



Franklin High School celebrated its winter sports seniors in a couple of ceremonies Tuesday at the basketball games against Smoky Mountain. Pictured is track team member Isaiah Roots with family and friends on Senior Night at the Panther Den. All four Franklin High School Panthers basketball teams won their games against Smoky Mountain. For more sports updates, see page 8.

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Retiring FPC pastor leaves 'big shoes to fill'



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Annual Burns Night celebrates Scottish poet



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Artist uses discarded materials to create his art

## Area nonprofits in dire need of volunteers

Deena C. Bouknight  
 Contributing Writer

It is no surprise that the pandemic dramatically affected in-person volunteerism in this region and throughout the United States. Macon County has not been immune. And while many volunteer opportunities are available with Macon County nonprofit organizations, two in particular especially need individuals to help with ongoing projects and services.

"In Macon County, we saw a significant loss of volunteer home delivered meal drivers when the pandemic began," said Jennifer Hollifield, administrative officer at Macon County Senior Services. "Unfortunately, many of those volunteers have not returned to delivering meals. Our program relies heavily on volunteers to drive our different routes, both in Franklin and Highlands."



Macon County Senior Services center delivers meals to seniors who are homebound. The Meals on Wheels program is in need of dedicated drivers. File photo by Vickie Carpenter

Meals on Wheels was first established by a small group of Philadelphia, Pa., citizens in 1954, and then it became a national movement in almost every community in America,

See VOLUNTEERS page 2



## Children in NC Health Choice moving to NC Medicaid April 1

On April 1, 2023, approximately 55,000 children receiving NC Health Choice coverage will move to NC Medicaid and begin receiving additional physical and behavioral health services. This change will help save families money and increase access to care.

North Carolina currently has two similar, but different, programs that offer medical coverage for eligible children — NC Medicaid, funded through the federal Medicaid program, and NC Health Choice, funded through the federal Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP). A provision included in the North Carolina state budget, approved in July 2022, directed the NC Department of Health and Human Services to move NC Health Choice beneficiaries from the NC Health Choice program to the Medicaid program. North Carolina joins 17 other states who have combined Medicaid/CHIP programs for children.

“This is an exciting change and allows NCDHHS to provide additional benefits to children moving from NC Health Choice to Medicaid,” said Deputy Secretary for NC Medicaid, Dave Richard. “This includes assistance getting to and from medical appointments through Non-Emergency Medical Transportation services and Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment — a benefit designed to discover and treat health conditions before they become serious.”

Families with children moving from NC Health Choice to Medicaid will no longer have to pay enrollment fees or co-pays for medical visits and prescriptions. They will also have access to enhanced behavioral health services not previously covered by NC Health Choice. People with NC Health Choice do not need to do anything to move to the Medicaid program. The move is automatic and will be effective April 1, 2023.

People impacted by this change should look for a letter in the mail from their local Department of Social Services in early March. They will get a new Medicaid ID card in the mail; however, their Medicaid ID (Recipient ID) will not change. They can continue to use the card they have now until the new one arrives.

For more information, visit the NC Health Choice webpage at [medicaid.ncdhhs.gov/nc-health-choice-move-medicaid](https://medicaid.ncdhhs.gov/nc-health-choice-move-medicaid).

## VOLUNTEERS

Continued from page 1

with the main organization citing that 2.4 million seniors annually are fed through the program.

“Without wonderful volunteers,” said Hollifield, “we could not deliver the approximately 50 hot meals every day (Monday through Friday) to our homebound older adults.”

To assist with Macon County’s Meals on Wheels, individuals can stop by the Community Resource Center, located in the Crawford Senior Center at 108 Wayah Street, for a volunteer application. The process to become a volunteer involves not only a completed application, but also a background check.

Hollifield added, “Meals are prepared by Angel Medical Center, and staff at Senior Services package the hot meals for the volunteers. Volunteers pick up the meals at Senior Services. Each volunteer drives a route that typically has around 10-12 recipients, and routes are based on geographic areas. Most routes take approximately one to one-and-a-half hours to complete and the majority of volunteers only drive one route a week.”

Initially, new volunteers ride with staff or existing volunteers to learn a particular Meals on Wheels route that they will be driving – in order to become comfortable with the route.

Another organization needing volunteers is Smoky Mountain Pregnancy Care Center (SMPCC), which has been serving the Western North Carolina area since 2001. Primarily, SMPCC offers free and confidential pregnancy testing, and positive tests are verified through Limited Obstetrical Ultrasounds. Volunteers help SMPCC keep the three medical clinics up and running smoothly and serve on its board of directors.

With a location on Palmer Street in Franklin, and another in Sylva, the Center also provides a variety of additional services, including medical and peer-counseling, a 24-hour helpline, in-person or online parenting classes, and a mobile medical clinic.

According to Marketing and Media Director Beckie Langston, would-be volunteers who want to work directly

with the clients must complete the Love Approach training that addresses all kinds of issues, even how to answer phones.

However, volunteers do not need to complete a training program to handle SMPCC’s myriad tasks, such as, organizing the “rewards” closets, which entails changing out seasonal clothing and restocking shelves.

“We sort and clean all gently used donations that come through our doors,” said Langston. “And we need skilled individuals to handle property maintenance, tree cutting, painting, and lawn service. We even need people to pray.”

The mobile medical unit, which travels throughout Western North Carolina with a registered nurse onboard to pro-



Volunteers and staff at the Senior Center package meals to be delivered to older homebound adults.

vide free and confidential services, requires volunteers to assist the staff at each destination location. This requires a “specific type of volunteer,” pointed out Langston, who can handle potentially tense situations that might arise – such as hostile protestors.

“And always, financial support is vital,” she added. “That’s what keeps the doors open and the services available.”

Interested volunteers can visit <https://smokypartners.com> to learn how to donate or fill out an online application.

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# SCC plans two job fairs in February

Area residents looking for a new job or career path are in luck.

Over the next month, Southwestern Community College's Career Services will be holding a pair of Job Fairs featuring area employers representing a wide variety of fields.

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

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

The following week, a general career fair featuring employers from all sectors will be held from 1-4 p.m. on Feb. 23. They'll be looking to hire individuals to fill everything

from professional full-time to part-time and seasonal positions as well as internships.

"Both of these events are outstanding events for anyone who's in need of a job or just wanting to explore a new career path," said Michael Despeaux, SCC's Director of Career Services. "I'm thrilled with the quality and number of employers who've already registered to set up booths at both these job fairs, and I'm confident these will be very successful events."

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

Job-seekers are encouraged to dress professionally and bring a resume.

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



Michael Despeaux (left), who is SCC's Director of Career Services, stands between employers representing Wildwater at last year's Job Fair in Sylva.

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# Lady wrestlers make history, basketball still winning and track sets records

Dan Finnerty – Sports Writer

Spring sports begin soon at Franklin High School (FHS), but not before athletes wrap up fall-winter sports and prove they have mettle enough to remain competitive. Indoor track, ladies wrestling, and basketball all have standouts this season.

Women's wrestling participated in its inaugural 3A regional competition Thursday, Jan. 27. At North Henderson, Panther wrestling had three women compete and succeed in moving on to the state tournament for the first time. Seniors Abby Carpenter and Jasmin Valencia made history becoming the first two female regional champions at FHS. On Feb. 3-4, Carpenter, Valencia, and fellow senior Stephanie Ortiz will be in Greensboro participating in the North Carolina High School Athletic Association (NCHSAA) 3A State Individual Tournament.

For the unaware, North Carolina is broken down into four classifications for athletics, with 1A comprising the smallest schools and 4A the largest. This is the first year that women's wrestling has been officially recognized within the conference structure. Carpenter (126 weight class) has excelled the entire year and now possesses a 31-1 record overall. Valencia (132) is next at 25-4, and Ortiz (120) also qualified at 17-13.



Franklin's varsity women battle Lady Mustangs at a packed Panther Den Tuesday, Jan. 31. FHS won 59-56.

The men will compete in their NCHSAA 3A West Regionals Feb. 10-11 at North Henderson. Currently, one wrestler (senior Nathan Diaz) has qualified with a 29-11 record.

#### Panther basketball

FHS hosted the Smoky Mountain Mustangs Jan. 31 for Senior Night. Between the varsity games, senior athletes were recognized from all sports, including cheer and dance

members. During the presentations, it was announced that senior Ty Handley, who has played football, basketball, and participated in the track program, has signed to attend Western Carolina University on a football scholarship.

Against Smoky Mountain in a packed Panther Den, the FHS varsity girls played an intense, close game with the Lady Mustangs and prevailed in the end, 59-56. The win keeps the Lady Panthers two games behind Pisgah in conference at 9-2 and extends their winning streak to three. The junior varsity (JV) girls easily handled their counterparts, 52-19. On the men's side, a tight game through the first half became a one-sided affair when the varsity Panthers started hitting their shots in the second frame and won going away, 71-



Senior Josh Zoellner (#23) takes a shot against Smoky Mountain. The Panthers won 71-49.

49. The JV boys ran their unbeaten streak to 11 games with a 54-38 victory over the JV Mustangs and are now 16-2 overall and 9-2 in conference.

Last week, the Panthers visited North Henderson on Friday, Jan. 27, to play the Knights who were third in 3A Conference 54 standings at 6-3. While a tight game the entire evening, North Henderson prevailed with a 69-62 victory. However, after the Jan. 31 win against Smoky Mountain, the Panthers are now 10-1 in conference, with West Henderson at 9-1. The next game to determine first place is Feb. 3 at Hendersonville and is the final regular season game for both squads.

On the women's side, Franklin came in at 7-2 in conference play while the Lady Knights were at 3-6. The Lady Panthers were in control throughout the game, leading 28-17 at halftime and winning 53-37 to remain two games back of Pisgah in conference play. The FHS junior varsity boys won 56-47 and the girls won handily, 42-19.

#### Indoor track records

The Panthers traveled to Winston-Salem, Jan. 27-28, to participate in the Mondo Elite Track Meet hosted by JDL Fast Track. Coach Matt Harlfinger was quick to point out, "This is one of the most competitive meets in the country this weekend."

The highlight of the meet for FHS was senior Isaiah Roots winning the 500-meter (m)



At Senior Night it was announced that Ty Handley has signed on to play football at Western Carolina University following graduation.

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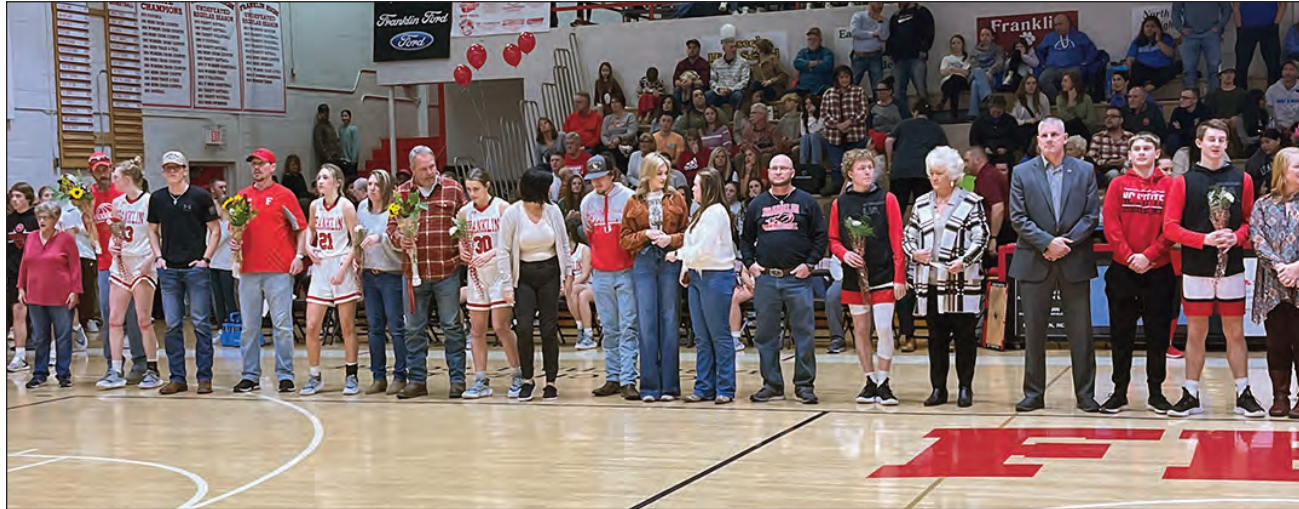
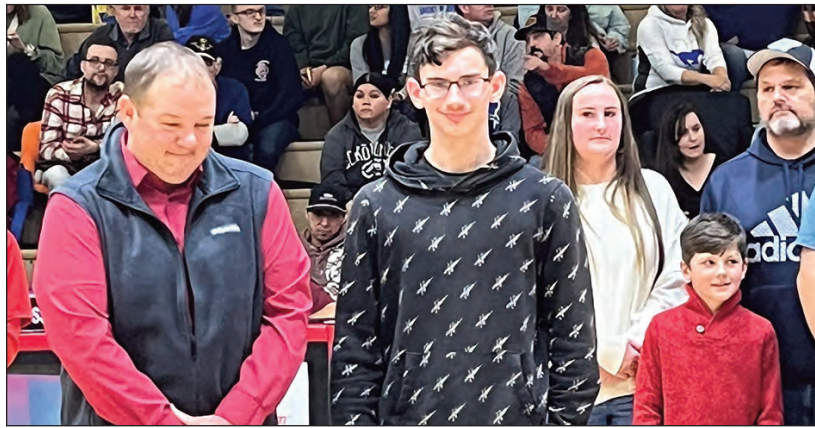
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dash, besting 85 other runners in doing so. Roots was also part of the 4X400m relay team, along with sophomore Matheson Post, and juniors Logan Russo and Elijah Cochran.

Additionally, Cochran placed third in the 300m dash (out of 75) and eighth in the 500m. Russo placed seventh in the 1000m (out of 70). On the girl's side, sophomore Laura Covarrubias placed seventh out of 70 runners in the 1000m.

"We had several personal records that will improve our standings in the state rankings," said Harlfinger.



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## The Legislative Review

Rep. Karl E. Gillespie

In this week's edition of The Legislative Review, the North Carolina General Assembly returns to Raleigh to kick off the legislative long session.

On Tuesday, Jan. 24, 2023, my colleagues and I attended a caucus to discuss the priorities of the legislative long session. On Wednesday, I spent much of the morning meeting with staff and various colleagues to discuss budget priorities and legislation of interest.

At noon, the House of Representatives convened for session to vote on the House [temporary rules to modify the list of standing committees.] The House voted on the resolution, HR16, and the bill passed by a voice vote.

The Speaker of the House announced adjusted committee chairmanships and gavels were officially handed out. I received two gavels, as I will be chairing the Environment Committee and the Appropriations, Agriculture and Natural and Economic Resources Committee.

During session, we were joined by a special guest, Rabbi



Rep. Karl E. Gillespie



N.C. House Speaker Tim Moore congratulates Rep. Karl Gillespie on his two committee chairmanships – Environment Committee and the Appropriations and the Agriculture and Natural and Economic Resources Committee.

Dovid Egert, Battalion Chaplain of the 192nd Ordnance Battalion at Fort Bragg, who made brief remarks from the Well of the House in recognition of Holocaust Remembrance Day (Jan. 27).

After session adjourned, I met with representatives from Charter/Spectrum to discuss their broadband build out plan for my district. Charter started their build in Jackson

County last year and they are working their way west. The expectation is that construction will begin in Macon later this year but the build out schedules are fluid and subject to change.

Later that evening, I attended an event with sheriffs and lawmakers to discuss public safety priorities for the legislative session.

Thursday morning I attended an event hosted by the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners. I am one of 33 former county commissioners currently serving in the General Assembly. I believe those of us who previously served as a County Commissioner are able to offer a unique perspective when discussing legislation that impacts all 100 North Carolina counties.

### Gillespie appointed to leadership position

I am greatly appreciative to my colleagues for selecting me as Deputy Majority Whip. It is an honor to have their confidence. I will continue to advocate on behalf of my district and I look forward to working with my colleagues in both the House and the Senate to ensure we help keep North Carolina on the right path.

### Food Distribution Assistance Program

The pre-application process for the Golden LEAF Food Distribution Assistance Program is now open. This program is funded by an appropriation from the N.C. General Assembly. Please help spread the word about this opportunity to nonprofit organizations.

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## Letters to the Editor

### Area volunteers helping children around the world

I am writing to thank Franklin area residents for sharing the true meaning of Christmas with children in need this past holiday season.

Thoroughly throughout contributed to a successful shoebox gift collection season at drop-off locations for the Samaritan's Purse project Operation Christmas Child. Across the U.S., the project collected over 9.3 million shoebox gifts in 2022. Combined with those collected from partnering countries in 2022, the ministry is now sending nearly 10.6 million shoebox gifts to children worldwide.

Through shoeboxes — packed with fun toys, school supplies, and hygiene items — Franklin area volunteers brought joy to children in need around the world. Each gift-filled shoebox is a tangible expression of God's love, and it is often the first gift these children have ever received. Through the continued generosity of donors since 1993, Operation Christmas Child has collected and delivered more than 209 million gift-filled shoeboxes to children in more than 170 countries and territories. This year, Samaritan's Purse delivered its milestone 200 millionth shoebox, which was packed on a country-wide tour and then hand-delivered to a young girl in Ukraine.

Across North Carolina, shoebox packers often shop for deals on shoebox items throughout the year, and many serve at a deeper level by becoming a year-round volunteer. Information about ways area participants can get involved year-round can also be found at [samaritanaspurse.org/occ](http://samaritanaspurse.org/occ) or by calling 704-583-1463.

Although local drop-off locations for gifts are closed until Nov. 13-20, 2023, anyone can still be a part of this life-changing project by conveniently packing a shoebox gift online in just a few simple clicks at [samaritanaspurse.org/buildonline](http://samaritanaspurse.org/buildonline).

These simple gifts, packed with love, send a message to children worldwide that they are loved and not forgotten.

Casey Goodwin, Samaritan's Purse – Boone, 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.*

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## What's new on the plateau

**Patrick Taylor**  
Highlands Mayor

We went to St. Simons Island this past weekend. When I visit other communities, I'm always looking for new ideas and how other towns address common municipal problems. As I have mused in the past, communities on the Golden Isle of Georgia have much in common with Highlands. These coastal towns, like St. Simons, are surrounded by a unique ecological environment of the vast marshlands and tidal estuaries. To Georgia's credit, they have worked to preserve these unique spaces while promoting tourism and development. Highlands, located on this high and narrow plateau, has faced the similar challenges.

Like so many visitors Sallie and I love to come to the Georgia coast to see and partake in its natural beauty and wildlife. The folks of coastal Georgia are keenly aware that marshlands cannot be lost to overdevelopment. Such development would jeopardize the fishing and shrimp industry as well as impact tourism.

On the Highlands Plateau, we also enjoy a unique ecological space. There are plant and animal species here that are not found in other places. We can't afford to compromise this natural realm for over-development and short-term financial gain, by a few. If we destroy what we have, it does not come back. We could face paraphrasing Milton, a paradise lost.

So, Sallie and I were having lunch at a nice restaurant in St. Simons. While waiting for our orders, I noticed a brochure on the table. It was called Pennies for Preservation. I read it with interest.

Pennies for Preservation is a program that the St. Simons Land Trust developed in 2017. The brochure clearly stated that 25 cents would be added to our bill. That quarter would go to the St. Simons Land Trust for preserving valuable land on the island. This program involving participating restaurants is not mandatory. Any customer can request the 25 cents to be removed from their bill. It is a voluntary program that needs no ordinances or state-enabling legislation.

I suspect the restaurants don't encounter too many cheapskate ne'er do wells that protest the extra 25 cents. It is too little of a cost, preserving such a critical environment, to make a complaint, I should think.

Here is my idea: Folks in Highlands could implement such a preservation program. With the influx of tourists and visitors who frequent our restaurants, a modest program of 25 cents on every bill could impact preservation and conservation efforts on the plateau. A 50-cent or dollar contribution might even be more in line with dining costs in Highlands.

The funds from this voluntary program could be directed toward the Highlands Land Trust or the Highlands Biological Station. The Highlands Land Trust could apply the funds toward acquiring additional property or for maintaining the property that they currently hold in trust.

The Highlands Biological Station and its foundation could use the funds to support research efforts on the Highlands Plateau. There may be other applications for the funds that I am not currently aware of or considered.

I am making this proposal for the preservation of the Highlands Plateau environment. What intrigues me about such a program is that it would be community driven and not mandated by any government agency. Let's give it a thought and let me know what you think.



Patrick Taylor

## Judy Moore Scholarship celebrates 25 years

The Judy Moore Memorial Scholarship, established to honor a health care professional devoted to nursing in southwestern North Carolina, is marking 25 years and over \$25,000 in awards to students from Macon County pursuing a nursing education.

The scholarship was established in November 1997 by Moore's fellow nurses, patients and community leaders. Moore's life demonstrated her twin priorities of pursuing an education and caring for people.

Cathy Poteet, Moore's daughter and a nurse at Emory Healthcare in Atlanta, said her mother was compassionate, selfless and hard-working.

"We couldn't just run to the store quickly," said Poteet, because her mother's former patients would often stop her to tell her how much they appreciated her care.

With her degree from Crawford Long Hospital School of Nursing, Moore was the adult health program coordinator at the Macon County Public Health Center. She oversaw tuberculosis control, the Macon County Breast Cancer/Cervical Cancer Control Program, and provided adult health screening physicals at the health department and at the community action program for disabled adults.

Moore also served as a weekend supervisor at Britthaven of Franklin (now Macon Valley) long-term care facility and, in 1996, earned a degree as an obstetrics-gynecology nurse practitioner from Emory University. She died unexpectedly that year at the age of 57.

"When the accident occurred and took Judy from us, it was such a sudden and unexpected loss," said scholarship administrator and former colleague Ann Hyder. "The staff of the Public Health Center rallied to do something to keep her memory alive."

The Judy Moore Memorial Scholarship Endowment was established to provide scholarships to students studying nursing, with a preference for students who are residents of or employees in Macon County. Applicants are judged on scholastic and leadership ability and demonstrated financial need.

"I am proud to have served nursing students over the years in memory of Judy through this scholarship," said Kimi Walker, Scholarship Committee Chair and former recipient, "Receiving this award helped me so much with the financial burden of attending classes, driving to clinical and purchasing all the required books. Everything is quite expensive and even now I can remember the blessing it was to have this



A scholarship established in memory of Judy Moore marks 25 years of providing awards for students pursuing a nursing education.

scholarship."

To make a donation or apply to the Judy Moore Memorial Scholarship Endowment, visit [nccommunityfoundation.org/JudyMoore](http://nccommunityfoundation.org/JudyMoore).

### About the North Carolina Community Foundation

The North Carolina Community Foundation (NCCF) is the single statewide community foundation serving North Carolina and has administered more than \$243 million in grants since its inception in 1988. With more than \$440 million in assets, NCCF sustains more than 1,200 endowments established to provide long-term support of a broad range of community needs, nonprofit organizations, institutions and scholarships.

NCCF partners with a network of affiliate foundations to provide local resource allocation and community assistance across the state. An important component of NCCF's mission is to ensure that rural philanthropy has a voice at local, regional and national levels. For more information, visit [nccommunityfoundation.org](http://nccommunityfoundation.org).

## Applications open for SEANC Scholarship, deadline April 15

The State Employees Association of North Carolina will once again offer state and district scholarships for the 2023-2024 academic year. Applicants must be active members of SEANC, or the spouse, children, or grandchildren of active members. Scholarships also will be awarded by SEANC District 1, which includes Cherokee, Clay, Graham, Swain, Jackson and Macon counties. All applications are eligible for statewide and district scholarships. Categories are 1) Financial Need; 2) Merit, which excludes financial need; 3) SEANC Member Only; 4) Retiree Grandchild/Financial Need and 5) Retiree Grandchild/Merit.

Applicants must be enrolled at or have applied to a recognized and accredited post secondary school, college, university, trade school or other institution of higher learning. Last year more than \$133,000 was awarded to students from across the state.

Information may be obtained by going online at [www.seanc.org/membership/scholarships](http://www.seanc.org/membership/scholarships) or by contacting Jim Pressley, District 1, Scholarship Chairman by email at [jkp28723@gmail.com](mailto:jkp28723@gmail.com)

All applications must be postmarked by April 15, 2021, and sent to: ATT: Jim Pressley, SEANC Scholarship, 12 Pressley Creek Road, Cullowhee, NC 28723.

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# Pastor retiring and leaving ‘big shoes to fill’

Deena C. Bouknight – Contributing Writer

First Presbyterian Church in Franklin’s pastor, Tempe Fussell, is retiring this month, after a career that spans more than four decades.

“She is leaving big shoes to fill,” said Barry Clinton, who was on the nominating committee that brought Fussell to Franklin more than seven years ago, and whose wife, Patsy, is on the church’s current nominating-forming committee that will begin to seek another pastor for the PC (USA) denomination church.

Fussell, whose husband, Curtis, retired from pastoring First Presbyterian Church in Highlands a few months ago, said she never intended to be a pastor. She sought a law degree and planned to become a legal aid attorney, but seminary classes at the University of Louisville and ultimately a seminary degree, set her on a different path. Plus, her father was a Presbyterian minister in Virginia, where Fussell spent her teenage years, so the position fit her.

“I just fell in love with theology,” she said, explaining that she finished her seminary degree at New College in Edinburgh, Scotland.

She was officially ordained as a pastor in 1981 and has pastored churches in Virginia, New Jersey, and North Carolina – always smaller churches, such as the under-100-membership church in Franklin.

“It’s been important to me to be able to reach out to people in need, work with local nonprofits, and work alongside other pastors in the area,” she said. “That’s what Christianity is about. We’ve got some big-hearted pastors here, and these people [in Franklin] have been like family. Mission and service are important to what this church is about.”

She said she has been impressed with the level of commitment and service provided by such local nonprofits as No Wrong Door and New Beginnings.

Griff Morgan and his wife, Cecilia, who have been attending First Presbyterian for 12 years, can vouch for Fussell’s pastoring abilities.

“She’s talented in every aspect of ministry,” said Morgan, “full of enthusiasm for everything and everyone. We have a lot of older folks and she’s been great about visiting them. And



Tempe Fussell, who has been the pastor of First Presbyterian Church in Franklin for the past seven years, is retiring this month.

she likes to be inclusive.”

In fact, a multi-colored sign erected in front of First Presbyterian Church currently reads: “Love your Neighbor who doesn’t look like you, love like you, speak like you, pray like you, vote like you. Everyone is welcome.” Commented Fussell, “Our door is open to whoever you are and wherever you are in your journey of faith.”

Added Clinton, “She wouldn’t close the door to anyone; she is accepting of everyone no matter their political affiliation, sexual orientation, and race. She weaves that message into her service. That makes her a very special person – what sets her apart in a big way is her pastoral care.”

“My heart has broken over people who have struggled, especially addicts,” said Fussell, pointing out that she plans to maintain connections with people in Macon County, even after she and her husband retire in Clyde, N.C.

A highlight of Fussell’s pastoral service in Franklin has been serving Thanksgiving Day meals, alongside other church volunteers, to at least 600 people annually. “People give up their own Thanksgiving days to help with that event. And, even though it’s been a drive-up event these past three years because of the pandemic, the goal is to bring it back inside.”

She indicated she has also been proud to have a long career as a woman pastor, even though there have been times of push-back due to biblical scriptures indicating only men should pastor churches.

“As long as you care about people, it shouldn’t matter what you believe,” she said. “I’ve never had trouble finding a church to pastor.”

Fussell, the mother of four grown children who live in four different states, admitted that she will miss preaching, but said she will continue writing and will stay involved in nonprofit work.

Clinton added that when he was on the nominating committee to hire a new pastor seven years ago, he learned from someone who knew Fussell, “If you get Tempe, you have scored a touchdown.”

“She’s extremely literate in theology and open minded in her teachings; her delivery is fantastic. The bar is raised so high, we don’t know if anyone else can meet it,” said Clinton.



A multi-colored sign erected in front of First Presbyterian Church reads: “Love your Neighbor who doesn’t look like you, think like you, love like you, speak like you, pray like you, vote like you. Everyone is welcome.”



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### CARS

YEAR	MAKE	MODEL	MILES
2021	Chevrolet	Corvette	5,792
2021	Kia	Optima EX	20,010
2020	Chevrolet	Camaro	25,641
2019	Chevrolet	Camaro	40,428
2019	Subaru	Outback	56,801
2019	Volkswagen	Beetle	42,676
2018	Chevrolet	Equinox	53,520
2018	Chevrolet	Cruze	34,692
2018	Hyundia	Elantra	51,067
2017	Dodge	Journey	110,982
2017	GMC	Acadia	80,692
2017	Honda	Fit	59,209
2016	Ford	Focus	68,653
2015	Ford	Flex	99,016
2013	VW	Beetle Convertible	67,099

### SUVS

YEAR	MAKE	MODEL	MILES
2023	Chevrolet	Tahoe	257
2022	Jeep	Wrangler Sahara Unlimited	10,539
2021	Chevrolet	Express 2500 Van	39,022
2021	Ford	Bronco Badlands AWD	1,237
2021	GMC	Yukon XL	53,356

2021	Jeep	Wrangler Sport	8,094
2021	Chevrolet	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	Trax AWD	16,288
2019	Honda	Pilot EX	40,801
2018	Chevrolet	Equinox LT	23,569
2018	Jeep	Compass 4x4	61,613
2018	Jeep	Renegade 4x4	79,635
2018	Mitsubishi	Outlander	44,985
2018	Nissan	Murano	53,903
2017	Hyundia	Sante Fe	97,104
2017	Nissan	Rogue SV	58,866
2016	Dodge	Grand Caravan	76,458
2016	KIA	Sorento LX	112,933
2016	Toyota	Sequoia	96,869
2015	Suburban	LT	92,352
2013	Chevrolet	Tahoe LTZ	113,464

### TRUCKS

YEAR	MAKE	MODEL	MILES
2022	Chevrolet	2500 LTZ	4,635

2022	Chevrolet	2500 HD	5,114
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	23,858
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
2019	Ford	F-150 Lariat	48,630
2018	Chevrolet	1500	77,642



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# ROBERT BURNS NIGHT

The Taste of Scotland Society presented its annual Burns Night last Saturday in Tartan Hall of the First Presbyterian Church. With Bob McColium as Master of Ceremonies, the event followed the traditional program which included Piping in the Clans, Presentation and Toast to the Haggis, poetry recitations by local high school students, a bit of Scottish dancing and an authentic Scottish meal. Festivities concluded by singing "Auld Lang Syne" taken from a Robert Burns poem.

Photos by Ellen Randall





**COMMUNITY CALENDAR**

**Manna Food Bank is now at Bethel United Methodist Church.** To reserve a food box, call (828)634-1116 and leave a message with the following information: your first name and last initial; phone number to confirm pick-up time; number of people in your family; if there are allergies in the family; and any specialty items you might need, like diapers, etc. Pick up is at Bethel UMC, 81 Bethel Church Road, off Highlands Road.

**NC Works at the Macon County Public Library** will be held on Friday, Feb. 3, 2 to 4 p.m. Work one on one with an NC Works Career Advisor on your resume, interview prep, job search assistance and more. For more information, call NC Works at (828)332-6060.

**Heartland Band Old Time Gospel Singing** will be held on Friday, Feb. 3, 6 to 8 p.m., at West Franklin Church, located on Sloan Rd., next to the Forest Service Office. All are welcome.

**Free Musical Entertainment at Frog Quarters** Saturday, Feb. 4, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Rey Phillip, local singer/songwriter is the featured musician. Frog Quarters is located at 573 E. Main St.

**Franklin Garden Club Meeting** will be held on Monday, Feb. 6, 11:30 a.m., at Fat Buddies of Franklin. New members welcome and volunteer opportunities will be upcoming to help maintain the downtown gardens. For more information or to RSVP, call Debra, at (828)342-6543. Volunteers can email Shelley at Parkerfillion@gmail.com.

**Trout Unlimited Sylva** will meet on Tuesday, Feb. 7, 6:30 to 8 p.m., at the United Methodist Church in Sylva in the Fellowship Hall. A hot meal will be provided by volunteers. On the agenda are club plans for the 2023 season such as outings, clean-ups and projects, along with raffles and lots of fishy talk. Everyone is welcome; you do not need to be a member.

**Share the Journey Support Group for Caregivers** whose loved ones are experiencing memory loss will meet on Wednesday, Feb. 8, and 22, 2 p.m., at First Presbyterian Church, 26 Church St. Enter the church from the parking lot, come through the double red doors in the courtyard and follow the signs. For more information, call (828)524-3119.

**An American Red Cross Blood Drive** will be held Thursday, Feb. 9, 12:30 to 5 p.m., at First Baptist Church Franklin, 69 Iotla Street, Franklin. All who come to give in February will get a \$10 Amazon.com Gift Card by email and will also automatically be entered to win a trip for two to Clearwater Beach, Fla. Details are available at RedCrossBlood.org/heart. Book an appointment to give blood or platelets by visiting RedCrossBlood.org, downloading the Red Cross Blood Donor App, or calling 1-800-RED CROSS.

**Murphy Art Center Valentine Cork Wreath** will be held on Saturday, Feb. 11, 1:30 to 2:30 p.m. Make a cork wreath valentine. This is a MAC-ey Mouse Art Club Class, suitable for kids, ages 10 to 15. Students will make a cork wreath heart for hanging. Register at the center or by calling, (828)360-3038. For more information, call Dian McKelvey, 404-580-5740, dbmckelvey@gmail.com

**Macon Early College (MEC)** is accepting student enrollment applications for the 2023-24 school year. MEC serves grades ninth through 13 and is fully integrated into the Southwestern Community College system. Students have the opportunity to graduate in four or five years with a high school diploma and a two-year Associate's degree with transferable credits to a four-year university. Applications are available at mec.macon.k12.nc.us under the Parent Information tab. The deadline to submit an application for rising 9th graders is Feb. 17, 2023, and for rising 10th and 11th grade students the deadline is March 17, 2023. For more information, call the school at (828)524-2002.

**Girl Scout Daisy and Brownie Volunteers** needed for Troop 2996 in Franklin. This is a great opportunity to help 5 to 8 year olds learn and grow. For more information, call Diane Peltz at (828)371-2823 or email dianepeltz1953@gmail.com.

**Gem & Mineral Museum**, located in the Old Jail on Phillips Street in downtown Franklin is open Friday and Saturday from 12 to 4 p.m.,

featuring gems and artifacts from North Carolina as well as all over the world.

**Macon Chips, Franklin's Wood Carving Club** meets on Tuesdays, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Macon County Public Library and on Thursdays, 6:30 to 8 p.m. at the Franklin High School Wood Shop just off McCollum Drive. Anyone interested is encouraged to attend. Anyone under 18 years of age must be accompanied by an adult. For more information, call (828)342-8126.

**Uptown Gallery Children and Adult Art Classes and Workshops** in acrylic, watercolor, acrylic paint pouring, encaustic, precious metal clay and glass fusing. Free painting in the classroom Thursdays, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. All skill levels and mediums are welcome. Participants are responsible for their own project and a bag lunch. Membership meeting second Sunday of the month at 3 p.m. The gallery is located at 30 E. Main St. in Franklin. For more information, call (828)349-4607.

**A.A. Meetings Franklin Alcoholics Anonymous "Open Meetings"** are for anyone who thinks they may have a drinking problem or is interested in the A.A. recovery program. In person meetings with Covid 19 preventive measures are held on Tuesday, 5:30 p.m., at No Wrong Door, 102 Thomas Heights Rd., Sunday, 1 p.m., Monday, Wednesday and Friday 5:30 p.m. at the First United Methodist Church Outreach Center, 66 Harrison Ave., Monday, noon, Tuesday, 8 a.m. and Thursday, noon at St. Agnes Episcopal Church on 66 Church St., and Wednesday, 7 p.m., at St. Cyprians Episcopal Church, 216 Roller Mill Rd. On Line Meeting information is available by visiting www.aawnc80.org. or to speak with a member of A.A. call (828)349-4357.

**Dorothy and John Crawford Senior Center** is now offering limited in-person classes at the Robert Carpenter Community Building. A variety of exercise classes and a writing group are offered in the afternoons for adults over 50. For more information, call (828)349-2058.

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

**Friends of the Greenway FROG Quarters** is open Wednesday to Saturday, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., at 573 E. Main. Free internet. Reservations taken for the shelters.

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

**CHURCH HAPPENINGS**

**Spiritual Light Center** on Sunday, Feb. 5, at 11 a.m., guest speaker Forest Rivers, local writer, spoken-word artist and teacher, regards the Earth as sacred and believes all paths to God lead to the same place: Oneness. Yoga with Ashley is every Monday at 6 p.m., on Thursdays, a movie is shown at 3 p.m. and then out to eat afterward. The center is located at 80 Heritage Hollow Dr., behind the Gazebo Restaurant. For more information or to stream services go to SpiritualLightCenter.com.

**Resurrection Lutheran Church** (LCMS) invites you to worship with them in the Sanctuary beginning at 10:30 a.m., followed by fellowship with light refreshments in the fellowship hall. Adult Bible class begins at 9:15 a.m. The church is located at 38 Wayah Street, Franklin

**Watch Party with Free Chapel Church and Pastor Jentzen Franklin** on Sunday, 11 a.m., 22 W. Palmer St. For more information, call (828)421-6712.

**Son Rise International Ministries Christian Fellowship Services** are held on Friday evenings at 7 p.m.; Wednesday ladies prayer and Bible Study from 1 to 3 p.m. Mens Bible Study Thursday at 7 p.m. The church is located at 462 Depot St. For more information, call (828)369-2465.

**First Pentecost Church Sunday Services** are Sunday School 9:30 a.m., Worship 10:30 a.m., Bible study Thursday, 7 p.m., 164 Iotla Church Rd., The Pastor is Luke Bateman.

**Mountain Synagogue in Franklin** conducts services the first Friday and third Saturday of each month. For information, visit the website at mountainsynagoguewnc.com, email us at mountainsynagogue@gmail.com, or call (828)634-1312.

**Memorial United Methodist Church** Worship Services in person and on Facebook at 11 a.m. every Sunday. They have communion the first Sunday of each month. The church is located at 4668 Old Murphy Rd. (across from Loafers Glory). The pastor is Evan W. Hill. For more information, call (828)369-5834.

**Franklin First United Methodist Church Sunday** In-person Worship is held at 10 a.m. or on Facebook at Franklin First United Methodist Church, either live or later on recorded video. The church is located at 66 Harrison Avenue in downtown Franklin; senior pastor is Rev. David Beam. For more information, call (828)524-3010 or visit us at http://www.firstumcfranklin.org

**Prentiss Church of God** is holding Sunday worship service in its sanctuary beginning at 10:30 a.m., and streamed online on the Prentiss Church of God Facebook page. Prayer and Worship service is the first Wednesday of the month at 7 p.m. Sunday School relaunch in March. Sign up for Connect Groups at prentisschurch.com. The church is located at 59 Church Hill Lane, off Addington Bridge Road. Phone: (828)369-3885.

**SUDOKU ANSWERS FOR PG. 22**

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

**CROSSWORD PUZZLE ANSWERS FOR PG. 22**

T	E	D	S	Y	E	S	W	R	I	T	S	C	O	C	O	A	W	A	I	T	R	O	T	A	I	R	T	I	M	E	L	A	N	P	L	E	A	G	U	S	S	E	T	B	R	O	P	U	P	P	I	S	S	E	M	I	S	O	C	A	R	E	G	G	A	E	L	I	A	R	P	O	C	K	E	T	R	I	H	A	N	N	A	D	A	D	U	L	E	O	V	A	L	E	S	T	A	T	E	F	A	R	M	I	N	S	T	P	I	E	R	E	F	Y	U	R	S	A	R	I	F	E	U	L	C	E	R	G	I	L	D	S	W	A	B	R	A	H	R	A	H
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# Artist reuses discarded paints and materials to create new works

Deena C. Bouknight – Contributing Writer

Every wall in William Gordon’s home is covered with his art – as well as art he has “saved” from the landfill. Drawing Disney characters since age 6 with plans to enroll in Disney’s animation school after graduation, the Vietnam draft changed his course. Gordon has painted hundreds and possibly thousands of scenes during his lifetime. However, since moving to Franklin in 2018 and working part-time at a local recycling facility, he has salvaged and restored dozens of discarded artworks, has repainted on used canvases, and has re-purposed materials for frames.

“My mother painted in watercolors ... thousands of works,” said Gordon, “so that must be how I acquired my talent. I am completely self-taught ... never took a class. And I just paint what moves me. Mostly the paintings are landscapes, but I like to paint other scenes as well.”

And, he likes color. His landscapes are replete with saturated jewel tones of reds, greens, blues, and yellows. And, having hailed from Nevada and then Colorado, go-to themes are of Western spots – pueblos, the White House ruins in New Mexico, a Colorado River scene, and much more. Western North Carolina’s forests and mountain peaks have most recently inspired Gordon as well. A January winter day found him painting a stream surrounded by towering evergreens.

Gordon prefers to paint with acrylic, and most of his paints are also rescued from becoming landfill fodder.

“People pass away and their families often don’t know what to do with their stuff, so they just decide to throw it away. I’ve kept whole collections of acrylics from being thrown away.”

Painting in acrylic allows Gordon to work at “mastering light and dark. You can go heavy with acrylic paint or take it light, to almost a watercolor state.”

Motivation to paint comes in “spurts,” admits Gordon, whose career was in the stone industry.

“I sold many of my paintings at auction before I left Colorado, but I really took a hit in that they did not sell for what they should have, so I didn’t paint for many years. I went through a spell of ‘What’s the point?’ But then when I started painting again, I painted 33 paintings in one month. I’ll paint when I see a scene or image or photograph that interests me; I’ve painted things from memory – like helicopters in Vietnam.”

He is also a historian and a researcher. Gordon will learn about a cast-off painting by researching the artist and by studying the age and style of the canvas or frame.

“I learned that one pointillist painting was by an artist in Florida who was very prolific during the 1940s. It’s a gorgeous painting, and it needed the colors restored, so I worked on it.”

He has also determined the value of some rejected paintings. But he is reluctant to part with any of them, choosing instead to enjoy being surrounded by them. He even acquired through a series of fortunate circumstances a few Red Skelton paintings. Though Skelton, who died in 1997, was known

as a television and radio entertainer, he was also an artist. Gordon pointed out Skelton’s signature on the paintings, added simply as “Red.”

“I can’t identify a favorite painting that I have saved or that I have painted,” said Gordon. “I like them all. And I just get lost in the process when I’m painting. There is freedom in painting ... stress relief. I come out of the time that I’m painting and I’m really a happy guy.”

Anyone interested in meeting with Gordon about his art can email him via his wife, Beverly: [beverleygo@gmail.com](mailto:beverleygo@gmail.com).



William Gordon, a self-taught artist who mostly reuses discarded canvases and paints, is surrounded by his work on the walls of his Franklin home.



William Gordon painted the helicopter scene from a memory he had of serving in the Vietnam War.



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# Marina Tkach tackles large-scale mural

Deena C. Bouknight – Contributing Writer

Already known in Franklin for her colorful, whimsical murals at 828 Café and Altered Frequencies, artist Marina Tkach's latest project is about a 10-foot by 15-foot wall in the lobby of Discover Church. Her cheerful, signature style conveys a floral, mountainous landscape to brighten the large lobby, located near the new Angel Medical Center in the Macon Center complex.

"We've always loved Marina's artwork and what she's done with 828 Café ... how she matched their culture and the outdoor vibe of our town," said Discover Church's pastor Ben Windle. He said the mural project came about because "someone from Discover, who knew we admired her work, saw that Marina put a mural for the value of \$500 in a silent auction at REACH's Mardi Gras fundraiser event last year. They won the mural in the silent auction and donated it to the church."

Tkach is an academically trained graphic artist and designer. For many months Tkach pondered over the image she would paint at Discover. But first, she explained, "I asked [leadership at Discover] what message the mural should bring ... or if they have something in mind. Most murals I do are local nature themes. After brainstorming and researching I came up with an idea and hope it will work."

"Our hope was to capture the culture of our church, which we feel is a deep love for our town and the vibrant landscape of our area [such as] mountains and sunsets," added Windle. "Her concept is a bright mountain scape with lots of sunset pastels, green scapes that appear in a stained glass-like layout, with the town in the center as almost a jewel. She'll finish with the words 'I Love My Town.'"

Working on a mural requires Tkach to sometimes draw and then paint on a 10-foot ladder. Ladies leaving Discover's weekly Wednesday morning Bible study saw Tkach working recently and said they prayed for her safety, since she was so high up on the ladder.

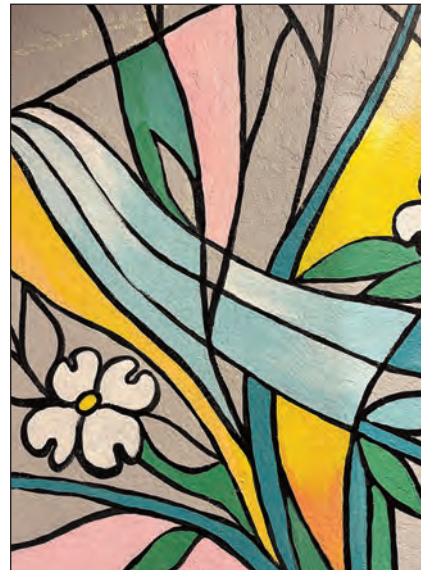
"I do a grid on a little sketch and on the wall to position big elements, and then I freehand afterwards," said Tkach about the process. "I have to be patient while I'm working and trust the [artistic] process."

"Marina is an absolute pleasure to work with," said Windle, who expects the mural to be completed by early spring, at the latest.

"I enjoy making people smile ... seeing them enjoying art," said Tkach, whose smaller sketches and paintings are displayed framed at 828 Café.



Local artist Marina Tkach is currently at work on an I Love My Town mural in the lobby at Discover Church. Tkach begins with a grid on a little sketch, then on the wall for the big elements and freehands the rest.



Artist Marina Tkach's whimsical, playful style is evident in her smaller drawings and paintings - as well as in her mural work - and often features animals and nature.

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## Work of EmPOWERing Mountain Food Systems continues with help of three new funding sources

Since 2019, EmPOWERing Mountain Food Systems (EMFS) has brought together producers, food businesses, schools, and regional partners to increase business opportunities for food and farm businesses and support the expansion of the food supply chain in Southwestern North Carolina. EMFS programs focus on Jackson, Macon, Haywood, Swain, Cherokee, Clay, and Graham counties, and the Qualla boundary.

An initiative of the Center for Environmental Farming Systems (CEFS), EMFS is pleased to announce three new sources of funding to continue this work. The Local Food Procurement Assistance Program, a nationwide grant funding program from the USDA is supporting the continuation of the Harvest Health produce prescription program to deliver up to 75 boxes of produce and value-added products for the next two years. EMFS is collaborating with the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services and Carolina Farm Stewardship Association to continue this program with Vecinos, supplying Latinx families with fresh local produce for the next two years. EMFS will continue to collaborate with WNC Farm to Table to source Harvest Health's local produce and deliver the boxes.

Additionally, \$205,350 from the Dogwood Health Trust will allow EMFS to continue to provide health education and cooking classes along with each box of food delivered in the Harvest Health program. This combination of services is a unique model for other food systems initiatives in the state. The original Harvest Health program, launched by Regional Area Specialized Agent Jessica Mrugala with support from MountainWise, Western Carolina University, and Vecinos, has inspired a similar project to begin in Swain County in partnership with Darnell Farms.

EMFS partner Community Food Strategies, another ini-



**EMFS is committed to working with multigenerational farms as they have with the Worly's the past four years. Pictured is Joe Worly with grandson Massey.**

tiative of CEFS, has also been awarded a USDA grant to support food council work in the seven-county region and the Qualla Boundary as well as in the Piedmont Triad Region. This support will build on EMFS programming with each regional county and the Eastern Band to assess food council ideas and strategically plan for growth and effective programming. This funding will continue for the next two to three years.

Finally, regional county Extension directors recently met to discuss a new round of Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) funding to replicate and expand EMFS programming undertaken during the past four years. Along with Project Director, Laura Lauffer, Dr. Michelle Shroeder-Moreno, director of CEFS and Becky Bowen from Community Development, NC State Extension will be helping to facilitate this conversation and plan to submit a new proposal in April 2023. We will be reaching out to farmers and food businesses in the region assessing entrepreneurial and supply chain focus areas to continue to grow a regionally robust supply chain.

The Center for Environmental Farming Systems is a partnership of North Carolina State University, NC Agricultural and Technical State University and the NC Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. CEFS develops and promotes just and equitable food and farming systems that conserve natural resources, strengthen communities, improve health outcomes, and provide economic opportunities in North Carolina and beyond. For more information, visit [www.cefs.ncsu.edu](http://www.cefs.ncsu.edu).



**An example of agritourism, Jehovah Raah Farm in Clyde raises fiber animals – alpacas, Shetland sheep, Angora goats and more – and teaches classes on how to spin fiber into yarn on spinning wheels.**



### Mary Jo Masullo Adams

Mary Jo Masullo Adams (nee Preast) 75, passed suddenly and unexpectedly Sunday, Jan. 22, 2023. She was born in Miami, Fla., to John Edward Preast and Pauline Yambor of Johnstown, Pa., as number five of eight children.

She loved children, helping people, flying airplanes (although some of her family may not have known), and she was a great cook. She had also recently grown to love these mountains since Ray had wished to retire here four years ago (which started with camping here as a child 50-60 years ago). She loved decorating for the holidays. She talked to almost everybody she saw, so perhaps you may have encountered her.

She is survived by her husband of 10 years, Ray; sister, Pat (brother-in-law, Brian); three children, John, Christie, Lara (son-in-law, Shane); eight grandchildren, Aidan, Talia, Logan, Gavin, Portia, Olivia, Vincenzo, Giovanni; nephew, Anthony; and grand nephew, Arthur.

A funeral service will be held Saturday, Feb. 4, at 2 p.m., in the Chapel of Bryant-Grant Funeral Home. The family will receive friends from 1- to 2 p.m., prior to the service at the funeral home. Burial will be private.

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

Bryant-Grant Funeral Home is serving the family.



**Mary Jo Masullo Adams**

### Vincent Barrett (Barry) Jones

Vincent Barrett (Barry) Jones, 83, of Highlands, N.C., passed away Wednesday, Jan. 18, 2023.

He was born in Jackson, Ga., to the late Vincent S. and Sue Pope Jones. In his youth he was most proud to be a member of his local Boy Scout Troup and achieved the ranking of Eagle Scout before going on to Emory at Oxford Prep School, then graduated from Emory University in Atlanta.

His career included advertising and film making for PBS. A documentary on Grandfather Mountain brought him to the Georgia/North Carolina mountains. He moved on to Tiger, Ga., then Highlands. He and his wife Paula started a rustic woodworking business, Tiger Mountain Woodworks in 1989, then The Summer House, a home furnishing center in Highlands.

Left to cherish his memory is his devoted wife, Paula Jones; brother, Alan Jones of Jackson, Ga.; stepson, James Christian (Mary); step-daughter, Michelle Hardy (Chris); three grandchildren; and Barry's loving puppy, Oliver.

A Celebration of Life will be held in the spring at Barry and Paula's home, Frog Pond Farm in Highlands at a later date.

Memorials may be made to the Highlands Land Trust, Highlands Community Child Development Center, The Bascom Fine Arts Center, Highlands.

Bryant-Grant Funeral Home is serving the Jones family.

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



**Vincent Jones**





# Deaths & Funerals

## James Arthur Westlund

James Arthur Westlund, 73, of Franklin, N.C., went to be with the Lord on Sunday, Jan. 29, 2023.

He was born in Daytona Beach, Fla., to the late James and Ann Westlund. He was preceded in death by his parents; brother, Mike Westlund; and one granddaughter, Baleigh Haas.

He was very family oriented and loved his family dearly.

He is survived by his wife of 52 years, Barbara; three daughters, Carrie Westlund (Gus), Jennifer Lucas (Anthony J), Michelle Fountain (Tommy); nine grandchildren; and two great grandchildren.

A celebration of life will be held Friday, Feb. 3, at 3 p.m., at Grace Baptist Church in Franklin. The family will receive friends 2 to 3 p.m., one hour prior to the service. Rev. Frank Rodriguez will officiate.

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

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.

## Daniel 'Danny' Boyd Coffeen

Daniel "Danny" Boyd Coffeen, 68, of Highlands, N.C., sadly and unexpectedly left this world Saturday, Jan. 21, 2023, at his home. He was preceded in death by his parents, Thomas Lund Coffeen and Bettye Jane Coffeen, of Highlands.

He was a Navy veteran who loved the outdoors and spending time with his family. In his later years, he enjoyed a quiet retirement in the mountains, dotting on his grandchildren, taking hikes with his sisters, or watching games and talking sports with his sons.

He leaves behind two sons, Jesse Coffeen and Lee Coffeen; three grandchildren, Ben Sullivan, Eliza Mae Coffeen, and Beatrice Avery Coffeen; two loving sisters, Debra Coffeen and Diane Sackman; nieces, Britany and Allie Sackman, Ashlie Mitchell; and nephews, Adam Sackman and Robbie Wilson.

As per his request, no funeral or memorial service will be held. His ashes will be spread privately by family at his favorite beach and fishing spot.

Bryant-Grant Funeral Home is serving the family.



James Arthur Westlund



Daniel Boyd Coffeen

## Mary Leola Talley

Mary Leola Talley, 83, of Franklin, N.C., passed away Sunday, Jan. 29, 2023.

She was born July 31, 1939 in Macon County to the late Fred and Bertie Holland Dills. She worked in nursing and was a CNA. She volunteered at the Highlands Emergency Council and was on the Board of Directors. She loved working in her garden and loved all her family and friends. She was a member of Buck Creek Baptist Church.

She is survived by her daughter, Mary Barnes of Highlands, N.C.; son, Jeff Talley of Franklin; grandchildren, Nicole Barnes, Jamie Barnes and Amanda Keith; great grandchildren, Sophie Keith, Emmerson Keith, Sawyer Barns and Colton Mathis; and a brother, Ronnie Dills.

In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by three husbands, Gene Munger, Howard Talley, and Freeman Rice; a sister, Martha Wilson and two brothers, Wade Dills and Willis Dills.

A graveside service will be held Friday, Feb. 3, at 2 p.m., at Buck Creek Baptist Church Cemetery, with Rev. Oliver Rice officiating. Pallbearers were Jamie Barnes, Joshua Mathis, Brad Keith, Chris Peek, Jason Jackson and Lonnie Barnes. The family will receive friends from noon to 1:15 at Bryant-Grant Funeral Home.

Bryant-Grant Funeral Home is serving the family.

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



Mary Leola Talley

## John 'Johnny' Galvan

John "Johnny" Galvan was, as he called himself, "just an Ol' Aircrew Ordie." He was a veteran of the United States Navy who served his country proudly. Even though he was a free spirit, taking orders from very few and living by his own rules, he was a person who was always available if family or friends needed anything. He lived and wanted others to live by his motto, "Just be happy."

He was a loving, caring person who doted on his dog, Katie. He was a fantastic photographer who loved driving around the country and taking photographs. Since moving to Franklin about 10 months ago, he had enjoyed sitting and watching deer and turkeys come into the yard. It was a daily pleasure for him, and he had planned to take over feeding them.

Born on July 28, 1963, he passed from this life on Jan. 28, 2023. He is survived by his children, Andrew Galvan and Kaitlin Galvan; his sister, Cherry Dalpe and husband Dave; a nephew, David Jackson; and his girlfriend, Lisa Maria Lowther.

"I was blessed to be your sister and spend the last couple of years with you. Brother, you will be missed in my heart, May you find much peace on your Spirit Journey. I love you..." - Cherry.

No public 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).



John Galvan

## Jeanne Barnes Woodard

Jeanne Barnes Woodard, 78, of Franklin, N.C., passed away Monday, Jan. 30, 2023. She was born June 26, 1944, in Jackson County, North Carolina, to the late Cliff and Edith Guest Barnes. She was a bookkeeper and was of the Baptist faith.

In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her husband, John Edward (Ed) Woodard who died in 1985.

She is survived by her daughter, Nina Gibson of Franklin; grandson, Jonathan Gibson Jr. of Franklin; and a brother, Rich Stewman.

The family will receive friends Saturday, Feb. 4, from 6 to 8 p.m., at Bryant-Grant Funeral Home.

Burial will be Taylorsville, Miss.

Bryant-Grant Funeral Home is serving the family.

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



Jeanne Barnes Woodard

## David Alan Graham

David Alan Graham, 78, of Franklin, N.C., passed away Monday, Jan. 23, 2023.

He was born in Galion, Ohio, to the late Kenneth B. and Goldie Bell Graham. He loved riding his CanAm motorcycle, feeding his wildlife, birds, and cats. He was a Mr. Fix-It, a master craftsman, and was always ready to help anybody. He loved machinery, wood working, and motorcycles. He will be remembered for his famous "dad" jokes and birthday songs.

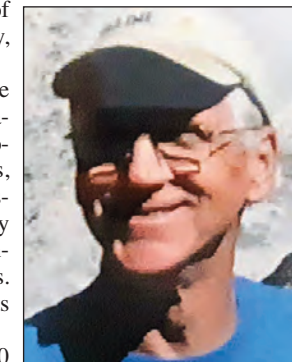
He is survived by his wife of 30 years, Kay Graham; daughter, Lori Graham (Patty); son, David Graham (Rita); brother, Fred Graham (Sarah); two stepsons, Robby Bunker (Sara), William Bunker; three nieces, Kay Klunkowski, Adrienne Kozacek, and Elizabeth Graham; and five grandchildren.

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

In lieu of flowers, memorials can be made to Appalachian Animal Rescue, P.O. Box 81, Franklin, NC, 28734.

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

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.



David Alan Graham

## Audrey Kitchen Simpson

Audrey Kitchen Simpson, 94, passed away Tuesday, Jan. 31, 2023.

She was born in Buffalo, N.Y., to the late Edward and Eleanor Batt Kitchen. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her husband, Fred Simpson.

She was formerly employed as a bookkeeper and was a faithful wife and mother. She attended First Alliance Church in Franklin.

She is survived by her children, Kathleen Shields (Andy), Diane Miller (Carter) both of Franklin, Laura Overton (Joe) of Florida and Glenn Simpson (Terry) of Leicester, N.C.; 17 grandchildren; 43 great grandchildren; and four great-great-grandchildren.

A memorial service will be held Friday, Feb. 3, at 12 noon in the Chapel of Macon Funeral Home. The family will receive friends from 11 a.m. to 12 p.m., one hour prior to the service. Rev. Carter Miller and Glenn Simpson will officiate.

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

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.



Audrey Kitchen Simpson

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# NASCAR announces drivers for historic entry at Le Mans

NASCAR Wire Service

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. – NASCAR has announced a prestigious driver lineup to pilot its Garage 56 entry in the upcoming 24 Hours of Le Mans, the 100th anniversary of the legendary race.

Seven-time NASCAR Cup Series champion Jimmie Johnson, former 24 Hours of Le Mans winner Mike Rockenfeller, and 2009 Formula One world champion Jenson Button will share the driver's seat of the Next Gen Chevrolet Camaro ZL1, which is anticipated to be approved for entry by l'Automobile Club de l'Ouest (ACO) in the coming weeks.

The Garage 56 project is a partnership between NASCAR, Hendrick Motorsports, Chevrolet and Goodyear.

“Since the beginning of the Garage 56 project, it has been our goal to partner with the top racers in the world to represent us in Le Mans,” said Jim France, NASCAR chairman and CEO. “The lineup of Jimmie, ‘Rocky’ and Jenson is everything we could have dreamed of – three elite drivers who have won at the highest levels of motorsports worldwide. As we celebrate the 75th anniversary of NASCAR, we are honored to have these world-class champions help bring the sights and sounds of a NASCAR race car to fans in Le Mans, and across the world.”

France was honored last year with the 2022 Spirit of Le Mans Award in recognition of his long-time impact in motorsports and his work securing a historic convergence agreement between IMSA and the ACO. The first chicane at Le Mans’ Mulsanne Straight is now called the “Daytona Chicane” and the chicane at Daytona International Speedway – once referred to as “The Bus Stop” – is now called the “Le Mans Chicane.”

Johnson won a record-tying seven NASCAR Cup Series championships and 83 races for Hendrick Motorsports and Chevrolet in his illustrious career. He recently became part owner of NASCAR Cup Series team LEGACY MOTOR CLUB and will race in next month’s Daytona 500. Johnson helped test the Garage 56 car at Sebring in December.

Johnson won a record-tying seven NASCAR Cup Series championships and 83 races for Hendrick Motorsports and Chevrolet in his illustrious career. He recently became part owner of NASCAR Cup Series team LEGACY MOTOR CLUB and will race in next month’s Daytona 500. Johnson helped test the Garage 56 car at Sebring in December.

“I’m super thrilled – it’s been at the top of my bucket list to compete in the 24 Hours of Le Mans someday,” Johnson said. “To have this opportunity come – and to partner with everybody and this driver lineup – is truly an incredible opportunity and one that I am thankful to be a part of.”

Rockenfeller, whose sports car accolades include winning the 2010 24 Hours of Le Mans, the 2005 24 Hours of Le Mans GT Class, the 2010 ROLEX 24 at Daytona and the 2013 German DTM championship, has served as the lead test driver for the Garage 56 project. He has driven the car at every on-track test and spent countless hours behind the wheel in the simulator.

“It has been a great journey so far with the whole team and project,” Rockenfeller said. “To be involved as a driver from day one until now was already a great honor, and to now have Jimmie and Jenson alongside me as teammates in Le Mans is unbelievable.”

Button had one of the most prolific careers in F1 history



Above, from left, president of IMSA John Doonan, Drivers Jimmie Johnson, Mike Rockenfeller, and Jenson Button speak to the media during a press conference announcing the NASCAR Garage 56 driver lineup for entry in 2023 Le Mans before the Rolex 24 at Daytona International Speedway on Jan. 28, 2023 in Daytona Beach, Fla.



Pictured at left are drivers Jimmie Johnson, Mike Rockenfeller and Jenson Button.

Photos by James Gilbert/Getty Images

## Rob Lowe named Grand Marshal of NASCAR’s Busch Light Clash at the Coliseum

LOS ANGELES (Jan. 29, 2023) – Rob Lowe only has one line to deliver on Sunday, Feb. 5, but it will be one for the record books.

NASCAR announced this week that the world-renowned actor, author and podcaster will be the Grand Marshal for the Busch Light Clash at the Coliseum. He’ll say, “Drivers, start your engines!” before the first race of NASCAR’s 75th anniversary season and set the stage for an evening to remember at the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum.

The main event begins shortly after 8 p.m., and all the action will be shown live on FOX, where Lowe currently stars in and produces the highly acclaimed “911: Lone Star.” It has been consistently one of the top-rated shows in all of television, and Season 4 premieres this month.

“This is shaping up to be another incredible event in the heart of Los Angeles,” said Ben Kennedy, NASCAR’s senior vice president for racing development and strategy. “Rob Lowe’s body of work is nothing short of remarkable, and we can’t wait for him to begin the 2023 NASCAR Cup Series season in style.”

Lowe’s presence adds to an already star-studded lineup that includes Heisman Trophy-winning quarterback Caleb Williams as Honorary Starter, performances by Cypress Hill and Wiz Khalifa, and, of course, the stars and cars of the NASCAR Cup Series. His iconic career spans four decades in film, television, and theater, making him one of the most recognizable artists on screen today.

To date, Lowe has been nominated for two Emmys, six Golden Globes, and four Screen Actors Guild awards in which he won two. He has starred in the ’80s classics “St. Elmo’s Fire,” “About Last Night,” and “The Outsiders,” as

finishing with 15 wins and 50 podiums on top of his 2009 World Championship and is widely considered one of the top British drivers of all time.

“As a lifelong racing fan, I have always dreamed of racing certain cars, with and against certain drivers and competing in certain events,” Button said. “In June, a number of those dreams will come true in one event when I get to bring NASCAR to the world stage alongside my pals Jimmie and ‘Rocky’ for the 100th anniversary of the most prestigious race in the world. I’m really looking forward to sharing this journey with NASCAR, Hendrick Motorsports, Chevrolet and Goodyear, and current and future NASCAR fans from around the world.”

All three drivers will participate in next week’s two-day test at Daytona International Speedway.

Jordan Taylor, who currently competes in the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship for Corvette Racing, will serve as the backup driver and help coach the drivers. Taylor won the 2015 24 Hours of Le Mans GTE Pro Class and has finished on the podium four times. He is a four-time IMSA champion.





Actor, author, podcaster Rob Lowe will deliver a classic line, “Drivers, start your engines!” at the opening race of the NASCAR season at the Busch Light Clash at the Coliseum, set for Sunday, Feb. 5.

well as television classics such as “The West Wing” and “Parks and Recreation.” His diverse career also includes scene-stealing work in “Behind the Candelabra,” “Austin Powers” and “Tommy Boy.” His two memoirs, “Stories I Only Tell My Friends” and “Love Life” are both New York Times Best Sellers. He took his first memoir and made it into a touring show called “Stories I Only Tell My Friends: Live!” which has received rave reviews throughout the country and sold out in London.

In 2020, Lowe launched his podcast “Literally! With Rob Lowe,” a podcast of irreverent yet thoughtful conversations with leaders in the world of business and entertainment like Oprah, Chris Pratt, Gwyneth Paltrow, Matthew McConaughey, Jennifer Aniston, Magic Johnson, and others. After a successful first year, it returned for a second season which premiered fall 2021 and a third season began summer 2022. Around the same time, Lowe launched another pod-

cast, “Parks and Recollection.” Co-hosted with showrunner Alan Yang, the podcast is a behind the scenes look at each episode of the celebrated comedy classic “Parks and Recreation.”

He also wrapped production on Netflix comedy “Unstable” from Victor Fresco alongside his son, John Owen Lowe. Fresco along with both Lowes co-created the show and will all serve as executive producers. Rob & John Owen will also star. The series is inspired by their social media relationship where John Owen often hilariously trolls his dad. Lowe has been married to jewelry designer, Sheryl Lowe, since 1991. They have two sons, Matthew and John Owen.

**Trackhouse Racing Chevrolets to carry Jockey paint scheme in six NASCAR Cup events in 2023**

CONCORD, NORTH CAROLINA –Trackhouse Racing drivers Daniel Suárez and Ross Chastain are going to look stylish once again in 2023 driving the red-white-and blue Jockey® Made in America Collection paint scheme in up to six NASCAR Cup races. Away from the track, the duo will sport the latest in Jockey activewear and casualwear throughout the season.

“It is an honor for me to drive a car replicating the American flag,” said Suárez, who became the first Mexican driver to win a Cup race when he won the June race at Sonoma (Calif.) Raceway in 2022.

“I came to America to chase my dream and I am living it. Representing Jockey is quite an honor and I hope NASCAR fans see our car out front a lot this year. You won’t be able to miss us.”

The Jockey partnership with Trackhouse began last year and was the first such team sponsorship in the 147-year history of the apparel brand. At the core of the partnership was the launch of the brand’s Made in America Collection – an effort aimed at delivering premium quality product, support reshoring American manufacturing jobs, supporting families and farmers in local communities, and providing a more sustainable option for American consumers.

“We are looking forward to another successful year with Trackhouse Racing, both on and off the track,” said Mark Fedyk, president and COO, Jockey. “From the start, Jockey and Trackhouse shared values of innovation, commitment to excellence and dedication to community. The upcoming 2023 season, we believe, is just the start for Jockey and Trackhouse Racing.”

The Jockey paint scheme will be on full display on

Suárez’s No. 99 Chevrolet at the Busch Clash on Feb. 5 at the Los Angeles Coliseum when NASCAR kicks off its season with a non-points race in the famous venue. Jockey will return to the No. 99 at the April 9 dirt race at Bristol (Tenn.) Motor Speedway, and the Martinsville (Va.) Speedway race on Oct. 29.

Jockey will appear three more times in 2023 as the primary sponsor of Chastain’s No. 1 Chevrolet beginning at Richmond (Va.) Raceway on April 2, Dover (Del.) Motor Speedway on April 30 and at Michigan Speedway in Brooklyn on Aug. 6.

Both drivers will also carry Jockey logos on their uniforms in every race and be a part of Jockey advertising and promotional campaigns.

Jockey joined Trackhouse Racing in 2022 appearing six times on Suárez and Chastain’s Cup Series entries. Jockey chose Trackhouse Racing as its marketing partner to feature its Made in America® Collection. The partnership features primary paint schemes, community impact programs, retailer engagement, product and styles, as well as season-long marketing rights and branding.

“Jockey is a family-owned company that has been around for generations and as an eighth-generation watermelon farmer I can appreciate the passion behind the brand and how important delivering a quality product is to everyone at Jockey,” said Chastain.

“NASCAR and Jockey are great American success stories and I love that we can tell the world about each.”

Trackhouse Racing is in its third season in the Cup Series. Last year it won three races, earned 21 top-five and 34 top-10 finishes. Chastain finished second and Suárez tenth in the season standings – career bests. The team is owned by former racer Justin Marks who has partnered with international entertainer Armando Christian “Pitbull” Pérez.

The Trackhouse team has made increasing the NASCAR fan base one of its off the track missions by engaging in efforts to expose the sport to new audiences. The Trackhouse Racing shop is in Concord, N.C.. For more information, visit Trackhouse.com.



The Jockey paint scheme will be on full display on Daniel Suárez’s No. 99 Chevrolet at the Busch Clash on Feb. 5 at the Los Angeles Coliseum when NASCAR kicks off its season with a non-points race in the famous venue. The iconic flag colors will appear in five more races during the racing season.



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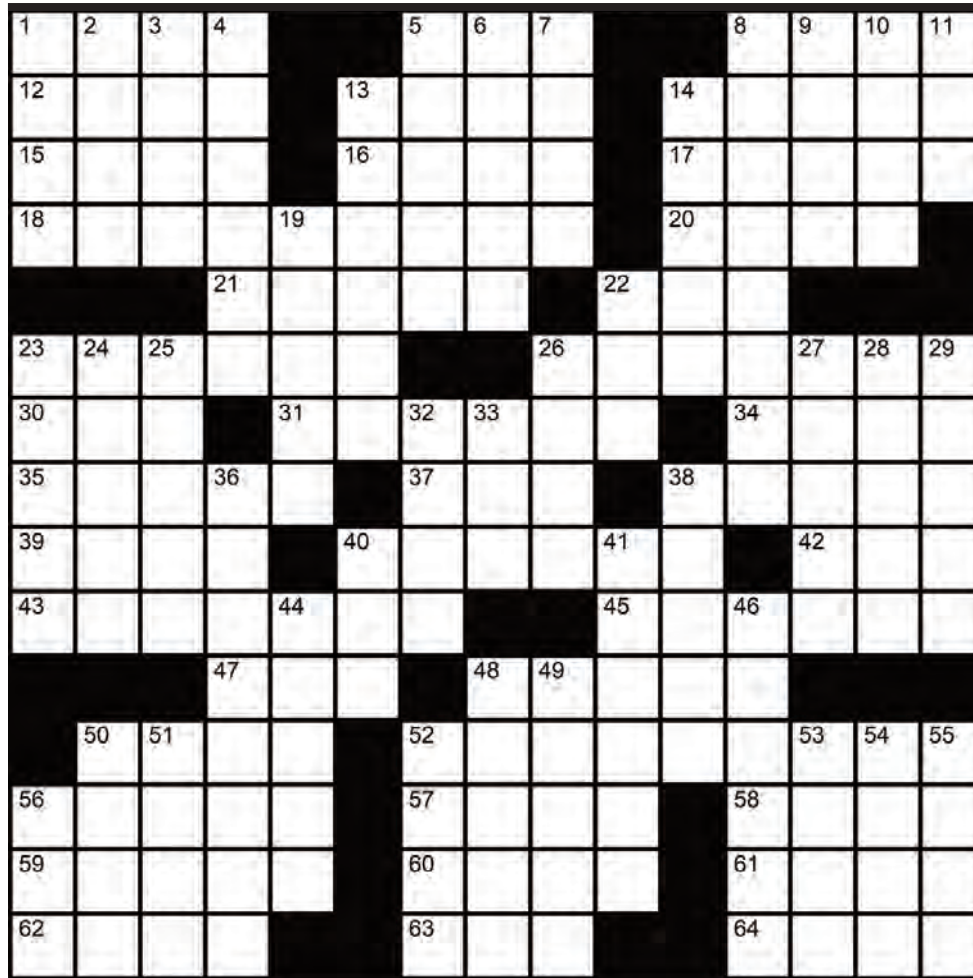
# CROSSWORD PUZZLE ANSWERS ON PG. 15

STATEPOINT  
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THEME: SUPER BOWL

ACROSS

- 1. COVID tester
- 5. Pep rally syllable
- 8. To overlay with thin gold coating
- 12. Sky bear
- 13. Abundant
- 14. Worrier's worry?
- 15. Fishing spot
- 16. Blackhearted
- 17. Full of coral
- 18. \*2023 Super Bowl stadium sponsor
- 20. Research facil.
- 21. Egg cell
- 22. King Charles to Prince Harry
- 23. Thief's target
- 26. \*2023 Super Bowl Half-time Show star
- 30. Mozart's "L' \_\_\_\_ del Cairo"
- 31. Bob Marley's music
- 34. Yarn spinner
- 35. "The Poky Little \_\_\_\_"
- 37. Skedaddle
- 38. 18-wheelers
- 39. "Guilty," e.g.
- 40. Fabric inset
- 42. One of the sibs
- 43. \*Super Bowl advertiser's purchase
- 45. Anatolian language
- 47. Decay
- 48. "There it is," † Paris
- 50. "Hold on!"
- 52. \*Home of the Ravens, for both Super Bowl appearances
- 56. Cuckoo for these puffs!
- 57. Curved molding
- 58. Medicinal plant



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- 59. Court orders, e.g.
  - 60. Sonny & Cher and Abbott & Costello
  - 61. Talk like a drunk
  - 62. Actor Danson and character Lasso
  - 63. "Owner of a Lonely Heart" band
  - 64. \*Star of the most-watched Super Bowl Halftime Show
- DOWN**
- 1. Paddleboarding acronym
  - 2. Court order
  - 3. Between ports
  - 4. Hungarian composer Bela
  - 5. \*Either one of the opposing Super Bowl teams
  - 6. FlambÉ
  - 7. Position of leadership
  - 8. \*2023 Super Bowl AZ location
  - 9. Frosts, as a cake
  - 10. Hit the road
  - 11. Like certain humor
  - 13. Disprove
  - 14. Dickens's Heep
  - 19. Each and all
  - 22. One of a set of dice
  - 23. Father, colloquially
  - 24. Round openings
  - 25. Pickled garnish
  - 26. \*Last year's Super Bowl winners
  - 27. Nimbus, pl.
  - 28. Nigerian money
  - 29. Torcher's crime
  - 32. Elmer's, e.g.
  - 33. Found at the pump
  - 36. \*Team with most Super Bowl appearances
  - 38. Signing tool at the cash register
  - 40. Greenwich-related acronym
  - 41. Superior ones
  - 44. Itsy-bitsy bits
  - 46. Patterned table linen
  - 48. Lacking clarity
  - 49. Bread spreads
  - 50. Donned
  - 51. As opposed to base in chemistry
  - 52. Snatchers' quest
  - 53. Cantina pot
  - 54. \*Overwhelming Super Bowl defeat
  - 55. Fear-inspiring
  - 56. 100 lbs.

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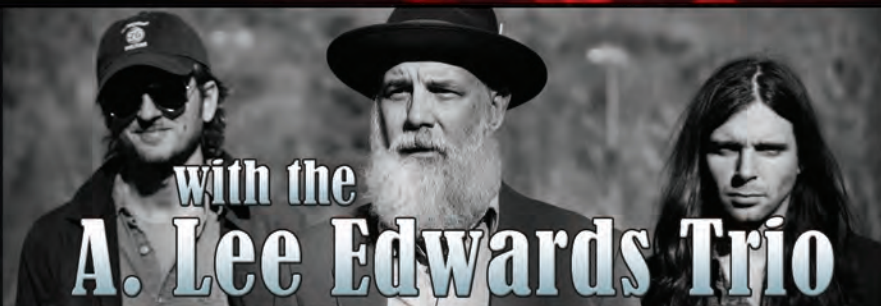




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