

Crowds gathered on Main Street in Franklin in anticipation of the ninth annual New Year's Eve Ruby Drop presented by Motor Company Grill and Crabtree General Store. Festivities included music, carriage rides and a photo booth. The Ruby was dropped at 10 p.m. instead of 12 ostensibly to include more people in the event. For more photos, see page 12. Photo by Ellen Randall

## Christmas cold snap leaves mark in Franklin

Deena Bouknight and Dan Finnerty – Staff Writers

The Christmas week cold weather that brought temperatures regionally down to near or below zero created numerous strains on utilities. Some Macon County residents encountered electrical power outages and the Town of Franklin a water main break, both of which were blamed on the extremely cold weather. Additionally, accompanying high winds that followed a storm, which blew through the area Dec. 22-23, preceded an arctic blast that lasted until around the 28th. Area shelters, churches, and even motels were included in the increased demand for housing as a result of the outages.

At the time of year when goodwill is expected, Macon County and the Town of Franklin stepped up. Officials quickly provided not only pertinent information, but encouragements regarding the safety of self and other individuals – especially the elderly and neighbors.

Macon County Emergency Management's Director Warren Cabe issued a statement on Dec. 23: "Macon County is feeling the effects of a severe winter blast of cold air. Some light snow fell overnight but for the most part roadways are in good condition. There are approximately 2,600 power outages across Macon County. Restoration times may be as early as midday today for some locations but high wind gusts may hamper utility crews. Check on family, friends and neighbors as conditions remain frigid throughout the weekend. Use extreme caution with any alternative heat sources."

See COLD SNAP page 2

## Boards evaluating next steps in FHS project

Dan Finnerty – Contributing Writer

Following the special, post-election mandatory meeting Dec. 5, Macon County Commissioners (MCC) met two more times in the month of December on the 13th and 21st, the latter of which was a joint session with the Macon County Board of Education (MCBOE) and focused on school project updates. Highlands and Macon middle schools were included in the discussions as both are undergoing renovations of different types: Macon Middle School (MMS) for locker room and track upgrades and Highlands with middle school upgrades as well as soccer field and pre-K construction.

The new Franklin High School (FHS) development project was a prominent topic of the evening. Architectural firm LS3P's Paul Boney was on hand to provide updates to the project's status. Boney talked about obstacles as well as decisions that must be made on the high school project.

"We're fighting right now 1% inflation. Every month this project goes up 1%," Boney said.

While some of the escalation is accounted for in the proj-

ect budget, any significant delaying in execution will likely add to the cost. The next major steps in the process include design review and construction estimate evaluations for project Phases 1 and 2. Currently, \$335,122 remains budgeted for 2023. Updated construction cost estimates will be ready for review in late January.

LS3P has also applied for a \$50 million grant that could significantly assist toward the overall proposed \$118 million budget estimated for the FHS project. However, the state grant process will not be completed until around May 2023, so some uncertainty is associated with that effort. Given that the last bond for schools in North Carolina was in 2000, Boney emphasized that the building costs will need to be a combination of the state grant and county funding. Yet, the one-quarter percent local sales and use tax referendum on the Nov. 8 ballot that was aimed at assisting with the school project in the way of \$2 million a year, was not approved.

Boney maintained that county commissioners and the

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Dulcimer became defining instrument for trio

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# COLD SNAP

Continued from page 1

A water line break occurred Dec. 27 and by early morning on Dec. 28, Town Manager Amie Owens alerted citizens of a water line break “due to the extremely low temperatures” with details about where the break occurred and what streets in Franklin were impacted. The alert expressed, “Crews have been working overnight to repair this line; however, at this time, we are unsure of how long these repairs will take. Water service will be interrupted during the continued repair. When service is restored, there may be air in the lines causing sputtering of water when first turned on, cloudy or brown water, and potentially contain dirt or small particulates. Residents are encouraged to run water from an outside spigot or in the bathtub to eliminate air from the lines quickly.”

Due to the nature of this repair, the Town issued a boil water advisory with instructions about the difference in a boil water advisory and a boil water notice: “A boil water advisory is voluntarily issued when water contamination is possible. During an advisory we recommend that customers vigorously boil water for at least 1 minute before consumption or drink bottled water. A boil water notice is

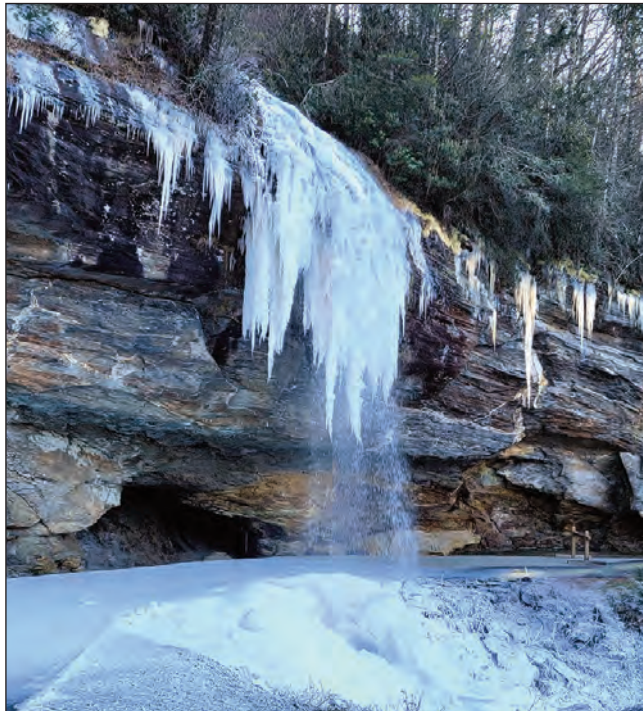
street from Lazy Hiker. Beam said, “FUMC members Carmen Mira-Knippel and Stephanie Alameda were instrumental” in orchestrating the arrangement of space for individuals seeking shelter.

FUMC also reached out to other area charitable organizations, such as Macon New Beginnings, No Wrong Door, and CareNet for assistance. An abundance of food, sleeping bags,

worked tirelessly from the night the line broke until almost 5 p.m. the next afternoon. We are so fortunate to have folks working for the Town of Franklin and meeting the needs of the community. I sincerely appreciate our town manager’s quick response and direction for our residents in keeping them informed and safe in dealing with this emergency. Providing clean safe drinking water is a top priority for us here



Macon County was a winter wonderland over the Christmas holidays with freezing temperatures that translated into spectacular scenery at Dry Falls (above and right) and Briday Veil Falls (below) as well as treacherous road conditions. Photos by Robert Solesbee



required by law to be issued when contamination is confirmed in the water system.”

The boil water advisory was lifted on Dec. 30.

“The crews did a great job in taking care of the repair, battling the cold, and handling other service needs at the same time,” said Owens.

Franklin’s new police chief, Devin Holland, also explained that officers responded to “cold-related calls to check the welfare of individuals.”

Police officers transported individuals to and from a “warming shelter” set up by First United Methodist Church (FUMC). Pastor David Beam explained that during the recent extremely cold weather, approximately 25 people took shelter Dec. 23-26 at the Outreach Center located across the

cots, and blankets were received. Starting at 6 p.m. on Dec. 23, people spent parts of the next three days over the Christmas holiday at the Outreach Center – until the weather warmed up and power and water were restored.

“Some people simply have no secondary heat source, and when power was lost, what were tough conditions in a normal environment got significantly worse. The freezing weather and accompanying power outage were just a magnifying glass exposing previously existing issues some people face every day,” Beam explained.

After water and power was restored, Mayor Jack Horton expressed appreciation.

“I must first of all thank our town employees for their quick response in repairing the broken water line. They

in Franklin. Thanks to everyone who understands the situation and responded well during this unfortunate incident.”

While the Town of Franklin as well as greater Macon County responded well to the extreme temperature drop, officials offered advice on how to be prepared for future harsh winter weather. Chief Holland pointed out that black ice on the roadways contributed to more vehicle crashes during those few days before Christmas.

“I urge citizens to always monitor the weather forecast and road conditions. Prepare your vehicles and homes for the extreme cold temperatures. Make sure you have alternative and safe heating sources. When driving during inclement weather conditions, always drive slowly to reduce risk of crashes.”

Emergency Management’s Cabe noted, “Remember that 9-1-1 is for emergencies only and not for routine road condition questions. Emergency preparedness and recovery information can be found at [www.readync.org](http://www.readync.org), including a link to NCDOT travel information. Information for Duke Energy, including outages, can be found at [www.duke-energy.com](http://www.duke-energy.com). Information for Haywood EMC can be found at [www.haywoodemc.com](http://www.haywoodemc.com). To sign up for emergency situation updates and weather warnings, go to [www.maconnc.org](http://www.maconnc.org) under the Emergency Services tab and click on the CodeRed link.”

Finally, in the event of another water outage, the Town of Franklin offered instructions on what citizens can do during a boil water advisory: “Boil tap water vigorously for at least one minute before using it for drinking, cooking, or any consumption. This includes water used for dental care, making ice, food preparation, or any other consumption purposes. Water should be boiled from the time the advisory is issued and continue until the Town of Franklin officially lifts the advisory. During the time the advisory is in effect, the Public Works Department will have an outside laboratory perform an analysis to determine if the water is safe and meets all standards.”

# REACH shelter suffers extensive damage from bursted frozen pipes

Deena C. Bouknight  
Contributing Writer

On the afternoon of Christmas Eve, a pipe in the sprinkler system of the REACH of Macon County shelter froze and burst in the client computer lab, resulting in the ceiling collapsing, damage to all computers, and extensive damage to adjoining rooms because of the several inches of water that flooded the shelter.

“Fortunately, no one was injured,” said Andrea Anderson, executive director. “The shelter has 10 bedrooms with private baths, two kitchen/dining areas, an office, computer lab, playroom, laundry room, pantry, and storage areas, so the flooding was quite extensive. There will be repairs needed throughout the shelter and most of the furniture will be a loss. We anticipate that it will be several months before repairs will be completed.”

Although insurance will cover much of the cost to repair damages, Anderson pointed out, “There will be a gap in replacement costs and expenses associated with client relocation and displacement. But the most important thing that we want everyone to know is that we are still providing all services, including shelter services. The night of the incident, we were able to transition all residents into alternative shelter and provide food and all necessities. And, we are very happy to say that the Christmas presents for the families and their children were saved, and in spite of the circumstances, everyone put their best foot forward in pursuit of a Merry Christ-



A severe temperature drop over the Christmas holiday caused extensive damage to the REACH of Macon County shelter due to a bursted pipe in the sprinkler system. The resulting flood sent the ceiling crashing into the shelter along with several inches of water. Photos submitted

mas.”

Anderson said she has been impressed with how “our community has always supported REACH and our mission. In fact, it was with the support of the community that we were able to build our shelter approximately seven years ago. Since that time, we have housed hundreds of families and their children. Our top goal is not to let this be a barrier for someone trying to leave an abusive situation. We do have resources to still provide immediate alternative shelter, and we are looking for a rental home for a few months to better serve our needs during the interim.”

Anderson expressed “thanks” to “Franklin Fire and Rescue, Serv-Pro, NCI, and many of our staff and their families, who responded and came in to help with whatever was needed. Without all who came to assist, the damage could have been much worse. Also, a huge thank you to First Baptist Church, which helped provide hot meals, drinks, and other items on Christmas Day.”

To assist with the REACH shelter repairs and ongoing efforts by the non-profit organization, whose focus is to assist individuals affected by domestic violence, sexual assault, or human trafficking, Anderson said that monetary donations, gas and food cards, and assistance with the REACH for Bargains thrift store is needed. Visit [www.reachofmaconcounty.org](http://www.reachofmaconcounty.org). Anyone in need of assistance and/or sheltering can text the crisis line at 828-369-5544.



Some of the furniture at the REACH shelter may be able to be salvaged but the computers are among the items that will need to be replaced due to water damage from the bursted pipe.

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# COMMISSIONERS

Continued from page 1

public is informed on project cost and status.

“We’re going to do everything humanly possible to make this work,” he said.

In other school projects, the MMS locker room building contract has been executed by the Carolina Specialties Construction company. The Highlands Middle School renovations are funded by the Repair and Renovation Fund as part of the N.C. Education Lottery. The MCC approved LS3P as the architect and County Manager Derek Roland to negotiate the fee/contract for architectural services. The overall budget is projected at \$697,730 and with \$300,000 in 2022 along with another \$500,000 allocated from the Education Lottery for 2023, funding is in place. A contract was also approved in November for LS3P to provide architectural services for the Highlands School Project, subject to school board approval for scope of services. Currently, LS3P is completing design, and county commissioners still need to identify funding mechanisms and bid out the project. For the MMS track project, bids are due back to the school system by Jan. 31. While the cost is estimated between \$645 and \$926 thousand, the school system has received nearly \$110,000 in grant funding thus far.

Macon Schools Superintendent Chris Baldwin laid out some additional information tied to the various school proj-

ects. The school board is currently in the Request for Proposal (RFP) process for the track and Highland’s soccer field projects, the deadline for which is the end of January. Commissioner John Shearl pointed out that from the original \$250,000 funding output for a soccer field, the current

lower.

Regarding the still unfunded projects, County Commissioner Chairman Paul Higdon motioned for those items to go back to the MCBOE for further discussion, scoring, and prioritization before being brought into the 2023 budget because there is no budgeting currently available otherwise. After repeated attempts by the chairman to gain a second to his motion and subsequent vote of approval, the meeting was adjourned, with no vote taken.

### Other business

At the Dec. 13 meeting, Macon County Transit Director Darlene Asher presented a public hearing on behalf of the Community Transportation Program, during which she presented a request for a FY-’24 Capital Grant involving six replacement vehicles. The amount requested was \$674,392. Because of a 20% match by the state, the county is being requested to provide \$137,879. The grant is a yearly occurrence with changes in request as necessary annually. The board unanimously approved the request.

During the public comment period, George McClure expressed his and other pickleballers’ gratitude for county commission support.

“We wanted to express our appreciation with the board’s ongoing efforts in getting dedicated courts in the city,” said McClure.

He also provided that his group is taking a three-pronged approach regarding pickleball –associated development: private money, corporate donations, and grant applications - all



LS3P’s Paul Boney addresses Macon County Commissioners on FHS high school project.

\$840,000 cost placeholder surfaced when parties involved realized that due to drainage issues, among some other concerns, an artificial turf field was going to be installed. The upfront cost of those types of fields is more expensive but the long-term costs of upkeep and maintenance is normally

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in complement to what the county has already allocated toward the courts.

Macon County Board of Elections Director Melanie Thibault gave an update about testing on new election equipment. The next step is a simulated election that will last three to four days in late January and mimic a real election, minus actual voters. The simulated election will include poll workers, a few members from the state board, and representatives from Hart (the company providing the new machines).

Jack Morgan, planning, permitting, and development director for Macon County, provided an update on the Nantahala Library Community Center renovation. Roland offered that while an architect is not required for the project, "having an architect would enable us to put a scope of work into a plan where there is no second guessing what's to be done on the scope of work."

Morgan defined the proposed budget of the renovation to be \$258,940, while the cost of an architect is expected to be approximately \$28,000. Roland went on to describe the value of spending money on an architect.

"We can put an architect on this project and stay within state funding allocation ... I would ask the board to consider using an architect without us [the board] having to put bids out for various aspects of the overall project."

More discussion about funding of current school projects will take place at future meetings.

The next regularly scheduled meeting will be held Jan. 10, at the Macon County Courthouse third floor Commissioner Boardroom in Franklin at 6 p.m.

## MMS teacher gets creative with funding sources

Deena C. Bouknight  
Contributing Writer

Ten-year teaching veteran Philip Cope, who teaches language arts to 7th and 8th graders at Macon Middle School, discovered an online site that helps him acquire books and other educational resources for his students – above and beyond what is available in his classroom. DonorsChoose was established to connect "the public to public schools," according to the site, and Cope learned that he could use it "as a tool to allow my family, friends, and community to be a part of my classroom."

Most recently, for example, enough funds were raised to acquire for his students a hardback set of the J.R.R. Tolkien book, "The Hobbit." He has used DonorsChoose to fund 10 different projects since 2014.

"I am constantly amazed by the generosity of the donor network that DonorsChoose has put together," said Cope of the site. "The process of setting up a project is incredibly easy and usually only takes a couple of hours to complete, which is important if you are a teacher. After that, I always advertise on my personal Facebook page to drum up support. Finally, once a project is completed, [I] the teacher must submit an impact letter and a thank you package for individuals who donate."

After "The Hobbit" was acquired for his students in November, with raised funds through DonorsChoose, Cope issued this



Macon Middle School teacher Philip Cope has come up with a way to provide for his classrooms when funds come up short. Recently Cope raised money on DonorsChoose.org to purchase a hard copy of "The Hobbit" for his students.

statement to donors: "Thank you all so much for your kind donations. Without donors, friends, and family like you my job would be so much harder! I am forever thankful for your support and kindness. ... thank you again for all your help! I cannot wait to show my students!"

Cope said, he is "grateful for the chance to provide students with an innovative, inviting, and accepting classroom." He added, "From my experience, the resources I get from DonorsChoose are invaluable to my classroom teaching. The most amazing thing about the program is how so many people come together to help our county's students. I am constantly in awe of the kindness of our community, and I am very pleased to say I am from an area where education is supported on all sides."



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## Contra Dance at the library Saturday, January 7

First Saturday contra dancing will be held Saturday, Jan. 7, 6:30-9:00 pm, in the Macon County Public Library, opening with a half hour of instruction for beginners followed by two hours of dancing with caller Laurie Fisher and live music by the band, Late to the Party.



Contra dance is widely considered the most accessible and sociable of all dance forms, with participants moving in long facing lines or in groups, changing partners often. No experience is needed; all dances are taught. Attendees don't need to bring a partner but are welcome to do so, and may bring a closed water container and snack. Wear comfortable clothes; no perfumes or strong scents, please. Masks are encouraged but not required. Admission is by donation; \$10 is suggested.

The Library is at 149 Siler Farm Road, Franklin, with a wood dance floor, ample lighted parking and wheelchair accessibility. The event is funded in part by The James Edward Hudock Trust and is produced by the Arts Council, Friends of Contra Dance in Macon County, and the Macon County Public Library. For details phone 828-524-ARTS or email arts4all@dnet.net.



# Volunteers needed for Night to Shine event

Deena C. Bouknight  
Contributing Writer

After not holding the event for several years due to COVID, Cartoogechaye Baptist and Discover Church will once again co-host the annual Night to Shine event Friday, Feb. 10, at the Moss Valley Venue in Franklin. However, in order for the event to be a success, more community volunteers are needed.

Night to Shine was established in 2015 by the Tim Tebow Foundation to celebrate people with special needs. Since 2015, approximately 100,000 people have participated annually in Night to Shine, which is essentially a prom-like activity that the Foundation touts as “centered on God’s love for people with special needs.”

According to Cheryl Richter, local Night to Shine coordinator, volunteer seamstresses are needed to help fit attendees of Night to Shine, and more “Buddies” are required to assist the almost 100 guests registered for the local upcoming event.

“As a Buddy, you will be assigned one of our special guests, and your responsibilities will include accompanying your guest throughout the evening, and providing companionship and any assistance they may need,” Richter explained. This includes sitting with them, eating dinner with them, dancing with them, taking them to photo ops, being with them on limousine rides, walking with them to the Karaoke Tent and the Shoe Shine Stand, and crowning them King/Queen of the prom at the designated time.”

Richter, who has been involved with Night to Shine since 2018, commented that the event is “the most important and



Every year, Night to Shine occurs simultaneously across the globe at hundreds of locations so that people with special needs can experience a celebratory evening of activities.

worthwhile event that I’ve ever had the privilege of being involved in.” She pointed out that Night to Shine provides the community with a chance to “give back” to “some of [the area’s] most deserving citizens by helping to show them how much they are loved and what an important part they play in Macon and surrounding communities. ... Once all positions are filled, I’ll start a waiting list for volunteers in case we have to substitute for any volunteer that gets sick or has to cancel at the last minute,” she said.

“Because of their disabilities, a lot of our guests have never had an opportunity to attend a prom, so this is a chance to give them a special night that they’ll never forget,” Richter concluded.

To volunteer for Night to Shine, email Richter at franklin-nighttoshine@yahoo.com or message her on Facebook with contact information so that registration information can be sent.

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YEAR	MAKE	MODEL	MILES
2021	Chevrolet	Corvette	5,792
2021	Chevrolet	Spark	82
2021	Kia	Optima EX	20,010
2020	Chevrolet	Camaro	25,641
2019	Camaro		40,428
2019	Dodge	Grand Caravan SXT	55,584
2019	Volkswagen	Beetle	42,676
2018	Chevrolet	Equinox	53,520
2018	Chevrolet	Cruze	34,692
2017	Dodge	Journey	110,982
2017	Honda	Fit	59,209
2016	Ford	Focus	68,653
2015	Ford	Flex	99,016
2014	Mazda	3	86,680
2013	VW	Beetle Convertible	67,099
2009	Lexus	ES350	113,060

### SUVS

YEAR	MAKE	MODEL	MILES
2023	Chevrolet	Tahoe	257
2022	Jeep	Wrangler Sahara Unlimited	10,539

2021	Chevrolet	Express 2500 Van	39,022
2021	Chevrolet	Tahoe	33,592
2021	Ford	Bronco Badlands AWD	1,237
2021	GMC	Yukon XL	53,356
2021	Jeep	Wrangler Sport	8,094
2021	Tahoe	High Country	28,303
2020	Acura	MDX AWD	46,606
2020	Buick	Encore	34,808
2020	Chevrolet	Trax	7,250
2020	Chevrolet	Trax Premier	28,030
2020	Grand Cherokee	Trailhawk	26,226
2020	Jeep	Wrangler Rubicon Unlimited	24,249
2019	Chevrolet	Blazer RS	45,231
2019	Chevrolet	Trax AWD	16,288
2019	Honda	Pilot EX	40,801
2018	Chevrolet	Equinox LT	23,569
2018	Ford	Explorer Sport	57,475
2018	Mitsubishi	Outlander	44,985
2018	Nissan	Murano	53,903
2017	Rogue	SV	58,866
2016	Dodge	Grand Caravan	76,458
2016	Lexus	RX 350	72,919
2016	Sorrento	LX	112,933
2016	Toyota	Sequoia	96,869

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### TRUCKS

YEAR	MAKE	MODEL	MILES
2022	Chevrolet	2500 LTZ	4,635
2021	Chevrolet	1500 4x4	10,243
2021	Chevrolet	1500 RST	34,026
2021	Chevrolet	Colorado ZR-2	10,842
2021	Chevrolet	LT Trailboss	34,069
2021	Chevrolet	Silverado 1500	5,822
2021	Chevrolet	Trailboss Crew	22,256
2021	Ford	F-150 SuperCrew Cab	32,251
2021	GMC	Canyon Elevation	50,934
2021	Ram	2500 Black Widow	13,542
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



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# Toys4Tots wraps up successful Christmas season in Macon County

Dan Finnerty –Contributing Writer

Jack Brennan, in conjunction with the local Franklin-based 828Vets organization, helped ensure children within Macon County had presents to open on Christmas morning this year. While having been part of the overall charity undertaking the past few years, Brennan sees changes each year – mostly positive ones.

“We had a lot more kids this year, around 150 more this year than last, and that is just within Macon County, which is pretty substantial because last year there were four counties included. Next year we are going to try and apply for Swain, Jackson, Cherokee counties, in addition to Macon.”

On Saturday, Dec. 17, the 828Vets organization hosted the final Toys4Tots pick up of this Christmas season at the CareNet facility, located on Bidwell Street. In total this year, toy bags were delivered to more than 300 Macon County families consisting of more than 950 children.

### Athletes Help Out

A few days earlier, on Dec. 15, in order to pack around 50 more bags of toys/gifts for children, Franklin High School (FHS) also stepped up and donated time and labor from 40 indoor track and field student athletes, along with Head Coach Melissa Ward and Assistant Coach Matt Harlfinger. The track team had just finished participating in a meet at Liberty University in Virginia, and while that experience brought one facet of development with it, both coaches emphasized the intangible benefit of having students participate in the local Toys4Tots program. Harlfinger, who coached track at Western Carolina University for seven years before moving to Franklin and doing the same at FHS, also manages a gym and works as a



Franklin High School indoor track team members and coaches head to the fair building on Dec. 15 to donate time helping local 828Vets efforts with Toys4Tots.

personal trainer. He acknowledged that coaches “encourage” track team members to participate in local charitable causes.

“We’re trying to not just have a good track team; we’re trying to create good social responsibility,” he said. “Last year, during the outdoor track season, we participated in the Macon County Greenway cleanup. We’re just trying to take care of our community.”

Ward participated with the track team in her second consecutive year to support Macon County Toys4Tots.

“Everyone who participated had a blast. It was fun; you’re picking out toys for kids!”

### Veteran Contributor

One of the main contributors to and champions of Toys4Tots for 33 years is Allen Field, of Franklin. In 1989, he began his three decade-plus association with Toys4Tots and now estimates that he spends around \$15,000 annually, be it through toy

purchases or cash donations.

Field is a U.S. Marine Corps veteran of the Vietnam War and has been an active supporter of not only Toys4Tots but also Stand Down – a yearly event focused on giving back to veterans in numerous ways – and House Beside the Road, which is another outreach ministry. As a native of Freehold, N.J., he is an accomplished musician and jammed with childhood friend Bruce Springsteen on occasion, while also rubbing elbows with Charlie Daniels and country music star T.G. Shepherd. His career was in the culinary field.

Raised in foster care, Field developed admiration and respect not only for his foster parents but all who undertake the responsibility of providing for children. He decided the best way to give back was to help make Christmas special for those who lacked the means to purchase

presents for their children. This year, Field donated around 500 toys to the local 828Vets Toys4Tots efforts.

Brennan said “that’s dedication” in reference to Field’s ongoing desire to help others. Brennan also reiterated that he and 828Vets are working to include additional surrounding counties next year in order to have an even greater, positive impact on area families and children at Christmas time.

Toys4Tots is an ongoing effort, meaning that anyone can donate monetarily and volunteer throughout the year – prior to the Christmas season.



FHS Indoor Track coaches Matt Harlfinger and Melissa Ward encourage their students to participate in local charitable causes.

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# First Baptist hosts CareNet-sponsored Christmas Day luncheon

**Deena C. Bouknight**  
Contributing Writer

Approximately 50 volunteers prepared food for and served approximately 100 people lunch the afternoon of Christmas Day at First Baptist Church. Volunteers included several involved in the organization 828 Vets, but many are also regularly involved in some capacity with CareNet, the organizers and sponsors of the event. One of those volunteers was Cindy Delvo, the brainchild behind the Christmas luncheon.

“The weather may have decreased the numbers, but we still served many,” said Delvo, who has been a volunteer at various organizations, including CareNet and Discover Church, where she attends.

“Some families brought their children to help serve, and some like me, with no family here, just wanted to be around people for Christmas and be of service,” said Diane Mahoney, executive assistant, Town of Franklin Police Department. “Everyone was greeted and served, offered fruit to take home, a care package with an ornament and toiletries, as well as donated warm coats, hats, scarfs,



First Baptist Church's dining room was filled with guests and volunteers enjoying a Christmas day lunch together sponsored by CareNet. Upper right: Dozens of hams, trays of rolls, green beans, mashed potatoes, and more were prepared by volunteers for the luncheon. At right: Volunteer Cindy Delvo, center, and CareNet Executive Director Tim Hogsted worked together to oversee the free Christmas day luncheon that fed approximately 100 people. Below left: Many crates of fresh fruit were donated by First Baptist Church and a variety was arranged on the tables for guests to choose from.



and jackets. Most importantly, volunteers spent time with the guests. A real team effort!”

The meal was provided by several entities in Macon County, including Discover Church, coffee; Bojangles, iced tea; Chick-Fil-A, macaroni and cheese; Ingles, cakes; First Baptist Church, fresh fruit; Dodge Packaging Specialties, paper and plastic products; and, CareNet (due to donations) green beans, mashed potatoes, ham, and rolls. CareNet volunteers also put together the gift bag giveaways.

“We [CareNet Executive Director Tim Hogsted, and other volunteers] are going to meet and critique the event to see how we can improve and plan for next year,” said Delvo, “but I think this first effort went very well.”

Throughout the year, CareNet is in need of volunteers to assist with providing food weekly to the needy in Macon County.

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## What's new on the plateau

Patrick Taylor  
Highlands Mayor

At the beginning of the new year, it is always good to look ahead. What does the new year portend for Highlands? Let me take a shot at predicting what needs to be done, if not this year, in years to come.

**Mirror Lake.** I optimistically predict that the Mirror Lake Improvement Association will garner the support from the community and state to begin Phase 1 of the restoration of Mirror Lake. Beginning this initial phase involves the critical dredging of areas near the bridge. With external support the town could partner with the folks living around Mirror Lake to help restore this community asset.

**STRs.** After passing an ordinance last Sept. 15 limiting the proliferation of STRs, [short term rentals] some folks believed this issue was over. It is not. First, enforcement issues will come into play very soon. Second, on behalf of the majority of the board, I stated at the time of adopting the Sept. 15 ordinance that the board would review the issue of amortization, or the sunseting STRs, at a later date. I expect these issues to be back on an agenda soon in the new year.

**Full Time Fire Department Staffing.** I predict the town will move forward in staffing the new fire department with firemen on a 24/7 schedule by mid-year without a fire tax increase for the next several years. Full time staffing will ensure response times of 1 to 2 minutes rather than the current 6 or 8 minutes. Another benefit is insurance rates should be held down because of faster response times.

**Big Bear Pen Road.** I anticipate NCDOT will begin work to pave Big Bear Pen Road from Upper Lake Road down to Chestnut. Rights-of-way have been secured and the design is nearing completion. The road will be widened to permit cars coming from both directions to pass without one vehicle having to pull over into the ditch. Several of the blind curves will also be improved. Some folks may be upset when they see trees, which are now in the roadway, being removed, but this project will improve safety and curtail the current heavy runoff of sediment into waterways.

**Macon County Tourist Development Authority (TDA).** This past year the town board has engaged with the chamber of commerce about TDA spending for tourist-related initiatives. I predict changes in the local TDA legislation that will be endorsed by a coalition of the county, chamber and town that permits a more flexible spending model to address tourist related infrastructure projects.

**After School Program at the Recreation Department.** With the demolition of the Houston House, our recreation



Patrick Taylor

Continued on page 11

## Letters to the Editor

### County needs dog ordinance with teeth in it

I am in total agreement with Ms. Henderson who was upset about nuisance dogs. I am two blocks away from a home who must have three or four dogs who continually bark all day. A neighbor told me that they were ready to poison the dogs. This needs to stop. What will it require to pass an ordinance with some teeth in it? Do you need a signed petition from everyone in our neighborhood? Apparently it seems that it will require some new elected officials who are willing to step up to the plate and do something.

Ron Jackson – Franklin, N.C.

### Excellent service received at Angel Medical

I recently had an opportunity to utilize the services of Angel Medical Center Emergency Room and the Med Surge services of the new hospital. Macon County is truly blessed to have such a wonderful medical facility at its disposal. If I correctly understand, the county negotiated a position with the new hospital owners (HCA) "Built the county a top notch new facility and we will sell you the old hospital." Kudos to the county negotiators! Their negotiating skills are unbelievable, bar none. There are larger, regional hospitals that would give "an arm and a leg" to have just some of the technology present within Angel.

I should know ... I am a retired medical professional (radiology – 20 years) and keenly aware of HIPAA practices (patient records privacy) while serving the patient. Angel Medical Center has in place an outstanding patient service presentation – follow through – and finally follow up – ensuring the patient's needs are met in a fast and professional means the first time.

I would add all co-workers are professionally treated as "customers" also. It would be impossible for me to recall the number of times one employee was servicing my needs and another would stop and quickly inquire if they could assist by obtaining something or giving a helping hand. The few hospitals I worked in around the southeast during my career sadly did not express the kindness and professionalism demonstrated by the employees at Angel Medical Center.

Someone at Angel Medical Center spent quality time to institute a "Customer Care Program Extraordinaire" bar none. Each time the employees utilized the major points of the Care Program it made me feel extra good inside. Like I was welcome to be there and the employees were excited to see me, service my needs and looking forward to making my stay the best possible ... which they absolutely did!

Beginning with the ER personnel, doctors, nurses, ancillary staff, radiology employees, med surge nursing/ hospitalist, patient care techs, food service and everyone else working all shifts (including the night shifts), everyone was

all so kind, compassionate, understanding and professional. There is no way I could possibly recall all the names; just know how much I care for your kindness and professionalism. You made me feel special.

I only wish there were a few more years I could work in such an environment then retire again just so I could experience what I had been seeking in my career for 20 years. Don't pass up Angel Medical Center because of poor, past rumors and innuendos.

Thank you Angel Medical Center for your excellent service.

Jim Gagliolo – Franklin, N.C.

### Carols reveal true meaning of Christmas

Great Christmas carols portray the true meaning of Christmas.

I recently discovered what seems to me one of the best Christmas songs ever written – "All My Heart This Night Rejoices." Its message begins with joyous praise expressed by angels on the night of Jesus' birth.

As I delivered packages for UPS again this year, I noticed many people publicly display what they think Christmas means. My favorite one simply said, "JOY!" Why do joyous celebrations surround this wonderful holiday? The second verse of the hymn answers that question this way.

Jesus came with a purpose. He said, "The Son of Man (Jesus' favorite name for himself) came to seek and to save that which was lost." Because of our sin, we must suffer and ultimately die. But - because of his great love for us, his creatures, God gave the greatest gift ever given. He sent Jesus to be born and take on human flesh so that He could bear the penalty for our sin. When he later went to the cross, he suffered the punishment that we, ourselves, deserve.

His love did not seek the penalty for our wrongs. Instead, God made a way to satisfy his absolute holiness. Jesus voluntarily allowed men to arrest him, charge him with crimes which he never committed, then brutally crucify him even though Pilate, the judge, could find no fault in him.

Under the Old Testament system, to atone for sin, the priests had to sacrifice a lamb. This sin-payment was only temporary. These sacrifices were made over and over.

When Jesus died on the cross, he became "the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world." With his one perfect sacrifice he made us fit for eternal life with him.

The only requirement for us is to "receive" him. We must turn away from our sin and live the remainder of our lives for the One who loved us, and gave himself for us.

In verse six, the hymn writer invites us to turn from sadness and come with songs of gladness to show our love for the One who first loved us.

If you want to read more of the beautiful words to this song, you can find them here: <https://hymnary.org/hymn/TH1990/217>.

Ed Hill – Franklin, N.C.

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### Three branches of government overlap at the center

A college football coach will tell you there are three basic units that comprise a football team: Offense, defense and special teams. That same coach will also tell you that they are not separate from each other. They all get analyzed by their fan base. By their coaches. They get derided by opposing teams. Still, this goes on with hundreds of teams - there is no national team.

Consider this, however. The U.S. Constitution provides for three branches of government. All three are designed to provide equal services/protection to all Americans. They appear to be separate from each other. But, they overlap, as in a three-lobed Venn diagram, in the center. That center is the American people. All Americans have one team. They must work for the good of all.

Former President Donald Trump has become an expert at playing one branch against the other. Even worse, he plays them against the American people to create chaos and confusion.

The Department of Justice is investigating the Jan. 6, 2021, attack on the U.S. Capitol. Dozens of rioters have already been prosecuted and sentenced for their dangerous roles. Yet, Donald Trump has refused to tell any investigative body whether he played a part in staging the riot/insurrection and/or failing to stop it. This is where Trump thumbs his nose at the American people - the people he was/is supposed to serve.

The Constitution links all elected and appointed officials with the people. Surely the Constitutional framers did not intend for elected officials to separate themselves from the people as Trump has. His refusal to testify suggests he did something he should not have done or failed to do something he should have (or both) while in office.

Will Trump eventually answer to the three branches of American government? Will he answer to the American people? We will see!

Dave Waldrop - Webster, N.C.

### Incessant dog barking wears on a person

I applaud the two people who wrote openly and honestly about nuisance dogs. I also believe that representatives don't always have to be voted out to effect change. Sometimes letting it be known in public forums such as this can help reframe the barking issue to one of a dog owner not being considerate of another's basic right to peaceful enjoyment of their homes.

Now, before someone says I must be a dog hater - I am not. I just try to be considerate of other people. I, too, have experienced the stress of feeling that sleep, and really anything you enjoy in your own home can be wrecked by constant, year-round barking. Then wondering each day, when and if this is the day the neighbors are going to have their dogs out barking incessantly for hours and not stop it. It really wears on a person.

Tim Holloran - Sylva, N.C.

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

## The Legislative Review

### N.C. Rep. Karl Gillespie

During my first-term in the North Carolina House of Representatives, I was proud to have played a role in the accomplishment of several important things for the citizens of N.C. Among the items I voted for that passed and were implemented:

#### Statewide Accomplishments

- Approved a balanced budget plan with key investments and savings (HB103/SB105)
- Supported North Carolina farmers and agricultural producers (SB762)
- Protect farms from additional burdensome federal regulations (HR1174)
- Increase penalties for arson and fires that injure first responders (HB315)
- Increase penalties for organized retail theft (SB766)
- Reduce and streamline unnecessary government regulations (HB911)
- Eliminate State Income Tax on Military Pensions (SB105)
- Cut the personal income tax rate from 5.25% to 3.99% (SB105)
- Increase zero-tax bracket to \$25,500 (SB105)
- Increase "Rainy Day" savings fund to \$4.75 billion (HB103/SB105)
- \$15 minimum wage for non-certified public-school personnel and community college staff (SB105)
- 6% pay raise for state employees over the biennium (H103/SB105)
- 9.1% average pay raise for teachers over the biennium (H103/SB105)
- \$883 million for water and wastewater infrastructure projects (HB103/SB105)
- Nearly \$1 billion in broadband funding (HB103/SB105)

I am incredibly pleased with the state legislature's accomplishments during my first term in office. In addition, Senator [Kevin] Corbin and I were able to successfully advocate on be-



Karl Gillespie

half of our districts and bring back historic funding for House District 120 and Senate District 50. Overall, \$43 million in direct funding for House District 120 was secured over the biennium. These appropriations will improve local infrastructure, emergency response, and enhance the educational and economic opportunities for our region. Included in those figures for Macon County are:

- Town of Franklin Water and Sewer Needs - \$175,000
- Highlands Water and Sewer Needs - \$100,000
- Macon County Greenway Project - \$250,000
- Southwestern Community College capital projects - \$5 million; and expansion of Macon County campus - \$1.1 million

#### Second Term Objectives

A few items are still a work in progress. These projects are on my radar once again as the legislative session approaches:

- HB81: In-State Tuition Pilot Program, would require the State Board of Community Colleges to create a four-year pilot program for residents of certain border counties in Georgia to receive in-State tuition at Tri-County Community College. HB81 successfully passed the House by a vote of 115-1. However, the Senate did not hear the bill in committee, and will need to be reintroduced for reconsideration.

- HB94: Graham County Occupancy Tax, would create a special taxing district outside the incorporated areas of the county and authorize that special taxing district to levy a 3% room occupancy tax. The proceeds would be deposited into a special fund. At least two-thirds of the proceeds would have to be used for tourism promotion and the remainder for tourism related expenditures. The bill passed the House 109-9 but was not heard in the Senate.

- Trout Farm Discharge Permit Changes: I will be focused on rescinding overburdensome regulatory changes that negatively affect trout farms in North Carolina. Commercial trout farming is essential to N.C.'s economy and after the heavy burden placed on the industry due to reduced capacity at restaurants and other COVID-19 restrictions, it is important to protect this sector of agricultural business.

New regulatory burdens were imposed on the industry without legislative approval. After numerous meetings were held for the better part of 2022 with the state agency responsible for the permit changes, the agency was unwilling to rescind the changes or provide a compromise between the affected industry and state officials. I will be looking to address this issue.

## TAYLOR

Continued from page 10

department doesn't have a facility for after school and summer camp programs. I hope the board will begin plans to build a facility that addresses that growing need or partner with other organizations in meeting this need.

**A Highlands Recycle and Convenience Center.** There is a growing need to provide options for recycling and disposing household garbage here on the plateau. I hope Highlands can work with the county in addressing this long-term need.

#### Lessons of the Big Freeze - January 3, 2023

With "the big freeze," just before Christmas, it's wise to review and reflect. Highlands hasn't had extreme below-0 temperatures in over a decade.

Visitors are now in Highlands year-round. Seasonal residents used to winterize their houses before leaving in late fall while not returning until spring. Second homeowners now tend to come and go year-round, therefore the house-winterizing ritual has declined. Many new homeowners had never experienced a subzero cycle. The full water lines in unoccupied houses where thermostats were set very low to save energy was a widespread practice. On the other hand, occupied houses had thermostats turned up high to counter the subzero temperatures that pushed demand.

Highlands struggled to keep the power grid operative. Electric crews did a magnificent job of managing loads in ex-

treme temperatures and high winds to keep the power connected, all amid the Duke Energy rolling blackouts. This cold event underscored the need to improve our electric grid to carry much higher loads.

As electric vehicles increase, there will be an increased need for electricity and an upgraded grid. Duke and other energy suppliers will have to significantly expand generation capacity. With concerns for climate change, I believe nuclear power generation has to be reconsidered as one piece of the emerging energy puzzle. Research suggests that small, safe nuclear package plants might be a game changer in meeting our insatiable demand for electric power.

The second outcome of "the big chill" is that the Town of Highlands and its residents will have to continue to maintain the water system. Maintenance will have to be done at the provider and user ends.

On Tuesday morning after the freeze, water plant operators could not fill town water tanks. It wasn't because operators were unable to produce water, the problem was the unoccupied homes that had frozen waterlines were gushing water. The computer system that monitors tank levels began reporting alarming water loss data. Fortunately, folks called in to town hall to report homes where there was evidence of major leaks. Crews worked long hours turning off water service at the meters of affected homes. Many residences and businesses will now need to make sure their water systems are upgraded to handle these super-cold events. The town will be working on a system to better locate leaks.

# New Year's Eve Ruby Drop

Photos by Ellen Randall



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# Franklin woman celebrates birthday by visiting hospital staff who cared for her

Christmas came early for some of the staff at Mission Hospital. A year ago, Andrea Bosio was not expecting to spend her 28th birthday in Mission Hospital recovering from a ruptured brain aneurysm. For her 29th birthday, however, she was thankful to plan her return.

Andrea and her husband Jeff brought gifts and treats to Mission Hospital Dec. 20 as a way to celebrate her birthday and show her love to the staff who helped her through the difficult times.

A letter of gratitude was placed in each gift box she brought to the intensive care and step down units she was in during her stay. The boxes also included snacks and handmade ornaments for staff, and soft, grip-bottom socks, Chapstick and a message of hope for patients.

Andrea and Jeff, both from Franklin, were excited to have welcomed their second baby boy just two months before her health emergency.

"The boys were taking a nap so I went downstairs to spend some time on the elliptical. All of a sudden, I felt an intense rush of pain to the front of my head - there was nothing gradual about it, so I knew I needed help," Andrea said.

In the process of calling for help, Andrea became so weak she began crawling up the stairs of her home. She also was having a difficult time speaking.

After being transported to



Andrea and Jeff Bosio visited with the intensive care staff at Mission Hospital, bringing them gifts in thanks for the care Andrea received during a critical health scare.



Jeff and Andrea Bosio

Angel Medical Center, she was taken to Mission Hospital.

"Of all the uncertainty that surrounded this time for me last year, there was no denying how much I had to be thankful for. Big things, little things, all the things in between," Andrea recalled in her letter. "Many of the nurses will be forever etched into my heart. I wish I could remember each name, but I so remember you."

Andrea did nominate one of her nurses for the DAISY Award, which recognizes excellence in nursing, and that nurse was presented the DAISY in April 2022.

Andrea said of this nurse, "to lift my spirits, she took me for walks around the floor so I could get some fresh air. She took the time to do things for my care that made me feel more like her sister than just a patient. She washed my hair, gently combed through the knots and took the time to braid it."

Andrea added that to these Mission team members, it was just another day at work, but to her, those days were some of the most significant of her entire life.

"May you know how valued you are, and never forget that miracles exist."

Jeff and Andrea Bosio presented gift boxes to the nurses that included handmade ornaments, snacks and other comfort items.



Andrea Bosio nominated Mission Health nurse Rachel Davis for the DAISY award, for the special care she provided when Andrea was ill last December. Davis received the award last April.



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# Arrest Report

The Macon County Sheriff's Department or the Franklin Police Department made the following arrests Dec. 17 - 30. All suspects are innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.



## Macon County Sheriff's Department

### December 17

Bradford John Brandon Jr., was charged with assault on a female. Timothy B. Carter made the arrest.

### December 19

Robert Charles Tallent, was charged with attempted common law robbery. Timothy B. Carter made the arrest.

James Barton Smith, was charged with child support enforcement contempt. Costin Jiglaun made the arrest.

Phillip Eugene Nix, was charged with failure to appear. Corporal James E. Crawford III made the arrest.

### December 20

Michael Steven Mason, was charged with secretly using photographic imaging device to view another's body or undergarments and possessing a photographic image obtained in violation of the peeping statute. Matthew D. Long made the arrest.

Wendy Lynn Goodrich, was charged with failure to appear. Corporal Clay A. Sanders made the arrest.

Nicholas Shane Thomas, was charged with assault on a female. Matthew D. Long made the arrest.

Nicholas Shane Thomas, was charged with assault on a female. Matthew D. Long made the arrest.

Damian Quin Dutton, was charged with violate domestic violence protective order and failure to appear. Deputy Cody J. Howard made the arrest.

Robert Charles Tallent, was charged with indictment. Corporal Clay A. Saunders made the arrest.

Dorcas Masson, was charged with domestic physical. Deputy E. Sands made the arrest.

### December 21

Howard Lee Dorton, was charged with domestic physical. Deputy E. Sands made the arrest.

### December 22

Teresa Marie Roquemore, was charged with committed in jurisdiction. Denver J. Elliott made the arrest.

Lance Edward Hughes, was charged with child support enforcement contempt.

### December 24

Alicia Karlene Huskins, was charged with simple assault, assault and battery or participate in simple affray. Timothy B. Carter made the arrest.

### December 25

Clarence James McCall, was charged with breaking and entering, injury to personal property and trespassing. Jordan C. Sutton made the arrest.

### December 28

Amando Thomas Virata, was charged with offense committed in jurisdiction. Denver J. Elliott made the arrest.

### December 29

Austin Lee Connally, was charged with failure to appear. Sergeant Jonathan A. Taylor made the arrest.

### December 30

Eusebio Joares, was charged with first degree trespass. Timothy B. Carter made the arrest.

Brian David Dills, was charged with assault on a female. Timothy B. Carter made the arrest.

Jacob Adam Hopkins, was charged with driving while impaired. Deputy Cody J. Howard made the arrest.

## Franklin Police Department

### December 20

Michael David Wright, was charged with assault by pointing a gun. R.S. Dula made the arrest.

### December 25

Michael David Wright, was charged with breaking and entering a motor vehicle. R.S. Dula made the arrest.

### December 28

Miguel Angel Hernandez Lopez, was arrested (no charges listed). M.A. Bingham made the arrest.

### December 29

Dylan Jaxsyn Cook, was charged with embezzlement. R.S. Dula made the arrest.

Michael Eugene Richards, was charged with possession of methamphetamine, possession of drug paraphernalia and driving while license revoked. R.S. Dula made the arrest.

## 'Talk it Out NC' shares ways to prevent underage drinking

During the holiday season, underage drinking, and impaired driving increase, putting drivers and pedestrians at risk of serious injury and death. In fact, one-third of fatal crashes during the holidays involve a drunk driver. To reduce alcohol-related dangers, Talk it Out NC, the North Carolina initiative to prevent underage drinking, launched the "Drunk Goggles Challenge."

The "Drunk Goggles Challenge" involves a set of goggles with the visual field obscured to simulate the dulled sensory abilities of impaired drivers at increasing levels of intoxication. Participants wear the goggles and attempt basic dexterity tests to show the effects of being under the influence in a safe and controlled environment. The goal of the activity is to encourage conversations with young people about the potential dangers and consequences of underage drinking and impaired driving.

Consider these statistics:

- In 2021, of all fatal (ages 15-19) teen crashes in North Carolina, 17% involved alcohol.
- In 2019, 19.3% of North Carolina middle school students reported riding with a driver who had been drinking alcohol.
- During the 2016-2020 December months, more than 4,400 people were killed in drunk-driving-related crashes.
- 7 million young people ages 12-20 reported drinking more than a few sips of alcohol within the past month.

### 5 Tips to Stay One Step Ahead of Underage Drinking

- Reinforce Your Expectations – Don't bend the rules or allow underage drinking during holiday or any other celebrations. While being mindful of the age-appropriate need for independence, set curfews.
- Lock Up Your Liquor Cabinet – Reduce temptation by limiting access to alcohol in your home.
- Communicate with Other Adults – If your child plans a sleepover or social gathering, talk to their friends' parents to make sure everyone is on the same page about preventing underage drinking.
- Teach Your Teen the X-Plan – Use the X-Plan to get your teen out of a tough situation while preventing them from losing face with their friends. This plan is as simple as letting your child know they can text you a single letter (X) and you'll call back to get them out of the situation and pick them up — no questions asked.
- Start the Conversation – Take time to talk to your kids about the dangers of underage drinking and how to say no to alcohol at a party or any situation. Take the Talk It Out Pledge to Stop Underage Drinking together as a family.

"We hope the tips and interactive experience shared ... will serve as an important reminder for new drivers and young people – especially if they find themselves in a tough situation," said Burna Mattocks, director of Special Services for the NC ABC Commission's Talk it Out NC Campaign. "It's so important for the parenting community to be aware of their child's activities and have those conversations about the dangers of underage drinking before it becomes an issue."

As millions of people travel for the holidays, Talk it Out NC, will continue to share important messaging through outreach efforts about underage drinking and driving in hopes of preventing tragedies from happening for the remainder of the year.

### About Talk it Out NC

The North Carolina Alcoholic Beverage Control Commission launched the Talk it Out NC campaign in 2014. The goal of the multimedia awareness and engagement campaign is to reduce underage drinking by encouraging conversations between responsible adults and young people. Talk It Out NC offers resources for parents and others who need guidance talking to their children about the dangers of underage drinking. Visit [www.TalkItOutNC.org](http://www.TalkItOutNC.org) to get the conversation started.

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# Dulcimer is defining instrument for members of Lady & the Tramps

Deena C. Bouknight  
Contributing Writer

Throughout Franklin and the surrounding area, at restaurants and historic spots, the distinct sounds of dulcimer music can be heard played by a trio, Lady and the Tramps. Especially during this past Christmas season, Sally DeLawter, John Hawk, and Phil Myers seem to be everywhere.

Each of the three retirees have a unique story regarding how they came to play, and then perform together, the dulcimer, which has German roots as a Scheitholt instrument. Yet, Scottish, Irish, and British musicians adapted the instrument into what is known as the dulcimer, a word that means "sweet song" in Greek. Since so many Scottish, Irish, and British settlers inhabited the Appalachian Mountain region, dulcimer music came to embody songs originating from the United Kingdom. However, the Appalachian people made the songs their own, interweaving folk ballads and original tunes. DeLawter, Hawk, and Myers were each originally drawn to the music of the long, fretted, three-to-four string instrument in dissimilar ways; but it was ultimately the sound of a dulcimer being played that captivated them.

DeLawter first saw a dulcimer hanging on a wall as a decoration. Thinking it was an interesting piece, she stopped into a dulcimer shop in Rabun County in the early 2000s to purchase one for wall décor. She had sung in choirs, but had never played an instrument – primarily because a birth defect caused her left hand to be crippled. After hearing the dulcimer played, however, she purchased one not as an accessory, but to learn to play it herself.

"I left the shop with a dulcimer and a teach-yourself-to-play DVD," she said. "My husband came up with the idea that we could switch the strings and I could push down on the strings with my good right hand and strum with my left."

The next year, DeLawter watched and listed to the Nikwasi Players, an original Macon County dulcimer group founded by the late Fran Cargill.

"I stood for a half hour in 2005 watching them play and they asked if I played, and I said, 'not really.' After they finished, they said, 'Come and we'll teach you.' And they did. I eventually started playing with the group in 2006."

DeLawter practiced daily at the thrift store, The Filling Station, that she and her husband, Herman, owned with another couple on Palmer Street. While the store, which raised money for food for needy individuals, closed a few years ago, DeLawter played daily – sometimes for hours – while the store was empty of customers, or even when customers were shopping.

"I had always wanted to make music, and the dulcimer gave me the opportunity to do



John Hawk, Sally DeLawter, and Phil Myers make up the musical dulcimer group Lady and the Tramps, which performs in festivals and gatherings all over Macon and surrounding counties, including recently at a Friends of the Greenway event.

that," she said. "It quickly became a part of me, and the music just flows out. I feel very blessed to be able to play the dulcimer."

Like many dulcimer players, DeLawter learned to play by reading tablature music, which basically means notating sheet music so that learning to read musical notes is not necessary. Although she still relies on "tabs" to play some songs, she mostly has memorized hundreds of songs. Plus, she often arranges songs she has heard and "tabs them out" for the dulcimer so that others can play the songs as well. She has written around 25 original songs, including a Christmas song she calls "Tiny, Holy One."

DeLawter, who grew up in Northern Illinois, but has lived in Macon County since 2004, also teaches locally and has taught at one of Western Carolina University's annual Dulcimer U events. She currently owns 12 dulcimers, including four antique ones that she uses to adorn the walls of her home.

Seventy-six-year-old Hawk has been playing for 29 years and is completely self-taught. He had never heard of a dulcimer or seen one played until he and his wife visited Pigeon Forge [Tenn.] and listened to famous dulcimer player Bill Taylor. While he was familiar with playing an accordion as a child, he was not musically inclined at 45 years old when "that sound [of the dulcimer] pulled me in."

His wife recognized her husband's fascination and purchased a dulcimer for him the next Christmas.

"For four years, I was trying to figure it out. I called Bill [Taylor] and he was nice enough to give me pointers over the phone. About five years later, I found out there was a dulcimer group in Florida, where I lived. I learned how to play and just got better and

better. Once I really started playing, I really took off with the music and even began representing a dulcimer maker – Modern Mountain – in the early 2000s and represented the company for 19 years."

Hawk, who has had a home in Macon County for 50 years and has lived in the area full-time for the last 15 years, said he typically does not "play well with others." However, when he met DeLawter at the thrift store and sat beside her to play his dulcimer, he realized they had a special synergy.

"It was magical. If you want to play the dulcimer, it should be from the heart, and I realized it was from the heart when we played."

Though Hawk does have to read tabs sometimes, he – like the other two players in the group – plays "mostly by ear." He said, "I get the tune in my head and just play."

Hawk realizes that he is somewhat of a dulcimer fanatic.

"At one time I had 44 dulcimers, but I've pared down to about 25. My favorites are handmade ones from Modern Mountain, although the company is no longer in business."

Since he represented a dulcimer company, he said he has learned much about all the idiosyncrasies of the wooden string instrument.

"The longer the dulcimer,

the better the vibrating string length – from nut to bridge."

He advised that beginners can purchase a starter dulcimer for under \$300, and one company that hand makes them in the United States is T.K. O'Brien.

"It's better not to purchase a foreign made one as they might look okay, but they won't sound good," said Hawk, explaining that high quality dulcimers might cost upwards of \$1,000 or more.

Myers also had not heard of a dulcimer until he began playing about 20 years ago, but he now owns a half dozen. He played guitar in high school and as a young adult, but put it aside when "life happened." The Louisiana native built a cabin in Macon County in 2001 and visited for many years until he moved to the area permanently. And it was in the Appalachian Mountains that he first heard the dulcimer.

"I loved how it sounded and decided to look into it," he said. "I ordered one online in 2003, right around my 50th birthday, and then I learned about a dulcimer class at Louisiana State University. I was used to fretting from playing guitar, so I immediately took to the dulcimer – so much so that someone in my class told me I didn't need to be in it because it was for beginners."

When he moved to Macon County, he decided to join several dulcimer groups in Western North Carolina, including the Western N.C. Dulcimer Collective, which meets at the Folk Art Center on the Blue Ridge



The dulcimer exhibit in the Macon County Historical Museum on Main Street, Franklin.



Parkway near Asheville, as well as the Nikwasi Players in Franklin and a group in Sylva called Pick and Play.

"I learned a heck of a lot. I like to tool with the tabbing ... arrange songs."

For all three players, the dulcimer has become a natural extension of their hands. They even admitted they sometimes dream they are playing the dulcimer.

A few years ago, DeLawter, Hawk, and Myers decided that they "make each other sound better," pointed out DeLawter. They established an official trio and offer their talents to the public. Lady and the Tramps seemed appropriate, said Myers, "because John and I had been playing together and we called ourselves the Doghouse Duo, so Lady and the Tramps just seemed to fit us."

"The way we play is free form," said Hawk. "It's not too structured. We don't all play the same thing the same way. But it all works and blends and sounds beautiful."

Added DeLawter, "We don't have to work at it too much; it just flows."

"They make me sound a whole lot better," said Myers, "We just lose ourselves."

For anyone interested in learning to play a dulcimer, free loaner instruments and classes are available at the First Methodist Church in Franklin. Dulcimers are on display and local history of the instrument is available at the Macon County Historical Museum on Main Street in Franklin.

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## Deaths & Funerals

### YNCS John Jackson 'Jack' Sanders

YNCS John Jackson "Jack" Sanders, USN Ret., 85, passed away Friday, Dec. 30, 2022.

He was born on Oct. 8, 1937, in Macon County, North Carolina, to the late Charles Claude Sanders and Leona Tippet Sanders. He was preceded in death by four brothers, Dee, Bill, Charles and Ron Sanders; and one sister, Thelma Sanders Hogsed.

He was married 61 years to the late Virginia Irene "Jean" Wooten Sanders who preceded him in death on Oct. 24, 2021. He retired in 1975 after a 20-year career as a Senior Chief Petty Officer in the U.S. Navy. He was of the Baptist faith. He was a great man who loved his family and his country. He was a loving husband, father, grandfather, and great-grandfather.

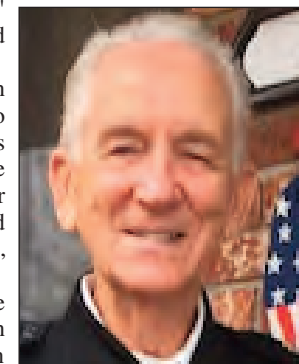
Surviving are his daughter, Donna Jean Sanders of Franklin; a son, John Gregory "Greg" Sanders (Becky) of Franklin; a brother, Leonard C. Sanders (Maxine) of Franklin; one granddaughter, Whitney Hope Hawkins (Russell) of Franklin; and three great-grandchildren, Emma, Griffin and Lailah Hawkins; and a special friend, Shirley Dillard.

Honoring his wishes, services were private. Burial was in the Woodlawn Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers memorials can be made to the American Legion Post 108, 614 West Main St. Franklin, NC 28734.

Online condolences may be left at [www.bryantgrantfuneral-home.com](http://www.bryantgrantfuneral-home.com).

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



**John Jackson Sanders**

### Frances Flynt Guy

Frances Flynt Guy, 82, passed away on Dec. 10, 2022 after a brief illness, surrounded by her family. She was born on Sept. 29, 1940, in Laurel, Miss., to Leon and Hazie Flynt. In 1958, she married her high school sweetheart, Sidney Guy, when she was 17 years old and he was 18 years old. They had a devoted marriage and had an adventurous life together.

After many moves throughout Mississippi, North Carolina, and Georgia, they settled in Franklin, N.C. She was a devoted Christian and belonged to the First United Methodist Church in Franklin. She loved her church and was involved in Sunday School, managed the church kitchen, and helped each year with the annual bazaar.

She was a beloved Girl Scout leader and school bus driver in Cornelius, N.C., during the 1970s and early 1980s. She also loved her cat Punkin, the Atlanta Braves, UGA, and owls.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Leon and Hazie Flynt; brother, Latrell Flynt; and sister, Doris Flynt.

She is survived by her husband of 64 years, Sidney Guy; daughter, Theresa Guy; son, David Guy; daughter-in-law, Lei Guy; grandchildren, Delia and Bryson Guy; family friend, Lisa Bryant; and a host of nieces, nephews and cousins.

A memorial service will be held at a later date.

Moffitt Family Funeral Care is honored to serve the family.

Online condolences may be made at [www.moffittfunerals.com](http://www.moffittfunerals.com).



**Frances Flynt Guy**

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## Deaths & Funerals

### Deborah Faye Bishop Boisclair

Deborah Faye Bishop Boisclair, 62, of Franklin, N.C., passed away Tuesday, Dec. 20, 2022.

She was born in Orangeburg, S.C., and the daughter of John Bishop and Helen Mary Tidwell. She was preceded in death by a sister, Sheryl Bishop. She loved cooking, coloring, listening to country music, and spending time with her grandkids.

She is survived by her parents; husband, Kenneth "Kenny" Boisclair; daughter, Peggy Ann Vargas Rameriz (Hugo) of Franklin; sons, Travis Lee Boisclair of Franklin, Kevin Wayne Boisclair of Alto, Ga.; brothers, Randy Bishop of Baldwin, Ga., Johnny Bishop of Alto, Ga.; and four grandchildren, Travis Lee Boisclair Jr, Jasmine Liliana Cruz, Abigail Faye Garcia and Hugo Antonio Vargas-Rameriz.

A funeral service was held Monday, Dec. 26, in the Chapel of Macon Funeral Home. Rev. Steve Reeves officiated.

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

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.

### Yvonne Lyons Miller

Yvonne Lyons Miller, 70, of Franklin, N.C., passed away on Wednesday, Dec. 28, 2022.

Born on March 14, 1952, she is the daughter of the late Ernest Arwood and Vesta Lyons.

Art was a passion and motivation throughout her life and career. After graduating from Franklin High School in 1970, she earned a Bachelor of Science in Art Education at Western Carolina University.

She began a fulfilling teaching career at Rabun County High School where she taught art for eight years. She was an instructor of painting classes at Southwestern Community College for two years and later took a position with the Macon County School System where she served as an art teacher for elementary schools across the county, spanning more than two decades.

After more than 30 years of teaching an appreciation for art and encouraging others to create, she retired as a full time educator in 2013.

She enjoyed tending to her many flower beds, working on home improvement projects, and caring for her family and pets. She was a devoted wife and mother who loved her family and friends fiercely.

In addition to her parents, she is preceded by her husband, Steve Miller; and a brother, Wayford Lyons.

Surviving family includes daughter, Heather Miller and son-in-law Joel McCoy.

A celebration of life service will be held at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, the family suggests a donation for the benefit of art or teaching supplies be made to a local teacher or school of your choosing.

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

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.



Deborah Faye Boisclair



Yvonne Lyons Miller

### Nicholia Brayden Taylor Lamb

Nicholia Brayden Taylor Lamb, 24, of Franklin, N.C., passed away on Wednesday, Dec. 21, 2022.

Born in Sylva, N.C., he was the son of Mickey Jerome Lamb and Suzanne Alexandria Grant. After graduating Franklin High School, he started working as a plumber. He was a talented musician and loved to play the guitar.

He is survived by his father, Mickey Lamb of Franklin; mother, Suzanne Grant of Franklin; grandmother, Patricia Grant of Franklin; three brothers, Gabriel Lamb of Burlington, N.C., Tristan Lamb (Kelsey) of Rock Hill, S.C., and Kayleb Bates of Franklin; three nephews, Logan Lamb, Easton Bates, and Asher Anglin; two nieces, Leighton Bates and Averigh Lamb; and one very soon to be niece, Merci Bates; and several aunts, uncles and cousins surviving.

A Celebration of Life was held on Friday, Dec. 23, at the Life Springs Church in Franklin with pastors Bryon Lamb Danny Prince officiating.

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

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.



Nicholia Brayden Lamb

### Sherilyn 'Sheri' Lorie Allen Bogle

Sherilyn "Sheri" Lorie Allen Bogle, 56, went home to be with the Lord on Sunday, Dec. 18, 2022. She was born Feb. 3, 1966, in Pekin, Ill., to Dexter Allen and the late Judy Mowder Allen.

She was a loving wife, mother, and grandmother. She was a home-schooling mother, loved and supported everything her family was a part of, and she was a fighter to the very end of her life.

She was a member of Emmanuel Presbyterian Church where she was a faithful member and cornerstone of the church. She loved Jesus, Biblical teaching, was a great cook, and a good friend to everyone.

Survivors include her husband, Jim Bogle; four children, Tiffany Thomas (Johnathan), Amanda Butler (Stephan), Rachel Boesch (Samuel), and Jared Bogle; four grandchildren, William Thomas, Aiden Thomas, James Boesch, and Katie Boesch; father and step-mother, Dexter and Sandra Allen.

She was preceded in death by her mother, Judy Allen.

A celebration of life service was held Thursday, Dec. 29, 2022, at Emmanuel Presbyterian Church with Rev. Tim Mc Quitty officiating. Burial followed in the Addington Cemetery.

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

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

### Karen Martin Speights

Karen Martin Speights, 61, of Franklin, N.C., passed away on Friday, Dec. 30, 2022. She was born in Lumberton, N.C., on May 23, 1961, to the late William and Katie Powell Martin. She enjoyed going to the beach and spending time with her family, especially her grandchildren. She was full of life and spunk. She will be missed by many.

She is survived by her daughter, Amanda Brogden (Joe) of Franklin; grandchildren, William Brogden and Emma Brogden; sisters, twin Sharon Haggins (Doug) of Holden Beach, N.C., and Debbie Hicks of Holden Beach; and nephews, Dillion Haggins and Christopher Hicks.

A memorial service was held Monday, Jan. 2, in the chapel of Appalachian Funeral Services with Rev. Wesley Price officiating.

An online registry is available at [www.appalachianfuneralservices.com](http://www.appalachianfuneralservices.com).



Karen Martin Speights

### Jack James DeBetta

Jack James DeBetta, 91, of Franklin, N.C., passed away on Saturday, Dec. 24, 2022.

Born in New York, N.Y., he was the son of the late John and Mary Parente DeBetta. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his wife, Jacqueline Strebel DeBetta, and a sister, Theresa Vere-line.

He was a plumber and a member of Local 1 Union. He was a United States Air Force veteran who served during the Korean conflict.

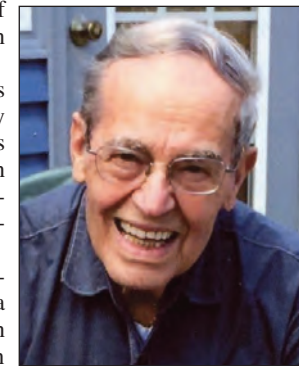
He is survived by a son, David DeBetta of Indian Land, S.C.; two daughters, Danya Panico of Massapequa, N.Y., and Georgia DeBetta of Franklin; two brothers, Daniel DeBetta of New York, and Richard DeBetta of North Carolina; and two grandchildren, Sara, and Nicolas.

A funeral mass will be held Monday, Jan. 16, at 11 a.m., at St. Francis Catholic Church. Father Tien will officiate.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations can be made to the food pantry at St. Francis Catholic Church, 299 Maple Street, Franklin, NC 28734.

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

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.



Jack James DeBetta

### Scott Lynn Marchant

Scott Lynn Marchant, 58, passed away Dec. 31, 2022.

No local services are planned.

Moffitt Family Funeral Care is honored to serve the family.

Online condolences may be made at [www.moffittfunerals.com](http://www.moffittfunerals.com).

### Rose Marie Freeman Blocker

Rose Marie Freeman Blocker, 76, passed away Friday, Dec. 30, 2022. She was born Aug. 12, 1946, in Jupiter, Fla., to the late Guy Harmon Freeman and Marion Williams Freeman.

She was a loving wife, mother, grandmother, and homemaker. She loved riding motorcycles, baking, fishing, camping, and making Halloween costumes for her grandchildren. She enjoyed her rose garden and her goldfish pond that her husband made for her. Most of all, she loved spending time with her grandchildren and family. She attended Oakdale Baptist Church.

Survivors include her children, Tony Sappe (Sheila) of Juniper, Fla., Angel De Bussey of Franklin, Robin Pilkerton (Charles) of Franklin, and Jason Zamperini (Deanna) of Riveria Beach, Fla.; one sister, Barbara Phelps of Live Oak, Fla.; nine grandchildren, and 10 great-grandchildren.

In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her husband, William "Bill" Blocker in 2018; and a great-grandson, Bryson Carey.

A memorial service will be held at a later date.

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

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

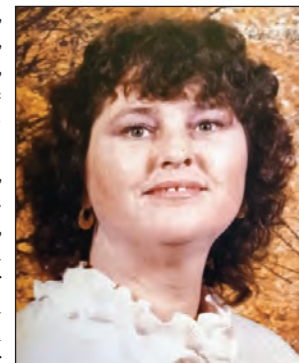
### Gregory Uyles Walker

Gregory Uyles Walker, 67, passed away Dec. 30, 2022.

No local services are planned.

Moffitt Family Funeral Care is honored to serve the family.

Online condolences may be made at [www.moffittfunerals.com](http://www.moffittfunerals.com).



Rose Marie Blocker

**Zena Pearl Rickman Brogden**

Zena Pearl Rickman Brogden, 95, passed away Sunday, Jan. 1, 2023, taking her last breath on this side of eternity and her first in the presence of her Savior. She was born in Macon County on June 24, 1927, at the home of her parents, Tom and Fannie Rickman. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her husband of 61 years, C. Ed Brogden, who died in 2009; her only brother, J. Roy Rickman and his wife, Doris D. Rickman; and daughter-in-law, Anne Brogden.



**Zena Pearl Brogden**

She is survived by her sons, Rick and Mack Brogden and Mack's wife

Linda, all of Franklin; her grandchildren, Chris and Julie Brogden of Charlotte, N.C., Lorrie B. Contino and husband Mike of Franklin, Ericka Brogden of Franklin, Joe and Amanda Brogden of Franklin; and Dustin and Chrissy Brogden also of Franklin; great grandchildren, Kendal and Kaitlyn Brogden of Charlotte; Abby, Heidi, and Cole Brogden of Franklin; and Will and Emma Brogden of Franklin; two nieces, Kaye Rickman and Janet Tipton and great niece, Jamie Leigh Tipton, all of Franklin.

After high school graduation, she attended Brevard College. After that she moved to Dublin, N.C., and taught for two years. She moved back to Cowee Valley, married, and had two sons, Rick and Mack. She returned to college for a teaching degree, and attended Western Carolina Teaching College, receiving her B.S. Education degree. She went to work at Cowee School, and taught fifth and seventh grades there for 33 years. One of her favorite students shared that one year a student in her class had rheumatic fever and could not attend school. Mrs. Brogden prepared lessons for that child and took them to their house, so that he could keep up and pass. She taught them music and organized great art projects, like ceramics, which they painted and hung proudly in their homes. One year she had a split grade, teaching two grades in one room. She did her best to make learning fun and exciting, inspiring each child to learn.

Zena Pearl became a member of Cowee Baptist Church in 1939 at age 12 and was the longest living member. She loved her Lord and served in several positions in the church. She became the first pianist of the church in 1939, playing for 14 years; the first Choir Director of Children and Youth in 1952 for 12 years; Sunday School Director from 1983 -1992; Sunday School Secretary and Assistant Secretary for 21 years; GA Leader for nine years; an Acteens Leader, and BTU Secretary. She was a member of WMU. She served as Chairman of the Flower Committee from 1982-2014. She also served as a Coordinator for the Prayer Team for many years.

Zena Pearl, known affectionately as "ZP" by her friends and family, was a pillar of her community who loved cooking and often prepared meals for anyone and everyone. When a death occurred in the community, she was one of the first to start planning food, contacting members of her Sunday School class, and within a short time, a week's worth of food for the family would be planned. For Sunday dinner after church, it was not uncommon for her to prepare two or three meats, seven or eight vegetables, and several desserts, because she said she never knew how many she would be feeding. She rarely used recipes, but loved to try out new ones. Zena Pearl shared the love of Jesus with everyone she knew.

After retirement, one of her favorite past times was studying and writing family history. Over a period of several years, she developed a huge photo album of the Brogden's history and genealogy, complete with pictures, dates, and names back to 1823. She presented two of her grandchildren a copy of this labor of love, to be shared with the rest of the family. She also wrote numerous other family histories.

When her grandchildren and great grands started arriving, she remembered them with calls, cards, gifts, and birthday money - one dollar for each year of their lives. She colored pictures of scripture verses and sent them as gifts for special achievements and events in the lives of their families. Zena Pearl had a favorite saying, "I love you a bushel and a peck," taken from one of her beloved aunts. She demonstrated this love to everyone that she knew, throughout her life.

A funeral service will be held Sunday, Jan. 8, at 3 p.m., at the Cowee Baptist Church. Burial will follow in the church cemetery. The family will receive friends from 1-3 prior to the service.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to St. Jude's Children's Hospital, or a charity of one's choice.

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

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

**Keith Cline Allen**

Keith Cline Allen, 82, passed away peacefully on Dec. 29, 2022. He was born on Dec. 27, 1940, to the late Franklin Cline and Anna Belle Henson Allen in Clay County, North Carolina.



**Keith Cline Allen**

He was a good, hardworking man. He was a truck driver for many years hauling automobiles for Complete Auto, a General Motors company. Later, he purchased his own truck and worked for himself for many years. Not only did he love to haul cars, he so enjoyed rebuilding old cars and trucks in his garage.

He was proud to be a US Navy veteran. While enlisted from 1958 -1962, his job was to teach others about instruments and navigation on Navy airplanes. It became a passion of his as he read every book he could find to help him further educate his comrades-in-arms. As a result, he became a pilot himself and owned a small Cessna airplane with a business partner.

He will also be remembered for his Christian faith, his dachshund dogs, and for being a good friend and father.

He is survived by his son, Greg Allen, Franklin, N.C.; his granddaughter, Amber Nicole Allen, Mooresville, N.C.; his great grandchildren, Wyatt Allen Jones and Ansley Ann Jones; his siblings, Virginia Edgeman, Bowman, Ga., and his identical twin, Kyle Allen, Marietta, Ga.; along with a number of nieces and nephews.

A memorial service will be held at a later date.

Moffitt Family Funeral Care is honored to serve the family.

Online condolences may be made at [www.moffittfunerals.com](http://www.moffittfunerals.com).

**Kenneth Harrison Planck**

Kenneth Harrison Planck, 95, of Lake Mary, Fla., former resident of Franklin, N.C., passed away Tuesday, Dec. 22, 2022. He was born in Morehead, Ky., to John William Plank and Mary Lou Whisman. He was an Army veteran who served in WWII. He retired from Winn Dixie stores and Macon County. He was a former member of First Christian Church of Franklin.



**Kenneth Harrison Planck**

He was preceded in death by his wife of 68 years, Mary Alice Planck and a son, Kevin Lee Planck.

He is survived by a daughter, Paula Jean Ellis (Dan) of Maitland, Fla.; two sons, Gary Lynn Planck (Dixie) of Spartanburg, S.C., and Kent Harris Planck (Shirley) of Conroe, Texas. He was blessed with nine grandchildren, 18 great grandchildren and one great-great grandchild.

A celebration of life was held Wednesday, Dec. 28, at Bryant-Grant Funeral Home in Franklin, with Minister Alan Martin officiating.

Bryant Grant Funeral Home is serving the Planck family.

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

**Willard Deweese**

Willard Deweese, 90, a lifelong resident of Franklin, N.C., went home to be with the Lord on Dec. 23, 2022. He was born Jan. 26, 1932, to the late Wymer Deweese and Mae Willis. He was a veteran, retired carpenter, and cabinet builder. He loved hunting, fishing, ginseng hunting, and gardening. Our family and friends have lost a wealth of knowledge of mountain heritage and the ways of life.



**Willard Deweese**

He is survived by his wife of 67 years, Ruby Nell Deweese; two daughters, Kathy Murphy Nix (Robert) of Six Mile, S.C., and

Becky McGaha of Franklin; a son, Randy Deweese (Stephanie) of Six Mile; seven grandchildren, nine great grandchildren, and five great-great grandchildren. In addition to his parents, he is preceded in death by a sister, Thelma Hodgins and his granddaughter, Sarah Deweese.

A funeral service was held Saturday, Dec. 31, at the Chapel of Bryant Grant Funeral Home. Burial followed at Burningtown Baptist Church Cemetery.

Bryant Grant Funeral Home is serving the Deweese family.

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

**Sue Story Schulte**

Sue Story Schulte, 86, of Highlands, N.C., formerly of Atlanta, Ga., passed away on Thursday, Dec. 22, 2022.



**Sue Story Schulte**

Born in Fulton County, she was the daughter of the late Travis L. and Sue Pelot Story. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by a daughter, Katherine Turner, and a brother, Pat Story. She was a member of the Our Lady of The Mountains Catholic Church in Highlands.

She is survived by her husband of 42 years, James David Schulte; their children, Thomas Lane Turner of Warren, Mich., James David Schulte Jr. of Sky Valley, Ga., Mary Karen Rabun of Roswell, Ga., and Elizabeth Ann Wattering of Florence, Ala.; two grandchildren, Callie Hsiang, Lexie Conway; and three great grandchildren, Luke Hsiang, Virginia Conway and Knowles Conway.

Funeral mass will be at 11 a.m., on Saturday, Jan. 7, 2023, at Our Lady of the Mountains Catholic church in Highlands. Father Jason Barone will officiate.

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

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.

View obituaries online at [themaconcountynews.com](http://themaconcountynews.com)

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## Couple celebrates 50th

Charles and Dottie Woods Nicholson recently celebrated their 50th anniversary. The couple were married on Dec. 16, 1972, at Hope Baptist Church in Sylva, N.C., by Rev. Hardin Nicholson. They have one daughter, Misty Colton (husband Rod) and two granddaughters, Rachel and Autumn.

## Decoration removal begins Monday

The Town of Franklin will be removing the holiday decorations from the Gazebo area beginning Monday, Jan. 9. Other decorations in town will be removed beginning this week, weather permitting, including pole wraps in downtown and the various decorations at the town entry points.

The snowflakes will remain up and lighted until mid-February. Duke Energy has been contacted regarding those poles where snowflakes are not lighted. When the snowflakes are removed, the spring banners will once again be on display.

Should you have any questions about specific decorations, please contact Chris Waldrop, Streets Supervisor in the Public Works Department at 828-524-2516 x 405.

## Nominations are now being taken for chamber awards

The Franklin Chamber of Commerce announces nominations are being accepted for four prestigious awards, Citizen of the Year, The Duke Power Citizenship and Service Award, Youth Citizenship Award and Club/Organization of the Year.

The Citizen of the Year Award recognizes an individual who significantly contributes to the community and is an inspirational role model. This is the most coveted award given by the Chamber of Commerce.

The Duke Power Citizenship and Service Award recognizes and rewards leadership and/or involvement in volunteerism and community services to an individual, team or group. Recipients of the award help foster a culture of citizenship and service that acts as a catalyst for others to become involved in civic and social activities.

The Youth Citizenship Award recognizes a youth who has shown a strong interest in serving in their community and volunteering to help others.

The Club/Organization of the Year Award is presented to the most outstanding club or Organization. The award is aimed at recognizing the club for its dedication and contribution in our community.

Nomination letters can be delivered to the Franklin Chamber of Commerce at 98 Hyatt Road or emailed to [facc@Franklin-Chamber.com](mailto:facc@Franklin-Chamber.com). Nomination deadline is Friday, Feb. 10, at 5 p.m. If you prefer, a Nomination Form is available at the Franklin Chamber. Feel free to drop by or call to have one emailed to you.

The awards will be presented at the Franklin Area Chamber of Commerce Annual Banquet on Feb. 28. The Banquet will be held at the Smoky Mountain Center for the Performing Arts beginning at 7 p.m. with dinner followed by the award presentations.

For more information contact the Franklin Area Chamber of Commerce at (828)524-3161.



## AARC gets donations

The Macon County Republican Women's Club annually contributes to the Appalachian Animal Rescue Center (AARC) who serves Macon County caring for stray pets. During the year the club collect items and money. This year they were able to donate many things on the center's wish list including blankets, sheets, food and cash. Representing the club are president Linda Herman and hospitality chairman Sharon Fay, both holding little black kittens. Receiving these donations for the rescue center is Lisa Bates, shelter manager.



## Zonta gives to KIDS Place

Members of the Zonta of Franklin Club stopped by KIDS Place Dec. 9 to present a gift of \$8,000. The gift represents proceeds from the 2022 Taste of Tuscany event that benefited KIDS Place and The Special Liberty Project. Pictured (L-R) are Peggy Milton, Deb Williams, KIDS Place Executive Director Alisa Ashe, and Michelle Masta.

## Grief Support Group begins Jan. 22

"GriefShare is a friendly, caring group of people who will walk alongside you through one of life's most difficult experiences. You don't have to go alone through the grieving process after the death of a loved one," explained group leader Neil Enloe.

The next group will meet in person starting Jan. 22, on Sunday afternoons, 3 to 4:30 p.m., through April 23, (except Easter) in the youth building at First Alliance Church.

"We hope you'll join with us as we work through our grief and loss together. New members are welcome to join at any time, even if you miss the first meetings," Enloe added. "It may be hard for you to feel optimistic about the future right now. If you've lost a spouse, child, family member, or friend, you've probably found there aren't many people who understand the deep hurt you feel," he said. "GriefShare was created to help people through this confusing time that can bring isolation and many questions about things never faced before."

GriefShare groups meet to help members face these challenges and move toward rebuilding their lives. Each session includes a video seminar featuring expert interviews, real-life case studies, dramatic reenact-

ments, and on-location video. After the video, group members discuss what was presented and is going on in their lives.

Between sessions, members can use their workbook for personal study of the grieving process and to help sort out emotions through journaling. Groups discuss questions and comments from the workbook study.

GriefShare topics include grief's challenges, guilt, anger, relationships with others, being stuck, and what to live for now. The church will cover the \$15 workbook unless you wish to reimburse the cost.

For more information about GriefShare in Franklin, contact Neil Enloe at 828-200-4296 or [MrVol73@dnet.net](mailto:MrVol73@dnet.net). To register online, use [www.griefshare.org/groups/160953](http://www.griefshare.org/groups/160953). GriefShare is a network of 12,000-plus churches worldwide. The nondenominational program features biblical concepts for healing. More information is at [www.griefshare.org](http://www.griefshare.org).

The Christian & Missionary Alliance is a fellowship of nearly six million evangelical believers worldwide. Its 2,000-plus U.S. churches are dedicated to fulfilling Christ's command to make disciples of all nations.

# RGNS second grade hosts Christmas Market

On Tuesday, Dec. 6, the second graders at Rabun Gap-Nacoochee School (RGNS) hosted their Second Annual Lower School Market. The students, led by second grade teacher Jordan Bates, worked hard all fall making their market items. Director of STEAM Dr. Maggie Renken and the Upper School STEAM students helped the second graders with their products.

“The market is the pinnacle of our economics unit in second grade where the students have learned about supply and demand, goods and services, and branding and advertising,” said Bates. “I’m so proud of every second grader and all the hard work they put into their projects.”

Students sold handmade items including action figures, fidget spinners, soap, pencil boxes, jewelry, and ornaments. Members of the faculty and staff, Upper School students, and other Lower School students visited the market to show their support and purchase gifts. The money raised from the market



Griffin Patrick of Franklin explains his product at the Christmas Market.

will be used to purchase a basketball hoop to be installed at the Lower School playground. The market raised almost \$2,300.

# SCC creates direct pathway to BS at Mars Hill

Graduates of Southwestern Community College who want to take the next step in their education by earning a bachelor’s degree now have a direct pathway to do so at Mars Hill University.

MHU President Dr. Tony Floyd and SCC President Dr. Don Tomas signed an agreement, creating the Mountain Lion-Southwestern Promise during an event at SCC’s campus in Sylva.

The program provides a streamlined process for Southwestern’s associate degree graduates to enroll at MHU. It’s designed to help students navigate the intricacies of admissions criteria, determine which community college credits will transfer to the four-year institution, fulfill general education requirements and address other potential issues that may arise when transferring.

The Mountain Lion-Southwestern Promise gives SCC students access to information about academic programs faculty and staff at MHU who will facilitate their transition to the university. They will be able to receive admission, financial aid, registration and orientation communications early in the transition process, which will set them up for maximum success at both institutions.

“This partnership expands our students’ opportunities to pursue higher education,” said Dr. Tomas. “We’re pleased to offer this pathway that makes it easier for our students to transfer their credit to a respected regional university like Mars Hill.”

SCC students will need to maintain a 2.0 grade point average, earn an associate degree in a collegetransfer program or in an applied program for which there is an articulation agreement with MHU, and enroll at MHU within one academic



Southwestern Community College President Dr. Don Tomas (left) and Mars Hill University President Dr. Tony Floyd (right) signed the Mountain Lion-Southwestern Promise, making transferring credits between the two institutions easier for students. Witnessing the signing are Dr. Thom Brooks, SCC Executive Vice President for Instruction and Student Services; Dr. Mark Ellison, SCC Dean of Students; Kristan Blanton, Director of Enrollment; Dr. Donna Boone Parsons, MHU Dean; and Carolyn Kuzell, Associate Director of Admissions.

year after receiving their associate degree.

Students interested in the Mountain Lion-Southwestern Promise may contact Kristan Blanton, Director of Enrollment Management at SCC at [k\\_blanton@southwesterncc.edu](mailto:k_blanton@southwesterncc.edu) or 828.339.4255 or Carolyn Kuzell, Associate Director of Admission at MHU at [ckuzell@mhu.edu](mailto:ckuzell@mhu.edu) or 828.689.1589.

# RGNS announces honor roll

Rabun Gap-Nacoochee School announces its 2022-2022 Honor Roll for Trimester 1.

## Head of School’s High Honors

Grade 12 — Jack Barta of Franklin, Jeb Bring of Highlands, Rebekah Wu of Franklin

Grade 11 — Elizabeth Brenner of Franklin, Jimmy Chang of Franklin, Anna Johnson of Highlands, Dawson Kirkland of Franklin, Isabella Martinez of Highlands, Georgia Mattis of Highlands, Sophia Moore of Highlands, Daniel Wu of Franklin

Grade 10 — Katie Barta of Franklin, Julian Mulholland of Franklin

Grade 9 — Coby Bloedow of Highlands, Abigail Brenner of Franklin, Katie Johnson of Highlands

Grade 8 — Leela Chrestman of Highlands, Ledger Culpepper of Franklin, Sloan Mattis of Highlands, Callie Parker of Franklin

Grade 7 — Macie Bennett of Franklin, Jared Greer of Franklin, Haley Manshack of Franklin, Porter Mulholland of Franklin

Grade 6 — Hannah Belof of Franklin, Savanna Bubenick of Highlands

Grade 5 — Max Jestin of Franklin, Chloe Parker of Franklin

Grade 4 — Eli Casebolt of Otto

## Head of School’s Honors

Grade 12 — Meg Bruner of Otto, Ella Loveland of Otto

Grade 11 —

Grade 10 — Cameron Abranyi of Highlands, Matthew Rivera of Franklin, Blaise Southerland of Franklin

Grade 9 — Zion Baumgarten of Highlands, Margaret Cole of Highlands, Izzy Edelheit of Scaly Mountain, Brody Fon of Franklin, Dillon Kirkland of Franklin, Davis Miller of Franklin, Santi Robles of Franklin, Ryan Rogers of Franklin

Grade 8 — Jasmine Abranyi of Highlands

Grade 7 — Mya Burnett of Franklin, Zoe Candiotti of Franklin, Riese Kirkland of Franklin, Abby Manshack of Franklin, Eleanor McArthur of Otto, Camden Sherwood of Franklin, Anslyn Smith of Franklin

Grade 6 — Jonathan Raoul-Schott of Franklin

Grade 5 — Sophia Burnett of Franklin, Aaron Chan of Franklin, Daisy Culpepper of Franklin, Alex Herrera of Franklin, Luke Highsmith of Highlands, Charlotte Swift of Highlands, Aria Wright of Franklin

Grade 4 — Rilyn Bilbrey of Otto, Natalya Calez of Otto, Oscar DeWandeler of Franklin, Wylie Dilbeck of Franklin, Elin Harrell of Otto, Axel Hughes of Franklin, Zora Johnson-Owen of Franklin, Coleman Patrick of Franklin, Natalie Wood of Highlands

Head of School’s High Honors recognizes students who earned an average no lower than 4.0 with no grade below B+, and no effort rating below satisfactory in Grades 9-12, and recognizes students who have all A’s with no grade below an A- in Grades 4-8. Head of School’s Honors recognizes students who have all A’s & B’s with no grade below a B-, and no effort rating below satisfactory in Grades 4-8, and recognizes students who have an average not lower than 3.0, with no grade below C+, and no effort rating below satisfactory in Grades 9-12.

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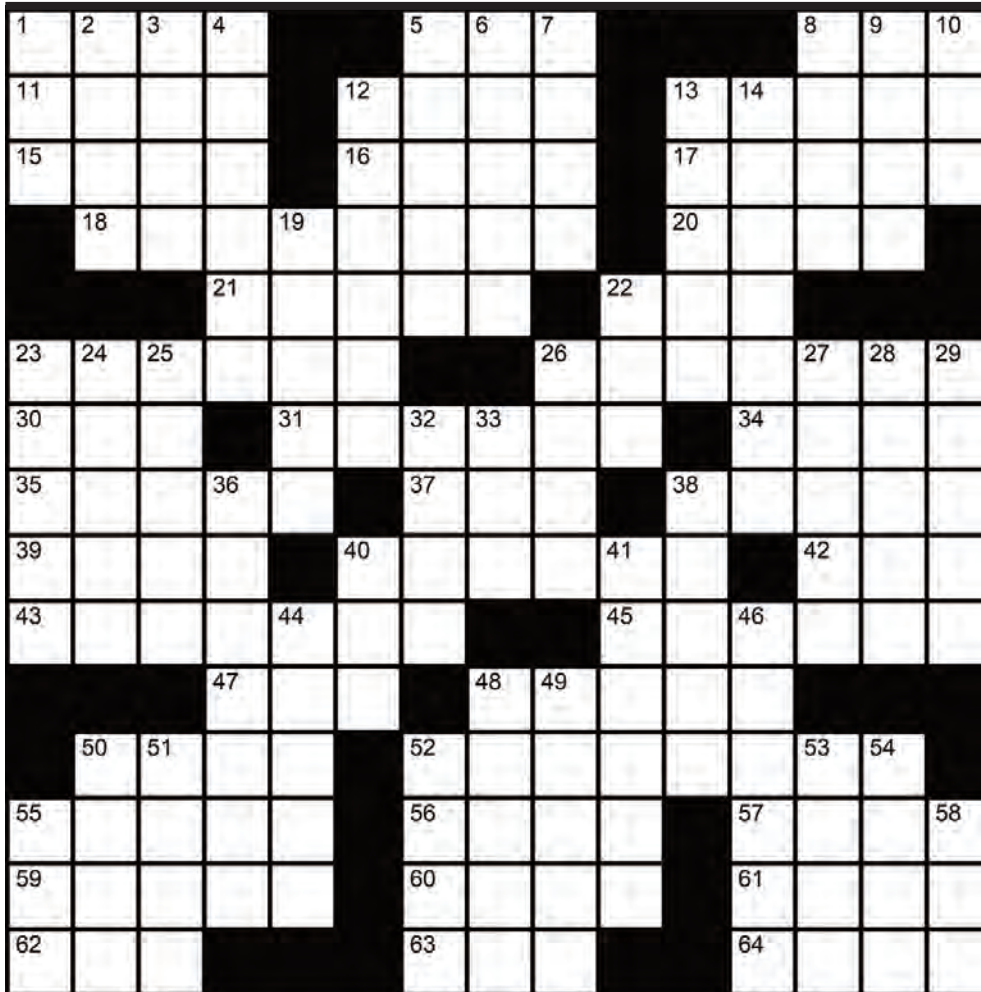
# CROSSWORD PUZZLE ANSWERS ON PG. 15

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### ACROSS

1. \*Like popular Pad
5. Limit
8. Boozehound
11. Bring home the bacon
12. \*Combine cuisines
13. Door holder
15. Between ports
16. \*America's favorite cookie, according to some
17. Driver's 180
18. \*Like poke bowl
20. Magician, in the olden days
21. Type of wrench
22. Campaigner, for short
23. Traditional sock pattern
26. \*Southeast Asian spiky fruit, pl.
30. \_\_\_\_-di-dah
31. Unequivocally detestable
34. Same as ayah
35. "That is," Latin
37. Urge Spot to attack
38. Chilled (2 words)
39. Observation point's attraction
40. \*Soft and soft type of tofu
42. Ship pronoun
43. Thrusts out or causes to protrude
45. One way to steal gas
47. Without professional help, acr.
48. Energy to motion converter
50. H.S. math class
52. \*Wasabi is popular in



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this cuisine

55. \*Type of soda bread
56. g in 10 g
57. Francis Coppola's middle name
59. End of tunnel
60. Casanova, e.g.
61. In the thick of
62. Saturn's wife
63. Human limb
64. \*Russian borscht vegetable

### DOWN

1. \*Brew from China, originally
2. \*American \_\_\_\_ browns
3. Acreage
4. Sort of (3 words)
5. Marie or Pierre, physicists

6. Southeast Asia org.

7. Lowly laborer
8. Like a bug in a rug
9. Princess Fiona, by night
10. Square root of 100
12. Thwarted
13. SNL's fortÉ
14. \*Nationality that gave us gelato
19. Administer
22. Wound fluid
23. Not dead
24. Radices, sing.
25. \*Clarified butter of Indian origin, pl.
26. \*Peking fowl
27. Mennonite's cousin
28. Jack Black's Libre
29. Martin of "Apocalypse

Now"

32. Terrorist org.
33. Fat of olives
36. \*Like certain meatballs
38. Tear-jerker
40. Hog heaven
41. Posthumous type of tax
44. Like 90 degree angle
46. Reassembled dwelling
48. Feudal dwelling
49. Poppy tears
50. Acid "journey"
51. Semis
52. France/Switzerland border mountain range
53. Not all
54. Canal in a song
55. U.N. workers' grp.
58. Banned insecticide, acr.

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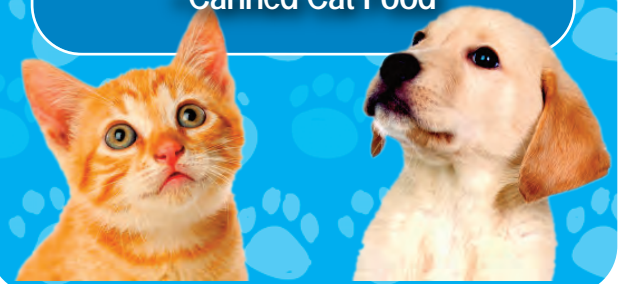
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