



The Franklin Food Lion held its grand opening and ribbon cutting on Wednesday, in conjunction with 17 other stores that opened in 2021. All but the Franklin store are located in South Carolina. The remodeled stores feature an “all-new look, extensive product assortment, wide variety of affordable and easy grab-and-go meal options and a great selection of locally sourced items produced or grown in communities around the store,” according to a statement from the corporate office. Food Lion is offering free giveaways to the first 100 customers each day through Feb. 25. Attending the grand opening were Food Lion officials, local staff and Macon County commissioners Danny Antoine, John Shearl and Gary Shields.
 Photo by Vickie Carpenter

BOC prioritizes capital projects; pre-K on hold

Dan Finnerty – Contributing Writer

Macon County Board of Commissioners (BOC) gathered for their fourth meeting of 2023 on Tuesday, Feb. 21, at the county courthouse. This session was a continuation of an abbreviated meeting held on the 14th, and topics on the agenda included information on tax assessments, capital priorities for Macon County schools, a county business receiving a state level award, and contracts associated with vertical expansion of the Macon County Landfill.

For the Public Comment period, numerous speakers arose to opine on various topics, the most prevalent of which addressed the ongoing public library book availability policy discussion. (See *Macon County News* article, Feb. 16, 2023, for background and news on this issue.)

As has been the case in the past year, deliveries argued both for some level of restrictive access and against restriction of any sort, as it applies to books with sexually explicit content accessible to minors in the youth section. Some speakers referred to recent library board meetings as forums of hate speech, while others indicated false information has been spread about what actually takes place at the meetings. Still other speakers commented on how they feel the Macon

County library staff is treated unfairly regarding how the Fontana Regional Library system is developing and directing policies.

Commissioner Danny Antoine spoke to attendees in response to the issue being, in one public commenter’s opinion, “relative.” He said, “It is in the name of relativity that got us in the mess we’re in. Just to be clear, ... when it comes to bringing about sexually explicit, pornographic material to kids ... it’s harming kids. It has nothing to do with what community you represent. What I cannot understand is how do we have adults who find it okay to give kids – children – pornographic material?”

Antoine closed Public Comment with: “What I stand for is protecting kids. Science teaches you what pornography does to the mind of an adult. What in the world makes us think that is going to be any better to the mind of a child? Please don’t mistake my position. My job right now is protecting kids. I don’t want anyone to say that this is an attack on the LGBT community or another community.”

On the topic of new tax appraisals, County Manager Derek Roland provided an update as to the county property

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Macon man returns from mission trip to Ukraine



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Franklin High cheer team competes at Nationals



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WNC artists impacting Nashville music scene

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BOARD

Continued from page 1

tax situation, regarding increased real estate value vis-a-vis millage rates. County Tax Administrator Abby Braswell also spoke on the subject.

“We do a mass appraisal, not private properties ... some people have land that can’t be used due to a flood area; some people have appraisals that need to be updated. There are 44,431 parcels to be considered, which is a lot for three appraisers,” said Braswell.

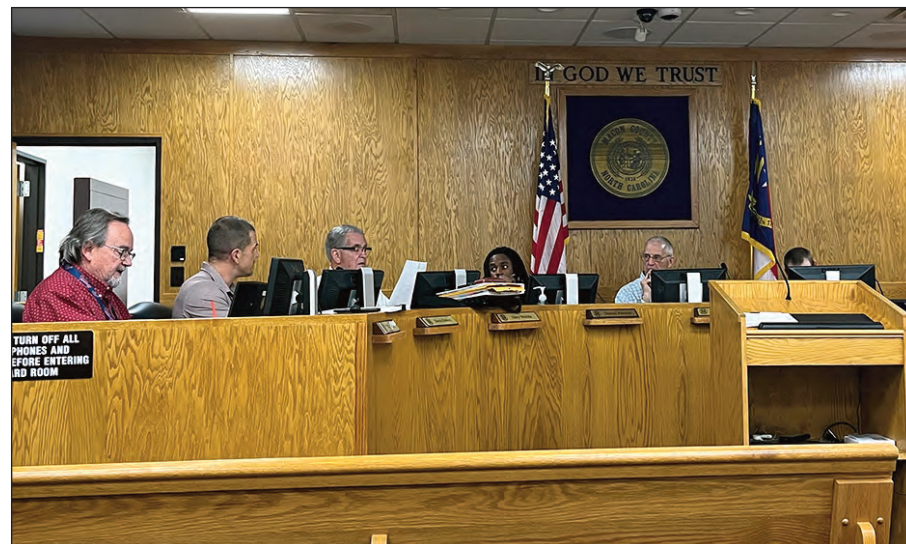
She advised residents to use GIS (geographic information system) to sort properties by various information to better define and determine individual property and surrounding sales, as applicable. “[Sales] comparable are going to be your biggest help [in determining success for appeal],” she explained.

Board Chairman Paul Higdon reminded attendees that a team of five members will comprise a Board of Equalization and Review to address property tax appeals as the year progresses.

Next, Roland delivered some additional details from the Feb. 9 budget work session regarding the Macon County Schools capital priority list, as submitted by the school board. The Liaison Committee narrowed the recommendations down to five priorities: The Macon Middle School (MMS) vent pipes, the wastewater treatment facility at Nantahala, the Franklin High School Project, the Highlands Middle School renovation project, and the MMS track replacement. The Highlands Pre-K project did not make the priority list. The board subsequently voted to terminate the contract of \$329,255 with LS3P for that project, contingent upon school board approval of the priority list as previously submitted. While the list was approved, BOC also acknowledged that they have no intention of giving up on the Pre-K project; it simply did not warrant priority ahead of the emergency status attached to the MMS vent pipes and Nantahala facility,

and was deemed not as urgent as the other three projects approved. Highlands is also still looking to replace turf on its high school soccer field.

Under new business, Macon County Soil and Water Conservation District’s Doug Johnson and Sarah Clancy delivered the news that H&H Farms was recognized in January as the 2022 N.C. Outstanding Conservation Farm Family. The local business is the first Macon County entity to receive such statewide recognition. An event honoring the Huscusson family and celebrating the award is scheduled for May 9 at the Moss Valley Venue with between 150 and 300 people expected to attend. Among those invited to the event are Governor Roy Cooper, Commissioner of Agriculture Steve Troxler, and many other state, regional, and local representatives.



Macon County Commissioners listen to public comments at the Feb. 21 meeting.

Johnson commented on the criteria used to award the recognition as twofold.

“The Huscusson family business reputation and overall merit as well as Clancy’s stellar job in writing up the nomination package on behalf of H&H Farms.”

Finance Director Lori Carpenter requested BOC approval of a budget amendment to appropriate \$9,000 in funding from the N.C. Association of Water and Soil Conservation Districts and public donations to help fund the May event. The board unanimously approved the request.

Macon County Solid Waste Director Chris Stahl requested commissioners approve contracts with McBill Associates and Bunnell-Lamons Engineering (BLE) for Phases II and III of the Macon County Landfill vertical expansion. Those contracts total \$113,450 and the expansion will increase the life of the landfill four years, delaying the need for closure and allowing time for repayment of existing debt service on Phase III, Cell I, and allowing for construction of Cell II. Stahl also requested BOC to authorize the county manager to execute work associated with the contract approval. He stated that since 2020, Macon County “has seen an influx of people and development and construction of different projects.” This is seen as attributing to increased use of the landfill.

Braswell added that new construction in 2022 included 2,000 permits, with 800 being new houses or complete remodels. Stahl did project levels of home building to drop back to pre-2020 levels due to, among other factors, higher interest rates expected to slow home buying. He also argued that getting four to five additional years of usage was worth the cost. A motion was submitted to approve use of money from the Enterprise Fund, which still has \$700,000 remaining from a previous 2018 allocation. The motion was unanimously approved.

The next regularly scheduled Macon County Board of Commissioners meeting is Tuesday, March 14.



Macon County Soil and Water Conservation District’s Doug Johnson and Sarah Clancy briefed commissioners on H&H Farms winning state recognition.



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Franklin Town Council holds annual retreat

Dan Finnerty – Contributing Writer

By most standards a “retreat,” when used in terms of a group meeting, brings visions of people gathering, relaxing, and generally having a good time. On Feb. 17 and 18, the Town of Franklin Council met not to relax, but to discuss and prioritize the year’s expected tasks and undertakings. After initially going over topics on Friday evening, the group met again Saturday morning at 8:30 to rack and stack their order of business for 2023.

Town Manager Amie Owens began the second session introducing two members of WithersRavenel (WR) – Ken Orie, utilities engineering director, and Dana Bolden, project manager. They were at the meeting to answer Council questions about the water plant and what WR might be able to bring to the effort to improve it, within Town priorities and expectations. The current water plant has been in place and operating since the 1960s.

“Generally for this kind of facility, 40 or 50 years is the lifespan expectancy,” said Bolden.

The two representatives presented a slideshow on the operative mechanics of the existing water plant and challenges with continued operation and condition of each. At the conclusion of the presentation, Owens recommended the Council prioritize the work that already has designs completed and get that accomplished over the next three-to-five years, in order to budget adequately for potential basin and filter repairs described by WR.

Bolden concluded by reminding the Council, “We’re here to serve you and we want to tell you the things you need to know. Sometimes you’re not going to like what I have to tell you - ‘Yeah, you’ve got some things that need to be fixed.’ We will implement your priorities.”

“We’ve made the request to go up to \$12.4 million (for the total project),” said Owens, while council member David Culpepper reminded everyone that due to current funding realities, the project must be phased out, regardless of the final decision.

Next up was a presentation by No Wrong Door (NWD), an organization that pulls services together to assist with homelessness and addiction issues within Macon County and the Town of Franklin. Dinah Mashburn, NWD president and Sheila Jenkins, executive director, were both present to provide information and answer any questions the Council might pose. After receiving an overview on the organization, the Council heard from Jenkins on more specific issues presently in need of attention and funding, such as the growing drug addiction epidemic in the area. She also summarized complicating factors encountered regularly with helping people in need, the most prevalent of which is no

identification and no physical address. Each are critical in obtaining assistance in many cases. Use of the former Angel Medical facility as a potential assistance option, was also briefly discussed, while it was also acknowledged that specific future use of the building is still up in air.

Town Planner Justin Setser and Town Attorney John Henning, Jr. presented various maps of locales throughout the town and ETJ (extra-territorial jurisdiction) that reflect zoning challenges to be considered in the coming year. Currently, 347 parcels are on the list and Setser focused on potential areas for housing. Manufactured versus single family and apartment housing were all covered, including what zoning changes would need implementing in order to increase building options. With such a large number of areas to review, Henning estimated at least a couple months for the Planning Board to do so.

Additionally, Culpepper suggested that people be notified when the Planning Board is discussing their property, in order to avoid situations like one recently encountered (7 Plantation Drive rezoning request/decision) where residents were vastly unaware of the effort until it was well underway. A consensus was reached by the Council to submit a request for more refined prioritization of the potential rezoning areas to the Planning Board for their review, input, and recommendation feedback.

Next, Police Chief Devin Holland discussed a proposal for his department to use CarFax’s law enforcement-specific resource to assist with investigative processes, free of charge, that includes tracking vehicles of suspected criminal activity. Holland’s proposal is to use the features provided by CarFax to implement a report fee for either individuals or insurance entities, both of which periodically require them and will end up purchasing through another means. He proposed \$10 for private party use and \$20 for insurance and corporate reports. The Council agreed to take on this proposal for consideration and place the request on the March agenda.

Lastly was discussion of tax rates, which are ultimately determined by use of millage rates. By definition, millage is the amount of tax payable per dollar of the assessed value of a property. As used in property tax, one mill is equal to \$1 in property tax levied per \$1,000 of a property’s assessed value.

While no decisions were made, Council discussion included the current \$.35 cents per dollar for millage, whether that needed to increase, what Macon County’s rate will be (still unknown), and how much, if any, the rate needs to be above revenue-neutral. Owens offered to have information back to the Council by their first budget book session on April 17.



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BBB: Meta's new subscription service - what you need to know

On Sunday, Meta founder Mark Zuckerberg announced that the company is introducing Meta Verified, a paid "blue verification badge" for Facebook and Instagram that will be available later this week. According to the news release, the monthly subscription service includes a verification badge, protection against impersonating accounts, increased visibility, priority customer service and other exclusive features. Previously, Twitter announced its blue checkmark program.

As with any new program, there can be initial confusion on what it all means, and scammers are waiting in the wings to grab at any new opportunity. Be sure you have the facts and protect yourself against future scam artists. Better Business Bureau (BBB) is a trusted resource to help guide consumers and businesses to accurate information.

Here's what you need to know:

- Regular Facebook and Instagram users do not have to pay. The subscription service is an option to help creators and businesses build their communities.

- The optional Meta subscription service will cost \$11.99 per month on the web and \$14.99 for the iOS and Android app. Twitter's blue check is \$8 a month for web and \$11 for iOS and Android. Twitter also announced an upcharge for its new secure text messaging program.

- Meta Verified is only available in New Zealand and Australia as of Feb. 21 but may expand globally soon and to business accounts eventually. Twitter Blue is available in many countries, including the U.S. and Canada.

- Users must meet the minimum requirements, be at least 18 years old, and submit a government ID that matches the name and photo on Facebook and Instagram to be eligible.

Be on the lookout for potential scams:

- Watch out for phishing emails, texts, and direct messages offering upgrades to your Facebook or Instagram accounts. Don't send a photo of your government ID to a scammer!

- Go to BBB's Spot a Scam page to see what fake emails, texts and web pages may look like.

- Beware of impostors pretending to be from Meta, Facebook, or Instagram. In December, Twitter experienced a wave of fake verified accounts after introducing Twitter Blue.

- Check links before clicking; go directly to the source.

- Fact-check all information. Go directly to Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter help pages if you are unsure.

Watch out for fake grant scams

The North Carolina Attorney General's office has been notified of a scam involving people impersonating state government employees on social media. These scammers will claim to be with a state agency and inform you that you are being awarded a large sum of grant money. To get the money, however, they will say you have to pay a fee up front. Remember, state government officials will never ask you for money or personal information on social media in exchange for payment.

To avoid falling victim to these scammers, follow these tips:

- Don't rely on a messenger's username or profile to determine if they are trustworthy. Look for red flags on online profiles. Verify any addresses or phone numbers listed by checking directly on the agency's website. If an address or phone number is listed as out of state, it is likely a fake.

- Do not send money or divulge personal information to unknown online users, even if they say that they represent the government. If you're unsure if someone is a legitimate government official, reach out to the government agency directly using a phone number listed on their website.

- Be skeptical of online accounts claiming you've been awarded money or could win something. If you don't remember entering for a grant award, it's probably a scam.

If you think you have been the victim of a scam, contact the Consumer Protection Division at 1-877-5-NO-SCAM.

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Macon County missionary returns from frontlines of Ukraine War

Deena C. Bouknight – Contributing Writer

Since learning of the war in Ukraine, Loren Kennedy has spent five months on the frontlines in the country. He returned this month from his third trip and provides updates on the effectiveness of donations by Macon County residents through his ministry, Sanctuary Relief. Kennedy spent Christmas and New Year's in the war-ravaged country, and he returned home to Franklin just a few weeks shy of the Ukraine/Russia war's one-year anniversary of Feb. 24.

Since last May, Kennedy has connected with pastors and missionaries in Ukraine to provide numerous items that people there are lacking due to on-the-ground fighting and missile strikes. After returning to Franklin in early February, he provided a list of what he witnessed accomplished during his winter trip:



Hundreds of people gather to receive food boxes filled with non-perishable items distributed by Sanctuary Relief.



A common sight that missionary Loren Kennedy experiences during his trips to Ukraine are those of bombed-out apartment buildings.

- provided propane heaters, tanks, and all the equipment needed for some people to heat bombed homes and apartments;
- provided 100-plus homes with heat;
- converted some wood stoves to double as cooktops;
- distributed hundreds of Christmas gifts to children as well as clothes, boots, and coats;
- distributed hundreds of vials of insulin;
- distributed thousands of adult Bibles and children's Bibles as well as activity and coloring books for children; and,
- donated money to cover surgeries for injuries caused by missile strikes.

Since Kennedy first began traveling to Ukraine, monies donated through Sanctuary Relief have resulted in the assem-

bling of a least 14,000 non-perishable food boxes for needy families.

"We are also at this moment financing a team of Ukrainian men that go in and out of Bakhmut, Ukraine, which is one of the hottest areas on the front lines," commented Kennedy. "There are people trapped there and these volunteers are taking them water and food as well as sharing the gospel of Jesus."

He added, "I thank everyone involved for their giving. One hundred percent of the finances are used to help and reach hurting people in Ukraine."

Each time Kennedy is among the people of Ukraine, he is saturated with stories of their struggles – but also of their steadfastness.

"Many of the stories are very graphic in nature ... stories of great pain and suffer-

ing. People young and old from all types of walks of life have seen things that no human being should have to see or be exposed to. But they need someone to listen, provide comfort, and pray."

He shared one story that is indicative of many individuals' and families' stories throughout this past year.

"One apartment building in Kiev was hit last month by a missile. There was a kindergarten school meeting in part of this building and the area sirens went off and they took all the children to the basement of the building. The missile hit the center front of the building and did a lot of damage, killed people, broke windows out of hundreds of apartment buildings for blocks ... We brought heaters and food to folks. They were pretty shaken up. But the miracle is that none of the kindergarten kids were hurt."

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Ukrainian volunteers take needed supplies and food into the most dangerous parts of the country.

During his trips to Ukraine, Kennedy is most encouraged by how the message of hope in Jesus is received.

“It is absolutely the most amazing thing I’ve ever seen. The war has opened their hearts to God. And what’s really wonderful is how their faces and countenances change as they hear the gospel of peace, love, mercy, and grace. They go from looking discouraged and depressed to faces with smiles. You can actually see a change come

over them as they hear about the love of Christ.”

Kennedy is planning on returning to Ukraine in March and hopes to assist with additional needs per donations provided to Sanctuary Relief. Visit sanctuaryrelief.com.

(For more information, Macon County News has also reported on Loren Kennedy’s efforts in Ukraine, and Sanctuary Relief, in the July 28, 2022 and Nov. 22, 2022 editions.)

Tree planting event needs volunteers

Mainspring Conservation Trust invites volunteers of every knowledge level to join a tree-planting party and turn Tessentee Bottomland Preserve’s newest tract into a haven for wildlife. Planting will occur on Thursday, Feb. 23, from 9 a.m.-5 p.m., Friday, March 3, from 9 a.m.-12 p.m., and/or Saturday, March 4, from 9 a.m.-12 p.m. Snacks will be provided or lunch if you join for the full days. Visit mainspringconserves.org/events for more details and to register for this event.

“We’re going to establish a woody riparian buffer on 14 acres of the property, along the river and the creek,” says Kelder Monar, Mainspring’s Stewardship Manager. “We will plant native trees with specific value for wildlife, 4,300 trees in total. This is a big project, so we’ll need extra volunteers.”

Mainspring acquired the first portion of Tessentee Bottomland Preserve in 1999, and



has since added three additional tracts. Visitors can view a historic farmstead, a rich diversity of birds and butterflies, and a wide range of habitats, including a red cedar savannah and a distinct granite outcrop. Mainspring maintains native river cane and white oak stands on the property in collaboration with Cherokee artisans, who harvest these plants for use in traditional crafts. This new addition, a 40-acre former cattle pasture, brings the total size of the preserve to over 110 acres.



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FHS cheer team reaches Nationals for first time

Dan Finnerty
Sports Writer

Lynn Baker has led the Franklin High School (FHS) Panther Cheer Team for eight years, but none of those years has she witnessed the team reaching the heights of this year. On Feb. 10-12, Baker led her cheer team athletes to the top of the cheer-leading mountain - the Universal Cheerleading Association (UCA) Nationals at Disney World.

Baker said that the team did “amazing” at the competition, adding, “They hit zero with their routine in

preliminaries and advanced to the semi-finals, where they hit zero again!” She explained that accomplishing a zero indicates a team completed their routine with no falls or other deductions, which is rare in the cheer competition world. FHS scored just shy of making the finals but made history nonetheless. They were the first Panther cheer team to compete at UCA Nationals, which is akin to the Super Bowl of cheer competitions.

“It was an awesome weekend and I am so proud of them for everything they accomplished,” said Baker.

Baker has been with FHS since 2014, first as a volunteer and then as a head coach. Prior to that, she also coached at the community league level and helped with various other programs and sports.

“I’ve worked with many talented FHS teams through the years that received state and national recognition,” she said, but this year’s team won state and advanced to compete at the cheer competition of all cheer competitions!”

On the individual level, cheer team members McKenzie Holland and Lauren Shannon were both also named to the All-Region cheer team and invited to try out for the All-State team. However, they ended up not making the cut in the highly competitive qualification process, which includes the best of the best across the entire state.



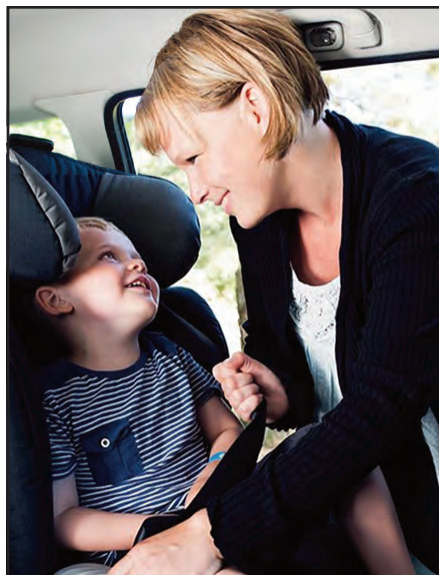
FHS Cheerleading team poses for a shot in front of the Tree of Life at Disney World in Orlando, Fla., where they competed in the Universal Cheerleading Association Nationals.



On Feb. 10-12, Franklin High School cheerleaders competed in the Universal Cheerleading Association (UCA) Nationals at Disney World, Orlando, Fla. At the ESPN Wide World of Sports venue are (front row, L-R) McKinzy Carver, Coral Perry, McKenzie Holland, Gracie Elliott, Jordan Westerman, Jennifer Westerman, and coach Lynn Baker; (back row) Michelle Perez, Kassidy Mixer, Lauren Shannon, Brianna Quiroz and Kaylee Zachary.



The Franklin High School cheerleading team is always a fixture a varsity ball games.



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FHS varsity basketball closes out winning season

Dan Finnerty – Sports Writer

With the regular season and conference tournament behind them, Franklin High School entered the 2022-23 North Carolina High School Athletic Association (NCHSAA) 3A basketball playoffs Tuesday, Feb. 21. The #11 seeded men hosted #19 the West Charlotte Lions, the defending 3A state champions at the Panther Den, while the #19 Lady Panthers traveled to the Hickory area to play the 14th-seeded Freedom Patriots. Like the NCAA Division 1 March Madness tournament, NCHSAA 3A playoffs consist of 64 teams, ranked 1-32 in an East half and the same in the West.

Franklin’s Men’s Coach Doug Plemmons, in an interview with Franklin Panthers Sports Network’s George Young, pointed out that West Charlotte, despite their sub-.500 record, is a strong team and played a tough schedule.

“I think it is the toughest schedule in the state,” said Plemmons. “They play in a 3A/4A split conference and even some of the 4A teams on their schedule will contend for the championship in the 4A bracket.

“We know what we are up against; we are not fooled by the record. I think the coach probably has done this on purpose knowing he was going to play in a tough league ... knowing that would favor him in the playoffs.”

On top of all the other pressure, Plemmons had a 24-game home winning streak on the line. He pointed out that his team is as healthy as it has been all year, so he felt good about going into the contest.

The game was all about West Charlotte’s size in the first half, as they dominated the game’s flow with strong inside play. Less than two minutes into the game, they established a sizable lead. Throughout the first half of the game, the Panthers repeatedly shot from the outside and missed, for the most part. Turnovers also played a huge role in the Panthers’ deficit as they had 13 as compared to the Lions’ 2 in the first half.

The score at halftime saw the Lions up by 15 points, 37-22. In the second half, Coach Plemmons’ squad played hard and made valuable adjustments as they chipped away at the Lions’ lead. They started taking advantage of mismatches and cut down on unforced errors. Also, Max McClure became more accurate in three-point shooting to reduce the deficit. First, the team got the score down to single digits and stepped-up defensive pressure, in addition to higher field goal percentage and purposely working to get West Charlotte into foul trouble.

With two and a half minutes left in the Tuesday night game, the Panthers cut the lead to four, 60-56. With 29 seconds left in the game, Parker Cabe put back a Max McClure three-point miss to reach a 61-58 score. That was the final, as FHS fell just short of another comeback, and their season is now over.



Senior Guard Josh Zoellner passes around Lion defender.



FHS senior Patrick Cabe scores over the head of a defending Lion in Tuesday's playoff game.



Cal Drake tips off with a West Charlotte Lions team member to start the state championship game hosted by Franklin High School.



The FHS student body was in full force to support the home team.

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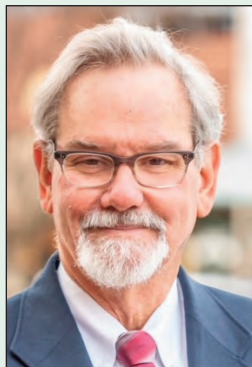



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What's new on the plateau

Patrick Taylor
Highlands Mayor



Patrick Taylor

I was optimistic, and the staff was too, that the town would receive a state grant to replace the aging pre-clarifier tank at the water tank. The town had resubmitted the grant we applied for last year. The project is a big-ticket item, somewhere around \$3 million.

Our town manager gave the bad news at the town board meeting last Thursday night that we did not get the grant. In fact, our application scored so low that the state folks managing the grant process told us we needn't apply again.

So, where are we in the process now that this grant source is not available? The town public works and financial staff will do an in-depth update to the board at the March 9 town retreat.

But I believe I already know where we are heading. Like the old Buck Horn water tank that was replaced on Satulah a number of years ago, we can continue to use the current pre-clarifier tank as we begin the process of replacing it. As in the case of the Buck Horn water tank, it remained in service, albeit leaking, until the new tank was completed. We may be able to implement a similar procedure for the pre-clarifier tank.

I foresee the town staff and expert engineers beginning an extensive design process for the new pre-clarifier tank this coming fiscal year. The critical first stage in such a major waterworks project is to develop and test a design plan before construction begins. It will take time for the engineering of this new tank to be completed. We did a similar process with replacing the Buck Horn water tank. One year was pretty much devoted to the design/engineering phase, followed in the next year of the actual construction phase.

The engineering phase of this new project will give the town a more exact cost estimate for building the new pre-clarifier tank. Inflation has changed our previous estimates. There are several design and construction options that will have to be carefully considered.

In the meantime, town staff will explore financing options for the project. There may be other grant sources, or we may have to consider a low-interest revolving loan. Several financial options must be considered. Do we tap into town reserve funds to build the tank? Do we use some reserves and finance the rest? Or do we finance

See TAYLOR on page 11

Letters to the Editor

Marketplace insurance carrying fewer providers

I would like to warn citizens in Western North Carolina about new HMO policies sold through healthcare.gov for 2023. Aetna has been an excellent insurance in this area for a long time. I know since I've done medical billing and management in this region for over 20 years. However, this year Aetna CVS Health has sold HMO policies through Health-Care.gov, when they do not have a network to support the patients with this insurance coverage.

Almost all claims generated from facilities, such as Angel Medical Center, Harris Regional Hospital and most healthcare provider's offices will be denied as out-of-network, when the facilities are in-network with Aetna Medicare and Commercial plans. Angel Medical Center, located in Franklin, is a critical access hospital, serving Macon and the surrounding counties. On the Aetna CVS Health website, they have ONE medical provider in-network within this entire facility. DLP Harris Regional Hospital, located in Sylva, N.C., is completely OUT-of-network. Keep in mind, these HMO policies have ZERO out-of-network benefits.

This means Aetna CVS Health is accepting premium tax credits from our government and premiums from policyholders with few to no providers in Western North Carolina. When an insurance company is accepting tax credits and premiums for HMO policies with NO out-of-network benefits and NO network to support those policies sold, that appears to be an obvious ploy NOT to pay claims! It is criminal for any person or business to take money for products or services they are unable or unwilling to provide. Why should it be any different for insurance companies? I have sent this information along with screenshots to every elected official that I could and have filed a complaint with the NC Department of Insurance. I purchased my Aetna CVS Health policy in good faith, but fear it was sold with fraudulent intent.

I contacted Cigna Provider Services on Feb. 14, 2023, and spoke to a representative asking why a provider who is in-network with Cigna, is not in-network for the new Cigna HMOs sold on the Marketplace for 2023. I was told that the plans sold through the Marketplace has a network that was by invitation only. He said a provider cannot request to be in network with those plans. I told him it sounds a lot like Aetna CVS Health plans: Selling policies without having a network of providers to support the policies sold when we are in a rural area without enough providers to begin with. I have also been told more than once this week that the same thing is happening with some of the Blue Cross Blue Shield plans sold through the Marketplace for 2023. To my knowledge, I have not seen issues like this with Marketplace policies before this year.

If you purchased an Aetna CVS Health Plan or another Marketplace HMO policy through healthcare.gov and you live in Western North Carolina, you may want to pick up the phone or get on your insurance's website to see if your providers are

in network with your insurance company. It could save you hundreds to thousands of dollars in denied medical claims, not to mention the stress and frustration you will endure! Every claim I have had this year has been denied! As of now, I would hesitate to receive emergency services for fear of how much I would owe due to these network issues. Almost all Aetna providers in our area are considered out-of-network and who knows about these other HMO plans. Protect yourself and file complaints if necessary with the NC Dept of Insurance.

See website address: <https://www.ncdoi.gov/contact.../assistance-or-file-complaint>

I have spoken with Senator Kevin Corbin and he was aware of this issue. Mr. Corbin told me that is why he did not offer these policies through the Corbin Insurance Agency. I have also been in communication with healthcare.gov, NC Dept of Insurance and Congressman Chuck Edwards office. There are multiple investigations that are now being conducted regarding this issue. Aetna Health has even requested additional time from the NC Dept of Insurance to do an internal investigation. I have also created an email for anyone who wants to contact me that are experiencing similar issues – hmoscams@gmail.com.

Karen Williams – Franklin, N.C.

Property price increases a product of political upheaval

Many owners in Macon County, North Carolina have received a "Real Property Reappraisal Notice" and are reeling from the shock. Average land value increases across Macon County range from a low of around 23% to well over 100%; and building value increases from 50% to over 174%. I didn't look at commercial properties.

The last Reappraisal was only four years ago and historically no rates of increase have approached these. Why? Land and homes are limited resources hit by overwhelming demand caused by massive relocation of populations across this nation. The relocations have the impact on our markets of a 7.9 earthquake. Here are just four recent earthquake examples:

1. COVID 19 causing a flood of refugees fleeing mandatory lockdowns and vaccinations;
2. HIGH CRIME causing a flood of refugees seeking safe communities.
3. HIGH TAXES causing a flood of refugees seeking locations with fewer and lower taxes;
4. OPEN BORDERS causing a flood of refugees seeking opportunities.

Refugees on the move have resulted in price pressures now reflected in the Reappraisals. Unfortunately the end result is that many of the people of Macon and similar counties will find they can no longer afford to own a home or property; let alone buy food or put fuel in their car.

However, this price pressure is not the result of "arm's length transactions" over time caused by natural population increase. It is instead political upheaval caused by this nation's rush to embrace socialism.

Diane Whitley – Franklin, N.C.

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SCC grad inspires latest New Century Scholars

Jake Tallent vividly remembers the impact that the New Century Scholars program had on his life.

“It was an incredible opportunity for me,” said Tallent, who was inducted into the program in 2007 while he was in the seventh grade. “It opened doors that might not have been possible otherwise. Being able to do the volunteer aspect of New Century Scholars got me in touch with some really great people.”

Thanks in part to the solid educational foundation he received through the program, Tallent went on to graduate Magna Cum Laude from Southwestern with an associate degree in 2014. Along the way, he made the President’s and Dean’s lists numerous times.

These days, the Macon County native is living his dream as captain for a charter airline based in Asheville, and he returned to SCC’s Jackson Campus on Jan. 30 to speak to the newest group of New Century Scholars at their induction ceremony.

“I had so many people – teachers, the staff of New Century Scholars – who really supported what I wanted to do,” said Tallent, who also earned a bachelor’s degree in Natural Resource Conservation and Management from WCU in 2016. “I knew I wanted to do something outside. I always loved the outdoors. I also wanted to fly airplanes. My teachers and the New Century Scholars support team really helped me along the way, showing me the best path to take.”

Tallent is among the more than 2,500 students who’ve been inducted as New Century Scholars since the program was founded by the late Dr. Charlie McConnell, who was Jackson County Public Schools Superintendent at the time, and then-SCC President Dr. Barry Russell.

Deserving students are annually inducted in the seventh grade and receive resources and support as they navigate middle and high school – preparing for a successful experience in college without worrying about the financial aspect.

The New Century Scholars program is supported entirely by private donations and provides last-dollar tuition assistance.

“Every year, I’m struck by how many lives are being changed by this visionary program and the generosity of in-



Jake Tallent, a former New Century Scholar and 2014 SCC graduate, spoke to the next generation of New Century Scholars during their induction ceremony on Jan. 30 at Southwestern’s Jackson Campus in Sylva.

dividuals and businesses in the communities we serve,” said Dr. Don Tomas, President of SCC. “It’s wonderful to shake the hands of these future Southwestern students as they walk across the same stage where they’ll one day soon receive their college degrees. Their future just got a lot brighter, and all of us at SCC are proud to be a part of it.”

In addition to working toward their high school diplomas, New Century Scholars are required to participate in community service activities that encourage leadership skills and explore potential future career options.

To support this program, donations may be made at SouthwesternCC.edu/Foundation or by check to New Century Scholars and sent to the SCC Foundation, 447 College Drive, Sylva, NC 28779

TAYLOR

Continued from page 10

what entire project with a low-interest loan. Right now, financing a project like this using conventional loan sources would not be desirable. But, maybe in a year, the rates may be lower.

At the all-day town retreat Lamar Nix, our public works director, will present a more detailed report assessing the situation with the pre-clarifier tank and how to proceed. Lamar will also present an overview of public works projects that are on the schedule for the next fiscal year. We will also hear reports from directors of the recreation, IT, police, and fire departments.

There will also be a review of utility rates. I anticipate, like last year, that electric, water/sewer, and garbage rates will remain the same despite the inflationary pressures we all have experienced.

Trades scholarships offered through Franklin Chamber

The Franklin Area Chamber of Commerce Community Enrichment Foundation announces a new Trades Scholarship available for Macon County students and residents. This new Scholarship was launched in 2019. To date 11 Franklin High School graduating students have been helped with scholarships totaling \$7500.

This scholarship was created for assisting students who are seeking to earn training/certification for trades such as construction trades, plumbers, electricians, auto mechanics, masonry, computer technology and programming, software development, culinary, CNA’s and other health related certifications, just to name a few. Students who receive training and certification in specific trades can enter the workforce sooner, build their confidence and increase their initiative.

It is the desire of the Franklin Area Chamber of Commerce Community Enrichment Foundation board to assist area youth in obtaining education and training that will enable them to enter the workforce with qualifications leading to better jobs and more income. In addition, the program was created to aid in building a workforce of qualified employees for the employers and businesses in the community. Employers can increase their productivity by hiring skilled employees, while giving students the opportunity to remain in their own community.

Students who need assistance and do not qualify for scholastic or sports scholarships are strongly encouraged to apply for this scholarship. More education and specific trade skills will create a better quality of life for individuals and families by opening up opportunities for better careers and higher wages.

Applications are available through the Guidance Counselors at Franklin High School, Macon Early College, Nantahala School and at the Franklin Area Chamber of Commerce, 98 Hyatt Road, Franklin.

For more information, call Linda at (828)524-3161.



Dr. Chris Baldwin (top, center), Superintendent of Macon County Schools, stands with Macon County seventh graders who were inducted into the New Century Scholars program on Jan. 30 at SCC’s Jackson Campus in Sylva. Pictured with Dr. Baldwin are, front row, from left, Cassie McDowell, Brooke Gibbs, Hayleigh Kunde and Zackary Bryant; back row, from left, Aiden Rogers, Tatem Vanhook and Yurem Arteaga-Munoz. Not pictured are Ava Baxley, Ana Rios Cruz and Xavier Robinson.

Email Letters to the Editor to
maconcountynews@gmail.com

Addiction ministry changes name

New name. Same addiction recovery ministry program.

In 1958, Rev. Dave Wilkerson was working with older teens that were addicted to alcohol and drugs and were in gangs on the streets of New York City and established an addiction recovery program known as Teen Challenge. Over the years, the organization grew and now has more than 200 centers in the U.S., including one in Franklin.

Some are for adult men, some for adult women and some for teenagers (boys and girls). The name "Teen" was confusing to a lot of people because there were so many adult centers. Later, the national office name was changed to Adult and Teen Challenge, so according to director Mike Barres, the Franklin center changed its name as well but some thought that name meant that the center served both adults and



teens.

"There has been a lot of confusion about our name. We have gotten many calls asking for help with teens. Also, when we go to churches they often ask why we are called Teen Challenge when we are all men.

"We are excited to announce that the national office has given us permission to change our name to Men's Challenge of the Smokies – a ministry of Adult and Teen Challenge," said Barres. "It will take a while to get used to the new name, but we hope it will clear up the confusion. We are the same addiction recovery ministry as we always have been, in every way. We just have a new name, Men's Challenge of the Smokies."

For more information on Men's Challenge of the Smokies, visit www.livinghopeway.com.



Community donates books to library

Members of the community recently raised more than \$1,500 in an online book drive with the purpose of purchasing and donating Christian books for the Macon County Library teen/young adult section. The goal was to donate books which portray traditional and conservative family values in order to increase the diversity of materials available in the teen/young adult collection. Pictured are community members donating books to the Macon County Library teen/young adult supervisor.

WNC Civil War Roundtable to discuss material culture of the Civil War soldier

The Western NC Civil War Roundtable will begin its 2023 series of programs on Monday, March 13, at 7 p.m. with Peter Koch. The program will take place at the Haywood County Library in Waynesville at 678 S. Haywood St. and is free and open to the public.

Material culture, or the study of history through the objects people used, provides a different window into the past than what documents and images offer. Join Mr. Koch as he explores uniforms and equipment Civil War soldiers wore and carried on marches or used in camp. What was the connection of these objects to their community or to the government they represented? What stories do these objects tell us about the people and communities that created them? The program will include plenty of hands-on items to explore.

Peter Koch is the Education Associate at the Mountain Heritage Center at Western Carolina University. He holds an M.A. in public history from North Carolina State University and is on the boards of the Western North Carolina Civil War Roundtable and Civil War Trails Inc. He has also had a long involvement in the North Carolina Museums Council including leading conference sessions on interpreting Civil War sites in the 21st century.

The WNC Civil War Roundtable meetings will continue on April 10 with Derrick Brown who will speak about Union Army actions on the North Carolina coast during the early part of the Civil War. Programs later this spring include Angela Elder of Converse College whose presentation is entitled "Confederate Widows and the Emotional Politics of Loss" will take place on May 8 and Neil Chatelain who will speak about the Civil War along the Mississippi River in 1862 on June 12. All these meetings will take place at 7:00 p.m. at the Haywood County Public Library.

More information on these and other future programs can be found at <http://wncwrt.com>.

Society meeting to focus on Cherokee Treaty of 1819

"Cherokee Lands in the Marketplace in WNC 1819-1829" is the title of the presentation by Anita Finger-Smith for the March 2 meeting of the Swain County Genealogical and Historical Society. On Feb. 27, 1819, representatives of the Cherokee Nation signed a treaty yielding the cession of about 6,000 square miles of their land claims, including portions of what are today Macon, Jackson, Swain, and Transylvania counties. In accordance with the treaty, some of the Cherokee were given 640 acre tracts. As per the treaty, on April 29, 1820, the Love survey of the 1819 Treaty lands began and the land sale opened at Waynesville, N.C., on Oct. 16, 1820. White settlers moved into the mountains, occupying many of the Cherokee built houses. Over time, as those became dilapidated, they were torn down or incorporated into the settlers' new homes. The settlers were numerous and "extremely solicitous for the establishment of a new county." In 1828, the frontiersmen got their wish with the formation of Macon County created from the old 1819 Cherokee Treaty lands. Finger-Smith will be presenting the history

and genealogy related to the treaty, the land survey and sale, and the people who settled the new county.

Finger-Smith, a genealogical and historical researcher for more than 20 years, specializes in records of the Eastern Cherokee. She has lectured at numerous conferences, conducted local and state seminars, and facilitated regional workshops on a variety of topics relevant to the Cherokee. When she is not attending to genealogical research, Finger-Smith is working as co-owner of Bearmeat's Indian Den, an authentic Native American art gallery located on Soco/Hwy 19, on the Cherokee Indian Reservation. Cherokee Genealogy Services is a business licensed by the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians.

This presentation is on Thursday, March 2, at 6:30 p.m., at the Swain County Regional Business Education and Training Center, 45 East Ridge Drive, Bryson City. East Ridge Dr. is a right turn off Buckner Branch Road which is west of Ingles. Conversation and refreshments will follow the presentation. This is free and open to the public.

Galapagos photo program at library March 2

See the Galapagos Islands through an artist's eyes on Thursday, March 2, 6:30pm, in the Macon County Public Library Meeting Room. One of the world's most volcanically active areas, the Galapagos Archipelago is famous for its unusual wildlife. In 2022, professional artist and avid globe-trotter Maryellen Tully toured the Islands and Equator, inspiring new art work and resulting in an abundance of photographs which she will share in this informal presentation.

A versatile visual artist and educator, Ms. Tully worked as a school art teacher for 32 years, leading students in creativity including drawing, painting, ceramics, 3-D construction,



and fiber arts. She currently specializes in silk-fabric painting; her work is available at the Uptown Gallery, 30 E. Main Street, Franklin, where she continues to teach children and adults.

The event is free and open to everyone. Light refreshments will be served. The Library is at 149 Siler Farm Road, Franklin, with lighted parking and wheelchair access. This program is co-produced by the Arts Council of Macon County and the Macon County Art Association; for information phone 828-524-ARTS or email arts4all@dnet.net.





RIPS Volleyball Club 13u Team takes first place finish in Gold Division at the Southern Volleyball Tournament Commander's Cup, in Atlanta, Ga.

RIPS looking to fill void in Elite volleyball training

RIPS Volleyball Club, a new youth volleyball program in Clayton, Ga., has announced its highly successful inaugural season. The program, which launched in September, has insofar exceeded all expectations in terms of both participation and performance.

RIPS Volleyball Club was established with the goal of providing a safe, supportive, and elite training environment for youth volleyball players to develop their skills and love for the game. Led by experienced coaches and staff, the program offers a comprehensive training program and tournament schedule that focuses on individual skill development, teamwork, and sportsmanship.

In addition to regular practices and a full tournament schedule, RIPS Volleyball Club also organized a number of community outreach events to foster a sense of teamwork among players and give back to the community.

With four teams and players representing nine different schools covering an 80-mile radius, RIPS Volleyball Club as a whole is currently ranked in the top 25% of all teams in the Southern Region of USA Volleyball.

"We are incredibly proud of what our young athletes have accomplished this first season," said program co-director/founder Tammi Nowack. "Their dedication and hard work, along with the support of our coaches and staff, have

helped build a strong foundation for the future of volleyball in our area. We look forward to continuing to grow and develop this program in the coming years."

"Volleyball participation in the U.S. has seen steady growth in the last decade for both boys and girls. We've had the talent in our area but we saw a need for an elite training and instruction for players who are having to travel to Asheville and Atlanta for a top-notch club volleyball experience that we should be building right here. We want to fill that gap," said Ali Wilkins, program co-director.

The success of RIPS VC's inaugural season has already generated significant interest from youth volleyball players and families across the region. Plans for the next season are already underway, with a focus on expanding the program's offerings and providing even more opportunities for young athletes to thrive.

For more information, visit www.ripsvolleyball.com.



RIPS Volleyball Club 14u Team tallies a first place finish in Gold Division at the Peachstate Tour Stop.

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Arrest Report

The Macon County Sheriff's Department, Franklin Police Department or Jackson County Sheriff's Department made the following arrests Feb. 13 - 20. All suspects are innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.



Macon County Sheriff's Department

February 13

Elizabeth Phillips Crane, was charged with second degree burglary, larceny after break/enter, possession of stolen goods/property and injury to real property. Sergeant Jonathan A. Taylor made the arrest.

February 14

Alexis Miles Bragg, was charged with misdemeanor larceny. Deputy Cody J. Howard made the arrest.

Fernando Esa Alvarez-Blanco, was charged with possession of firearm by a convicted felon. Sergeant James E. Crawford III made the arrest.

Thomas Patrick Weaver, was charged with failure to appear. Joel Lynch made the arrest.

Robert David Burch, was charged with possession of methamphetamine, possession of drug paraphernalia, resist/obstruct/delay law enforcement officer, probation violation, second degree burglary, larceny, possession of stolen goods/property and injury to real property. Joseph A. Raby made the arrest.

February 15

William Jonathan Carpenter, was charged with warrant service for offenses committed in jurisdiction. Lieutenant Nick Lofthouse made the arrest.

Rachel Jewel Urrutia, was charged with offense committed in jurisdiction. Deputy E. Sands made the arrest.

Brittany Gibson, was charged with breaking and entering to terrorize/injure and assault on a government officer/employee. Tristan Howard made the arrest.

Jonathan Wade Hurst, was charged with child support enforcement contempt. Matthew D. Long made the arrest.

Stacy Lynn Burton, was charged with failure to appear. Tristan Howard made the arrest.

February 16

William Dale Sheffield, was charged with failure to appear for domestic violence protective order violation. David Blanton made the arrest.

Reyna Angelica Garcilita, was charged with true bill of indictment. David Blanton made the arrest.

February 17

Matthew Owen Carpenter, was charged with true bill of indictment. Sergeant James E. Crawford made the arrest.

Christopher Bryan Lococo, was charged with assault on a female. William D. Stamey made the arrest.

Stoney Beaver, was charged with breaking and entering, larceny, possession of stolen goods/property and injury to real property. Deputy Cody J. Howard made the arrest.

Donald Victor Shook, was charged with obtaining property by false pretenses and possession of stolen goods/property. Deputy Cody J. Howard made the arrest.

February 18

Heidi Johanna Dreml, was charged with possession of methamphetamine, possession of drug paraphernalia and felony possession of a schedule I controlled substance. Sergeant James E. Crawford III made the arrest.

Daniel Lee Jenkins, was charged with violate domestic violence protective order. Deputy Cody J. Howard made the arrest.

February 19

Lisa Denise Crisp, was charged with breaking and entering and injury to real property. Deputy Cody J. Howard made the arrest.

Adam Brock Crawford, was charge with drug/narcotic violation. Deputy E. Sands made the arrest.

Franklin Police Department

February 13

Ryan Christopher Kopp, was charged with carrying a concealed gun, driving while license revoked, improper passing and consume under 21. R.S. Dula made the arrest.

February 14

Austin Richard Dyer-Cook, was charged with assault on a female. L.S. Beegle made the arrest.

February 15

Justin Johnson Stanfield, was charged with possession with intent to sell/deliver methamphetamine, possession with intent to sell/deliver cocaine, maintain a vehicle for use/safe/keeping of a controlled substance, possession of drug paraphernalia, display fictitious registration plate, driving while license revoked, cover registration plate, expired registration plate, and speeding (70 mph in 55 mph zone). R.S. Dula made the arrest.

Jackson County Sheriff's Department

February 13

Linda Andretti Parker, 51, of Sylva, was charged with simple assault. No bond was set.

Michael Scott Parker, 61, of Sylva, was charged with assault on a female. No bond was set.

Zachary Martin Bonbay, 28, of Cherokee, was charged with child support purge. A secured bond of \$627 was set.

Tabitha Sherell Henry, 33, of Sylva, was charged with failure to appear for possession of a schedule I controlled substance, possession of drug paraphernalia and shoplifting goods. A secured bond of \$1,500 was set.

February 14

Simon Hans Joest, 27, of Whittier, was charged with trespass of real property, destruction/damage/vandalism of property. An unsecured bond of \$500 was set.

Amanda Lee Mesyk, 34, of Cullowhee, was charged with breaking and entering a motor vehicle, felony larceny and other larceny. A secured bond of \$30,000 was set.

Levi Eric Jones, 28, of Canton, was charged with four out of county warrants. A secured bond of \$15,000 was set.

Jerry Lee Stiwinter, 48, of Franklin, was charged with two out of county warrants. A secured bond of \$3,000 was set.

Harvey Douglas Bumgarner, 37, of Sylva, was charged with failure to appear for felony larceny. A secured bond of \$50,000 was set.

Jody Dawn Bell, 42, of Cullowhee, was charged with violation of domestic violence protective order. A secured bond of \$500 was set.

Gracie-Madison Lemke, 20, was charge with warrant for extradition. A secured bond of \$200 was set.

February 15

Jasper Isaac Groenwold, 30, of Whittier, was charged with assault on a female. No bond was set.

Tansi Elaine Young, 42, of Cherokee, was charged with probation violation. A secured bond of \$1,500 was set.

Eric Daniel Vaughn, 40, of Cherokee, was charged with two out of county warrants and resist a public officer. A secured bond of \$30,000 was set.

Samuel Jacob Crisp, 26, of Sylva, was charged with weapon on educational property, communicating threats and assault on a female. A secured bond of \$10,000 was set.

David James Leary, 45, of Whittier, was charged with out of county warrant. No bond was set.

Michelle Lee Ann Bryson, 31, of Cullowhee, was charged with failure to appear for aid and abet for driving while intoxicated. A secured bond of \$1,500 was set.

February 16

Sara Jane Elizabeth Pannell, 19, was charged with failure to appear for felony larceny and shoplifting. A secured bond of \$20,000 was set.

Thomas Paul Trantham, 27, of Sylva, was charged with felony conspiracy, possession of stolen goods, felony larceny and failure to appear for driving while license revoked. A secured bond of \$32,000 was set.

February 17

Jimi Ray Bivins, 45, of Cashiers, was charged with assault by pointing a gun and carrying a concealed weapon. A secured bond of \$1,000 was set.

Barney Ruben Rich, 62, of Whittier, was charged with give/sell alcohol to under 21 and contribute to the delinquency of a juvenile. A citation was given.

Caleb-William Keatley, 26, of Union, S.C., was charged with assault on a female. No bond was set.

Amanda Rose Touger, 36, of Sylva, was charged with obtaining property by false pretense, possession of stolen property and felony conspiracy. A written promise was secured.

Bradley Christopher Burke, 32, of Cullowhee, was charged with communicating threats. A written promise was secured.

Gabrielle Louise Pero, 34, of Cullowhee, was charged with communicating threats. A written promise was secured.

Sandy Ernestine Whitaker, 32, of Sylva, was charged with simple assault. A written promise was secured.

Destiny Marie Stewart, 25, of Sylva, was charged with obtain property by false pretense and financial card fraud. A written promise was secured.

Timothy Arthur Wallis, 31, was charged with false imprisonment, injury to real property. A secured bond of \$1,000 was set.

February 18

Doyle Dooger Ramirez, was charged with felony flee to elude, fail to yield blue light and siren, careless and reckless driving, resist/obstruct/delay, speeding (70 mph in 50 mph zone), possession of drug paraphernalia, littering < 15 pounds, cover/conceal registration plate, failure to maintain lane, rear lamps violation and possession of firearm by felon. R.S. Dula made the arrest.

Edge Dakota Fortner, 33, of Bryson City, was charged with child support purge. Bond was set by other county.

February 19

Lazaro Thomas Cedillo, 21, of Sylva, was charged with assault on a female. No bond was set.

February 20

Fracisco A. Caballero, 58, of Miami, Fla., was charged with simple assault. A secured bond of \$500 was set.

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; allergies in the family; and any specialty items needed, like diapers, etc. Pick up is at Bethel UMC, 81 Bethel Church Road, off Highlands Road.

Start Your Recovery.org is a groundbreaking website developed by bringing together experts in substance misuse treatment from leading nonprofit, academic, and government institutions. Through this resource, the community can find local support and treatment options; hear stories from individuals with similar life experiences; and learn about recognizing and dealing with substance misuse.

Visually Impaired New Support Group will be held on Thursday, Feb. 23, 2 p.m. The group is for impaired individuals, spouses, caregivers and others who are interested. They will provide information about equipment and services from the Division of Services for the Blind as well as giving individuals a chance to interact with others who are equally challenged by vision loss. For more information, call (828)349-2058.

Yoga in the Living Room Thursday, Feb. 23, 6 to 7 p.m. in the Macon County Public Library. Vinyasa flow yoga moves mindfully through the body with the breath to create a deep sense of calm and relaxation, releasing tension, stress and anxiety. Bring a mat and plan to arrive by 5:55 p.m. before the doors lock at 6 p.m. The library is located at 149 Siler Farm Road, Franklin. For more information, call (828)524-4800.

Bascom, A Center for the Visual Arts Free Reception will be held on Thursday, Feb. 23, at 5 p.m. to highlight its winter exhibitions. The Bascom is featuring 11 exhibitions this year in its gallery spaces, including Emergence: A Survey of Southeastern Studio Programs 2023; The Ravel & The Rest; and Selections from the Permanent Collection: Origins. The reception is open to the public and includes refreshments and brief remarks by Executive Director Karin Peterson. The center is located at 323 Franklin Rd., Highlands.

Free Musical Entertainment at Frog Quarters Saturday, March 25, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Barry Roma is the featured musician. Frog Quarters is located at 573 E. Main St.

Franklin Covenant Church Drive through Hot Lunch, Food Pantry Items and Prayer as Requested will be held on Saturday, Feb. 25, starting at 11 a.m. The church is located at 265 Belleview Park Rd.

American Red Cross Blood Drive will be held on Monday, Feb. 27, from 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., at Lowe's of Franklin, 161 Franklin Plaza. Donors of all blood types particularly type O blood donors, which is the most needed blood group by hospitals. Book a time to give blood by visiting RedCrossBlood.org, downloading the Red Cross Blood Donor App, or calling 1-800-RED CROSS.

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

First Fridays with NC Works Job Assistance will be held on Friday, March 3, 2 to 4 p.m. One-on-one help with resumes, interview prep, job search assistance and more. For more information, call (828)332-6060.

Nantahala Hiking Club will host author Nancy East on Thursday, March 9, 6 p.m., at the Macon County Public Library. She will talk about her book "Chasing the Smokies Moon." Synopsis: "Two lives lost too soon. When a search and rescue member's unresolved grief is triggered by tragedy, will a life-changing hike end in hope? An audacious 948-mile hike fueled by love, loss, laughter, and lunacy is a thought-provoking memoir." All are welcome. www.nantahalahikingclub.org

Share the Journey Support Group for Caregivers whose loved ones are experiencing memory loss will meet on Wednesday, March 15 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.

Aglow International meeting will be held on Saturday, March 18, 10 a.m. to 12 noon, at the First Pentecost Church, 164 lolta Church Rd., Franklin. For more information call, Marybeth at (407)951-4286.

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 and 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.

Crawford Senior Center officers a variety of classes to older adults in Macon County. Classes include arts, crafts, exercise, and more. They also offer a variety of support groups: dementia caregivers, visually impaired persons, grief support and multiple sclerosis support group. For more information, call (828)349-2058 ext. 0.

Crawford Senior Center Care Connection Adult Day Program offers activities and supervision for adults with dementia and other forms of memory loss. For more information, call (828)349-0211 ext. 0.

CHURCH HAPPENINGS

Spiritual Light Center on Sunday, Feb. 26, 11 a.m., Ashley Russell will be the guest speaker, the title of her talk is "lets talk about that voice in your head." 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.

Snow Hill United Methodist Church Sunday worship with music is held at 10:45 a.m., morning worship service 11 a.m. Pastor D'Andre Ash is the pastor. The church is located at 330 Snow Hill Rd., in the Cowee Community.

Grace Baptist Church services are held on Sunday, 11 a.m. Frank Rodriguez is the pastor. All are welcome to attend. The church is located at 130 Setser Branch Rd.

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship is an inclusive faith community that celebrates life in all its joy and mystery. Inspiring and sharing journeys of love, learning, justice, and hope. For information, call (828)342-0546.

Seventh Day Adventist Church meets on Saturday, with Sabbath School at 9:30 a.m., Worship Service at 11 a.m. Masks are optional. The church is located at 71 Brendle Rd.

All Saints Episcopal Church, Franklin Services are held Rite I, 8 a.m. without music and Rite II, 10:15 a.m. with music, every Sunday. First and third Sundays at St. Agnes Chapel, 66 Church St. and second and fourth Sundays at St. Cyprian's Chapel, 216 Roller Mill Rd. Sunday 10:15 a.m. services can be viewed live on the website: www.allsaintsfranklin.org and past Sundays can be viewed on YouTube search "All Saints Franklin".

Olive Hill Church Services are held on Sunday at 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; and Wednesdays at 7 p.m. Pastor is Keith McWhite. The church is located at 2389 Olive Hill Road.

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.

Email your church events to maconcountynews@gmail.com

SUDOKU ANSWERS FOR PG. 22

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

CROSSWORD PUZZLE ANSWERS FOR PG. 22

B	E	R	G						
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Three native sons impacting Nashville's Country music scene

Deena C. Bouknight – Contributing Writer

Three friends, two from Franklin and one from Sylva, are making their mark on the country music scene in Nashville, Tenn. Their music roots are steeped in tradition and bluegrass, and their family roots run deep in the Appalachian Mountains.

Sylva-born John Morgan is the frontman for a group of musicians that includes childhood friends Caleb Bates and Rob Ricotta, both of whom were raised in Franklin, and a new member, Joey Maliszewski, a guitarist who hails from Tennessee. In the past few years, the three Western North Carolina friends have found such burgeoning success in country music that they gravitated to where the action is: Nashville. Yet, Morgan, Bates, and Ricotta have held fast to their towns of origin – visiting family and friends as much as their increasingly busy schedules allow.

From Bluegrass to Country

Twenty-seven-year-old Morgan grew up in Sylva in



Sylva native, John Morgan, who started playing with the local Mountain Faith Band at age 10, is making a name for himself in Nashville, Tenn.'s country music scene.

His “biggest influence” in country music was Keith Whitley, who died in 1989, but who had “a similar transition” from bluegrass to country as Morgan has experienced. Morgan explained that his musical talent led him, like Whitley, into writing music and singing. Four years ago, he moved from Sylva to Nashville, Tenn., to become entrenched in the country music scene.

“Being an artist has always been my dream – my end goal. Song writing is a huge step in getting in that direction. I take it seriously. I love performing [singing and primarily playing the guitar] and songwriting equally.”

Morgan said he has not put out a full album yet, but he and his band have released a growing list of singles, most recently, “Friends Like That,” released in the latter part of 2022. And his songwriting has captured the attention and support of well-known country music performers, including Jason Aldean, who has two number one songs written by Morgan – “Trouble with a Heartbreak,”

and “If I Didn’t Love You,” which Aldean sings with Carrie Underwood. And, last year, for 40 dates, Morgan and his band were a part of Aldean’s “Rock and Roll Cowboy” tour. It was the first full music tour for Morgan, Bates, and Ricotta.

“It was a good learning curve for us,” said Morgan.

A highlight of most performances on the tour was that Aldean asked Morgan to pick a song so they could perform it together on stage. “‘The Truth’ is one of my favorites,” added Morgan. “I got to sing that with him for most concerts. It was a good tour. And I have been fortunate enough for my songs to be on his last album, which is a double anniversary edition for [Aldean] as an artist.”

Last year, Morgan also landed a spot on NBC’s “American Song Contest” and advanced to the semi-finals with his original song “Right in the Middle.”

Musical bonding

It was in the Myriad Media Studios (which is now Backlot Cinema) in the Franklin Plaza, that Morgan and Ricotta solidified their friendship.

They had known each other since middle school, but working together to record music in the studio resulted in them becoming “good friends.” Morgan and Bates had been acquainted even longer, since elementary school.

“Rob moved to Nashville a year before I did, and I slept on his couch until I got my own place,” said Morgan. “Caleb moved about two years ago, and he slept on my couch for a bit.”

Ricotta, the band’s drummer, said he realized from a young age that music was his calling.

“I had fairly good rhythm,” he said, “and both of my parents, Bob and Nancy Ricotta, can sing and play instruments. They were aware there might be the musical bug in me also. So, my mother started me on piano from 7 years old until I was 12 years of age.”

While he quit piano lessons because he said “I was tired of practicing,” he approached his parents at age 14 and told them his true desire was to play the drums. “My father came home with an old jazz drum kit one day, and I never looked back after discovering this brilliant instrument!”

“John Morgan spurred the musical gifting in me,” Ricotta added. “And, Robert Browning with Sheets to the Wind Music Publishing, made sure John succeeded in starting demos at Myriad Media. I also have to thank the churches and youth groups in which I was a small part. Individuals such as Kevin Ford, Patrick Moore, Andrew Gouge were so helpful in spurring me on in music with a Biblical foundation.”

Ricotta said that before joining Morgan as a band member, “I would play for events, ceremonies, and in (various) bands. There were gatherings when I played for free, simply for the love of making music. Whatever scale of playing, whether it has been for four people or for thousands, I count it all as the ebbs and flows of being a



Bass guitarist and Franklin native Caleb Bates, (in front) works with long-time friend, fellow band member, and singer-songwriter John Morgan in a Franklin recording studio in their younger days.

a musically talented extended family. He learned to play the mandolin, bass, banjo, and guitar as a kid, and by age 10 was making music with his cousins in the nationally recognized bluegrass-genre Mountain Faith Band (now known as Summer and Bray). For eight years, he played locally, nationally, and even in Canada – until he went off to college. It was while he was in college in 2015, that Mountain Faith Band competed in “America’s Got Talent.”

Documentarian Ken Burns’ “Country Music” series focuses on how bluegrass is the foundation for country music, and Morgan agrees.

“I was always a country music fan, but bluegrass gave me my musical roots,” he said. “Bluegrass is one of the best genres to plant your roots because it stems to so many different kinds of music; blues, jazz, rock, bluegrass, and country have some of the same chord structures. And bluegrass enabled me to become a strong picker and player.”



Rob Ricotta, who hails from Franklin, is garnering success in country music currently as a drummer with his long-time friend, John Morgan.



During last year's "Rock and Roll Cowboy Tour," country music star Jason Aldean often invited John Morgan on stage to perform a song with him.

'professional' musician."

Bates, the band's bass guitarist, explained that "the key to music enjoyment for me is to be doing it with friends. I guess I never really thought about it, but all the music I've ever played has been with friends. It's awesome to travel with friends and experience this with people with so many common backgrounds and experiences."

He began playing mandolin in 2007, when he was 15.

"I played a little guitar and bass back then, but through the years, I just kind of picked bass up here and there. I played bass in bands for a few years, but it wasn't until I began playing bass with John that I really took it seriously. He told me I had a knack for it. When he asked me to play for him in 2020, I began actually focusing on bass instead of mandolin and guitar."

Like Morgan and Ricotta, Bates said he has always loved music. And, once he began playing, he said, "All other hobbies took a back seat. I went to college for music ministry, but it wasn't until John gave me this opportunity that I legitimately saw it as a career."

Besides music, faith in God is another factor the three friends have in common. Morgan and Bates' parents were friends at church before the two were born. Morgan and Bates attended Victory Christian School in Sylva and Ricotta, Trimont Christian Academy in Franklin. Morgan's cousin, Marilyn Betts, who helped drive the tour bus last year, said it was heartening to see the band members "start every tour with prayer. And I could hear them discussing the Bible when I was driving."

"Being a believer and child of God does inform, inspire, and motivate my music personally," pointed out Ricotta. "Music is my therapy, whether playing it, writing it, or making it with other people. I also believe that scripture says God 'sings over us,' and that's always been an amazing thought to me – that music is a massive part of how God communicates with us."

Moving forward

Morgan said the band "hit the ground running" when it came off the "Rock and Roll Cowboy" tour. "We are currently in the process of getting some new songs cut, with March 3 as the release date for our next single."

In addition, Morgan is presenting music he has written to other well-known country music artists besides Aldean.

When he writes, he tries to keep it real.

"Country music is that genre that focuses on real life stuff. People want to hear something real and relatable."

While Morgan enjoys all aspects of the music process, being in the studio is a highlight.

"I like to touch each moving part of the creative process," he said.

Ricotta's goal as a drummer is to always "get better at the craft of playing and writing. I plan to make my own individual significant mark on the industry and not be a copycat artist. I can be informed and inspired by other songwriters and musicians. Yet, it's ultimately up to me to carve my own journey and to leave my own unique signature on the industry."

Ricotta noted that the band's association with Jason Aldean has been important in a number of ways. Yet, primarily, he respects Aldean's willingness to connect with other artists.

"Jason is one of the most hands-on, encouraging, and caring individuals and artists. He has inspired us to build a foundation on faithfulness and trust with our own team. He has been an unlimited resource of support to not only John, but all of us, welcoming us like genuine family," said Ricotta.

"Jason's bass player, Tully Kennedy, has greatly helped me improve my bass playing," added Bates. "He's always

encouraged me. I guess one of the biggest 'aha' moments was when he told Rob (after he hadn't heard us for a while) that I sounded like a totally different bass player because I had really put a lot of practice into it during that time. That was an encouraging moment."

Although Nashville has become the city where the three friends' music careers are escalating, Western North Carolina is still their home. Morgan married last year, and he and his wife, Hailey, have an 11-month-old daughter, Willie.

"Sylva is home for me," he said. "Some people in my time of growing up there were jaded because they felt trapped in a small place that didn't offer much ... felt like there were limited opportunities. But I think my upbringing there was crucial to getting me where I am now. I was supported and able to focus on what I wanted to do. Home is a reset – a chance to remember what matters in life: Family."

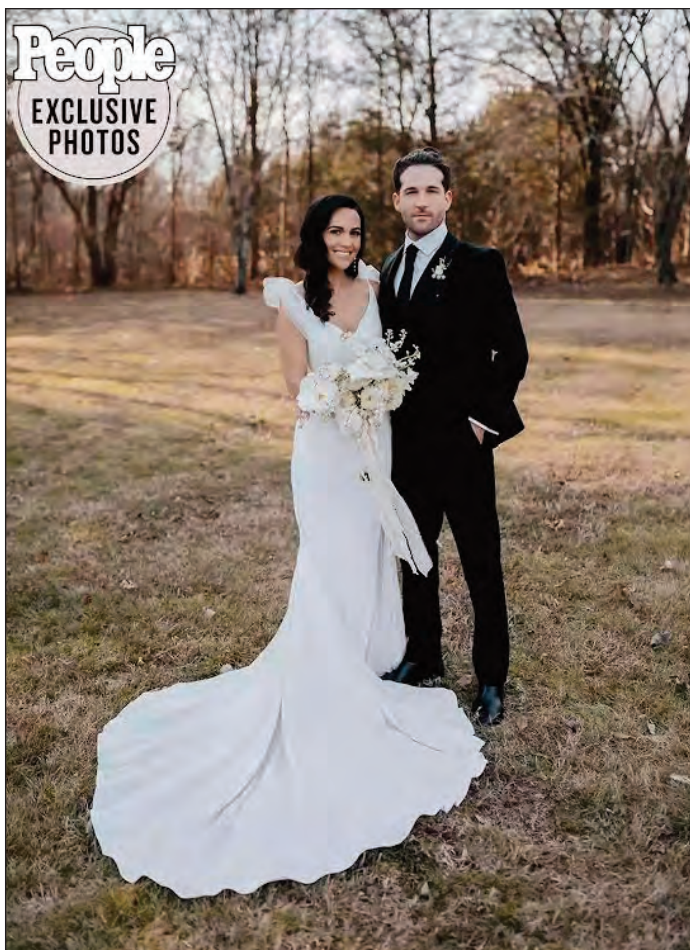
Morgan's younger brother, Bryan, worked on the "Rock and Roll Cowboy" tour as a stage manager last year.

"And my dad, Bobby, and my cousin, Marilyn [Betts] helped drive the tour bus. And it's my mom, Tammy, who is our prayer warrior – keeping us safe on the road."

Recently, a music video was filmed in the Blue Ridge Mountains for one of Morgan's songs, "Man of Few Words," and the video will be released sometime in the spring or early summer. An EPK (Electronic Press Kit) about Morgan focuses on his Western North Carolina roots.

Ricotta married country music artist Jennifer Hart on New Year's Day. The couple originally met at a songwriting session. Getting to Franklin to visit family and friends is important to Ricotta.

"Growing up in such a beautiful place in the mountains and with true country heritage has always given me the opportunity to write about how I truly grew up 'country,'" he said.



A Franklin native and the drummer for John Morgan's band, Rob Ricotta, married on New Year's Day country music artist Jennifer Hart, who he met at a recording studio; photographing the wedding was People magazine.

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February is a time to strengthen our hearts

Clint Kendall
Angel Medical Center CEO

As we leave February behind, the shortest month that can sometimes feel like the longest as it's the last gasp of winter — I have a question: If you made New Year's resolutions for yourself, are you still actively working toward them? If so, research shows that you aren't alone. In fact, 64% of those who made a resolution successfully kept it one month in.

What accounts for this success? This group broke down their goal into achievable milestones, didn't bite off more than they could chew, and have already celebrated one or two successes. Doesn't that feel great? Congratulations on rocking life and making the right choices so you create positive change in your health and wellness, finances, and other pivotal parts of your life.

Perhaps your health-related resolutions dovetail with the heart-healthy practices we turned our attention to in February, which is also Heart Health Month. It's the ideal time, the month of Valentine's Day, to focus on what we can do improve overall health to avoid a heart attack.

Unfortunately, many of the things we crave aren't the best for us as we try to support our heart health, even when our favorite treats are traditional Southern fare. Think fried chicken, buttery biscuits, and bar-b-que. And I'm not being self-righteous here — I relish these dishes as much as anyone else! I am just as guilty as anyone in my love of sweets as well. There's a good chance you'll run into me at a local donut or ice cream shop.

This is all to say that in spite of what I do for work, I understand how hard it can be to enjoy a truly balanced diet, as opposed to one that's limited to not-so-healthy foods. I'm sure I'm not the only one either, whose mother thinks they're ill if they don't sidle up to the buffet table for a third portion. If your resolutions are diet-related, it's especially true that making lasting changes toward eating a healthier diet of nutrient-dense fruits and vegetables, lean proteins, and other smart choices is an endeavor that needs to be broken down into achievable pieces, and you should celebrate every success.

There are lots of doable steps you can take to improve your diet, including being more conscious when you shop for groceries — avoiding those "impulse buys," for example, experimenting with healthier condiments and spices as alternatives to butter and gravies, having meatless Mondays, and more.



Clint Kendall

For better heart health, there are easy ways to increase your daily movement too, and ensure you get the advised 150 minutes of moderate physical activity per week in, as well as two days that include muscle strengthening. This is advised by the US Department of Health and Human Services' Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans. Sticking to something you enjoy, whether it's walking, taking a hike, or enrolling in a dance class will make exercise fun, as opposed to another "should."

We also know that the better we can manage our stress, the healthier our hearts will be. We all experience stress, and certain periods can be worse than others. Rather than let it take over your life, learn how to ask for help if you need it, spend some time outdoors, and choose healthy habits over unhealthy ones. Here again, eating well and fitting in daily exercise is much better for your heart than smoking or working until all hours. Maintaining our valued relationships with friends and family is also a proven stress buster.

But what if the unthinkable occurs to you or a loved one, and a heart attack happens? Suffering a heart attack doesn't spell the end of a meaningful life. In fact, many people who experience one say it was actually the beginning of managing their health better. Your recovery should be managed by your doctor, and the first step is Cardiac Rehab, an all-encompassing program where you learn healthy habits that help your heart going forward, as you regain strength — after all, your heart is possibly your most important muscle.

Patients speak highly of cardiac rehab because it not only involves the critical education component, you experience rare camaraderie with your rehab classmates. You're all going through this together, and the bonds rehab participants build are both inspiring and empowering. Angel Medical Center is proud to offer a robust Cardiac Rehabilitation program, where you're closely supervised and cheered on by the providers at the Rehab Center. If you've survived a heart attack, talk with your doctor about getting a referral to our program to see if you qualify to participate.

Possibly the most important task we all face is examining our hearts and actions to make certain that we treat everyone we meet with the respect they deserve. I share Martin Luther King Jr.'s dream of a world where we're not just accepted, but loved for who we are. We can make the decision to be the change we wish to see in the world.

Finally, this spirit definitely lives on at AMC. I am thankful to this community for the warmth they've shown me and the AMC staff who don't happen to be Western North Carolina natives. Feeling included and welcome means everything, and as we face some of the challenges of the Great Resignation that followed the pandemic, our community is making all new AMC staff feel welcome and embrace their new home.

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

Red Cross: Three reasons to give blood this month

One in 7 patients entering a hospital will need a blood transfusion. At the same time, only about 3% of Americans give blood. The American Red Cross needs more people to make and keep appointments to give blood or platelets in February and has three great reasons to do so:

- Help prevent a blood shortage: Winter brings seasonal illness and dangerous weather, which can hurt the blood supply. When donors give now, they can help ensure blood is on hospital shelves when it's needed.

- It's Heart Month: During a blood donation appointment, the Red Cross checks donors' blood pressure and pulse, which are important indicators of heart health.

- Treat yourself: All who come to give in February will get

a \$10 Amazon.com Gift Card by email, thanks to Amazon. Those who come to donate this month will also automatically be entered to win a trip for two to Clearwater Beach, Florida. Details are available at RedCrossBlood.org/heart.

Donors of all blood types — particularly type O blood donors, the most needed blood group by hospitals — are needed daily to meet demand. Protect the blood supply from dropping — book a time to give blood by visiting RedCrossBlood.org, downloading the Red Cross Blood Donor App, or calling 1-800-RED CROSS.

Locally, an American Red Cross Blood Drive will be held Monday, Feb. 27, from 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., at Lowe's just behind Franklin Plaza off Georgia Road.



Deaths & Funerals

Betty Ann Ledford Worley

Betty Ann Ledford Worley, 74, of Otto, N.C., passed away Wednesday, Feb. 15, 2023.

She was born in Macon County, to the late Paul and Ida Patton Ledford. She was also preceded in death by her husband, Don Worley; two sons, Erik and Derrick Worley; brothers, Ray, Delano, Lester, James Silas, John Wiley, Lawrence David, and Paul Ledford Jr.; two sisters, Maggie Mason and Amy Sue Cody. She was a member of Black Mountain Baptist Church.

She is survived by her son, Darren Worley (Yunaya) of Otto; brothers, Charles Ledford of Franklin, and Gene Ledford of Franklin; and several nieces and nephews.

A funeral service was held Saturday, Feb. 18, in the chapel of Macon Funeral Home with Rev. Frank Rodriguez officiating. Burial was in the Pleasant Hill Baptist Cemetery.

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

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



Betty Ann Worley

Robert Ronald 'Bob' Peters

Robert Ronald "Bob" Peters, 80, of Franklin, N.C., formerly of Dexter, Mich., passed away Monday, Feb. 13, peacefully at his home, after a short illness.

Born July 31, 1942, in Ann Arbor, Mich., the only child of the late Howard A. and Gustie G. Stagner Peters, he was a graduate of Ann Arbor High School, member of Post #46 Hunt and Fish Club of Dexter, Mich., former member of the Dexter Lions Club, and a retired electrician, IBEW Local #252 of Ann Arbor.

He was an active member of Iotla Baptist Church, Franklin, involved in the Wednesday night kitchen crew, Berean Sunday School class, special historical projects, sang in the church choir, and served on the church facility committee.

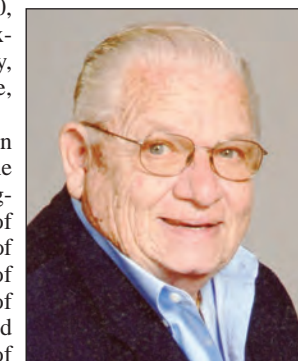
A proud father and grandfather, he spent his retirement attending local auctions, reading, building his antique collection, splitting wood with his good friend George, and working with his gun collection. He will be remembered for his warm smile, generosity, and his love of the mountains.

He is survived by his son, Jeffrey Peters, of Chelsea, Mich.; daughter, Jill (Neil) Covington, of Dexter; grandchildren, Matthew Ringlein of Ann Arbor, and Katherine Ringlein of Grand Rapids, Mich.; stepchildren, Mark (Stephanie) LaVigne of Pinckney, Mich., Rachele (Rob) Day of Scottsdale, Ariz.; Brandi (Antonio) Whitehead, of Southfield, Mich.; step niece Brooke (Alvin) Arabo of Scottsdale; and several step grandchildren.

A celebration of life will be held Saturday, Feb. 25, 11 a.m., at Iotla Baptist Church. The family will receive friends from 10 to 11 a.m., one hour prior to the service. Rev. Brandon Breedlove will officiate.

In lieu of flowers, memorials can be made to; Iotla Baptist Church, 1537 Iotla Church Rd, Franklin, NC 28734.

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



Robert Ronald Peters



Deaths & Funerals

Patricia Anne Long Callahan

Patricia Anne Long Callahan, 84, passed away Sunday, Feb. 5, 2023, after a long battle with Progressive Supranuclear Palsy. She was born in Marion, N.C., on Feb. 15, 1938, to the late Thomas Hoyle Long and Bonnie Gibbs Long Jolley.

She graduated from Marion High School in 1956 and Western Carolina University when it was a Teachers College with a Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education.

She was a teacher in Ft. Lauderdale, Fla., where she taught kindergarten through third grade and after becoming certified, she taught special education. After 39 years of teaching, she retired and moved to Franklin in 1999.

She loved to read and had a special gift for storytelling. As one of her co-workers said, "You had the worst students mesmerized listening to every detail as you told a tale. They were engaged and their bad behaviors faded away while you spoke."

She was an avid runner, finishing her first 10K in 1983. She ran in several marathons, including the US Marine Corps Marathon in 1993 and twice in the Grandfather Mountain Marathon. The longest race she completed was the Tropical 50 Miler. It started at 7 p.m., running all night long finishing the entire 50 miles. Notably, she won first place in her age category in many of the races.

She was kind to everyone she met and had many friends. She was always thoughtful, never forgetting to wish family members and friends happy birthday by sending them cards and letters.

She is survived by two daughters, Cindy Renee Callahan of Franklin, N.C., and Jamie Lin Callahan of Coeur d Alene, Idaho; grandchildren, Seth Penland (Katie) of Flowery Branch, Ga., Patrick Penland (Sandra) of Hoschton, Ga., and August Penland of Franklin; two great granddaughters and two step great granddaughters; brothers, Van Long (Phillis) of Marion, James Long (Lib) of Marion, and Yorktown, Va., and Steve Long of Marion; sisters, Shelia Presley and Pamela Jolley of Marion,; and dear cousins, Gina Mewborn and Bette McC Carson.

A memorial service will be held for friends and family in Franklin on Saturday, March 4, at 11 a.m. in the old chapel at First Presbyterian Church. An additional memorial service will be held in Marion on March 11, at 3 p.m. at East Marion Baptist Church.

The family would like to especially thank Carolyn Gosnell for loving and caring for Ms. Pat for the last three years.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Humane Society or Best Friends Animal Society.

Moffitt Family Funeral Care is honored to serve the family. Online condolences may be made at www.moffittfunerals.com.



Patricia Anne Callahan

Ernest Russell Riddle

Ernest Russell Riddle, 86, of Franklin, N.C., passed away Feb. 14, 2023.

He was born in Granite Falls, N.C., to the late Clifford and Leora Welch Riddle. He was a machine operator for Burlington Mills for many years. He served our country in the Army during the Cuban Conflict and was stationed in Puerto Rico. He was a member of Tessentee Baptist Church. He loved his cats, dogs, being outside and most importantly spending time with his family.



Ernest Russell Riddle

He is survived by his son, Ernest Scott Riddle of Franklin; daughter, Leslie Day (Gregg) of Franklin; two grandchildren, Michelle Rholetter (Justin) of Morristown, Tenn., Emily Day of Franklin; three great-grandchildren, Landen, Jayda, and Kaylor.

A graveside service was held, Sunday, Feb. 19, at Prentiss Baptist Church Cemetery. Rev. Carl Carpenter officiated.

In lieu of flowers, memorial can be made to one's favorite animal shelter or humane society.

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

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.

Mary Rose Massey Lillard

Mary Rose Massey Lillard, 97, of Franklin, N.C., passed away Tuesday, Feb. 14, 2023.

She was born on July 15, 1925, in Grantville, Ga., to the late LeRoy and Mary Sue Hardaway Massey. She was preceded in death by her parents; husband of 57 years, Albert; infant daughter, Susan; son, Ray; and brothers, Roy, John, Harry, and Pete Massey.

She was a member of Iotla Baptist Church and had lived in Franklin since 1978. She was an active quilter, member of Sew 'n Sews and made pillowcases for cancer children in the hospital. She participated in the Relay for Life, as she herself had been a cancer survivor.

She is survived by her son, Jim Lillard (Marilyn) of Hendersonville; grandsons, Tim Lillard (Lori), Ben Lillard (Tiffany); granddaughters, Kim Smith (Nate), Jamie Freund (John); six great grandsons and three great granddaughters; several nieces and nephews; special sisters-in-law, Bonnie Massey and Mildred Asby; and a very special niece, Jan Orgaz.

A funeral service was held Monday, Feb. 20, at Iotla Baptist Church with Rev. Steve Reeves and Rev. Brandon Breedlove officiating. Burial was in the Iotla Baptist Church Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, memorials can be made to the American Cancer Society or Iotla Baptist Church.

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

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.



Mary Rose Lillard

Evelyn Florene Ervin Ramey

Evelyn Florene Ervin Ramey, 100, of Franklin, N.C., went home to be with Jesus, on Thursday, Feb. 16, 2023.

Born in Davidson, N.C., she was the daughter of the late Farris and Lessie Howard Ervin. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her loving husband of 57 years, Carlyle Judson Ramey Sr.; and seven siblings, Ethel Poteet, Marie Ridenhour, Bobbie Ridenhour, Eursly Anders, Raymond Ervin, Shirley Munday, and Howard Ervin.

She was of the Pentecostal faith and a charter member of Franklin First Assembly of God. During WWII, she worked for Boeing, where she worked on the inside of the wings of the B17 Bomber. She later retired from Georgia Power, where she had worked for many years. After retiring from Georgia Power, she owned Ramey's Plant Shop on the Highlands Road.

She is survived by two children, Evalee Ramey Egan (Thomas) of Charlotte, N.C., and C.J. Ramey Jr. (Maxine) of Franklin; three sisters, Marcia Radford of Cherokee, N.C., Carolyn Southers, of Albermarle, N.C., and Darlene Taylor of Jacksonville, Fla.; and one brother, Farris Ervin of Mooresville, N.C.; five grandchildren, Sean Carlyle Egan, Julie Egan, Jennifer Melvin, Becky Ramey VanderWoude, and Bonnie Forkner; five great grandchildren, Charles "Chase" Melvin V, Madeline Houck, Chandler Thomas Melvin, Bear Forkner, and Ollie Forkner; and numerous nieces and nephews.

Funeral service was Sunday, Feb. 19, in the chapel of Macon Funeral Home with Rev. David Bearden and Rev. Tom Grubb officiating. Burial was in the Woodlawn Cemetery.

Pallbearers were Sean Egan, Chase Melvin, Charles Melvin IV, David Forkner, Chris VanderWoude and Carey Houck.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to Levine & Dickson Hospice House Southminster, 8919 Park Road, Suite 1000, Charlotte, NC 28210; or Samaritan's Purse, PO Box 3000, Boone, NC 28607.

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



Evelyn Florene Ramey

Carl Henson

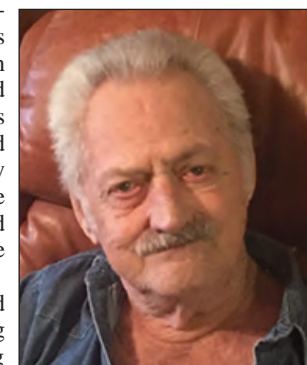
It is with great sadness the family of Carl Henson announces his passing on Feb. 17, 2023. Born on July 15, 1941, to Rufus R. and Hester Nicholson Henson, he was a loving husband, father, and grandfather. Known as Pappy by his family, he was a very private person who always had a kind word for those who were fortunate enough to know him.

He was a veteran of the United States Army. He enjoyed fishing and had the reputation of being one heck of a cook. His favorite pastime, however, was seeing old westerns on television. His family teased him about watching them from daylight until dark.

He is survived by his wife, Mona Robinson Henson; his children, Phillip Henson and Kimberly Loy (Bryan); his grandchildren, Dusty Dills (John), Shawn Cruse (Mady), Tyler Cruse (Brady), and Jessica Loy, (Blake); his great-granddaughter, Ciara Loy; and his siblings, James Henson, Alvin Henson, and Patsy Hall. He was preceded in death by his parents and his brother, Robert Henson.

His family is grateful for the wonderful and loving care given to him and offers a heartfelt thank you to the staffs of Grandview Manor, CarePartners Hospice, Macon County Communities Care Program and also to Patti A. Sparling, FNP.

No services are scheduled. Moffitt Family Funeral Care is honored to serve the family. Online condolences may be made at www.moffittfunerals.com.



Carl Henson

Moffitt Family FUNERAL CARE David Moffitt OWNER/FUNERAL DIRECTOR

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Ricky Stenhouse Jr. wins longest Daytona 500 in history in two overtimes

Reid Spencer – NASCAR Wire Service

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. — In the longest Daytona 500 in NASCAR history, Ricky Stenhouse Jr. got help from an unexpected source and won the sport's most prestigious race when a wild wreck froze the field in the second overtime.

Stenhouse and reigning NASCAR Cup Series champion Joey Logano were battling for the lead on Lap 212 when contact from Aric Almirola's Ford started Travis Pastrana's Toyota spinning in Turn 2. Pastrana's Camry clipped the Chevrolet of Kyle Larson and set it rocketing into the outside wall.

Tires screamed, sparks flew and smoke billowed as the cars of defending race winner Austin Cindric, Brad Keselowski, Kyle Busch, AJ Allmendinger, Denny Hamlin, Bubba Wallace and Ryan Blaney all were collected in the chaotic wreck.

But when NASCAR hit the button to illuminate the caution lights, Stenhouse's No. 47 JTG-Daugherty Chevrolet had edged ahead of Logano's Ford, thanks to a timely shove from the third-place finishing Toyota of Christopher Bell, who, like Stenhouse, arrived at the pinnacle of pavement racing from a dirt-track background.

NASCAR declared Stenhouse the winner of the 65th running of the event, a perfect christening of the renewed relationship between the driver and crew chief Mike Kelley, with whom Stenhouse won his two NASCAR Xfinity Series championships more than a decade earlier.

"Yeah, I think this whole off-season Mike just preached how much we all believed in each other," Stenhouse said after climbing from his car. "They left me a note in the car that said they believe in me and to go get the job done tonight. I made a few mistakes. We were able to battle back. This Kroger Continental team worked really, really hard in off-season, great pit stops, Hendrick engines.

"Man, this is unbelievable. This was the site of my last win back in 2017. We had a couple shots last year to get a win and fell short. It was a tough season, but, man, we got it done."

It was a remarkable victory and a perfect highlight for the 75th anniversary of NASCAR racing. Stenhouse is the first driver from a single-car team to win the Great American Race since Trevor Bayne shocked the racing world with the Wood Brothers Racing in 2011.

The win was Stenhouse's third in the Cup Series and first since he took the checkered flag in the Daytona summer race in 2017, snapping a streak of 199 races without a victory. JTG-Daugherty hadn't found Victory Lane since Allmendinger triumphed at Watkins Glen in 2014, a drought of 266 races.

With a push from Kyle Larson after the second overtime restart, Logano held the lead with one lap left.

"Second is the worst, man," Logano lamented. "Leading the white flag lap there, I was up front. Kyle gave me a good push and, yeah, you're watching in the mirror and you're three-wide across there. I felt like the three-wide was going a hurt a lane; looked like Kyle was getting pushed ahead, and then Ricky started getting pushed ahead.

"I knew if I went to the bottom my car didn't handle good enough. I already got pushed off the bottom once and I thought, if I go down there, I'm probably going to get wrecked, and I don't know if I can get down there in time to throw the block (on Stenhouse) and so I didn't want to wreck my car either."

At 212 laps (530 miles), this Daytona 500 was three laps and 7.5 miles longer than the 2020 race, which held the previous record.

Chris Buescher finished fourth after leading 32 laps, second most to Keselowski's 42. Pole winner Alex Bowman was fifth, followed by Allmendinger, Daniel Suarez, Ryan Blaney, Ross Chastain and race rookie Riley Herbst.



Ricky Stenhouse Jr., driver of the #47 Kroger/Cottonelle Chevrolet, and crew celebrate in victory lane after winning the NASCAR Cup Series 65th Annual Daytona 500 at Daytona International Speedway on Feb. 19, 2023 in Daytona Beach, Fla. Photo by Chris Graythen/Getty Images



Blaney made a remarkable recovery after sustaining serious damage in the first wreck of the afternoon. Until then, the calm of the first 295 miles of racing gave no indication of the chaos to come.

The race ran without incident until Lap 118, when contact from Kevin Harvick's Ford turned Tyler Reddick's Toyota sideways in Turn 4. After bouncing off the outside wall, Reddick's crippled No. 45 Camry came to rest at the entrance to pit road and was towed to the garage.

The No. 43 Chevrolet of Erik Jones and the No. 9 Camaro of 2020 series champion Chase Elliott also sustained terminal damage in what became a nine-car incident.

Blaney lost a lap on pit road under repair, while others involved—Kyle Larson, Kyle Busch, Daniel Suarez and Martin Truex Jr.—remained on the lead lap.

"It looked like some guys got tangled up, up front," Elliott said. "Those of us in the back were just scattering to kind of miss it. It looked like the No. 5 (Larson) and the No. 43 (Jones) kind of went to the apron. By the time we got slowed up, they were coming back across the track, and I was the lucky winner to get there first. It's a bummer—long ways to go. Hate to end the day, but it is what it is."

Hill wins NASCAR Xfinity opener in overtime photo finish at Daytona

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. — After Sam Mayer spun on the

roof of his Chevrolet on the backstretch at Daytona International Speedway, trailing a shower of sparks, Austin Hill, Justin Allgaier and John Hunter Nemechek sat in their cars and waited.

And after what must have seemed an eternity to the drivers, NASCAR reviewed video of the final lap of overtime and declared Hill the winner of his second straight season opener at the World Center of Racing in front of the largest crowd to witness an Xfinity Series race at Daytona since the \$400-million renovation of the facility in 2016.

A consummate superspeedway racer, Hill led a race-high 38 laps in Saturday's Beef. It's What's for Dinner. 300 and was narrowly ahead of surging John Hunter Nemechek when the sanctioning body called the caution for Mayer's spectacular accident on Lap 125—five circuits beyond the scheduled distance.

"As soon as the caution lights came on, I thought I had it, but it was so close," Hill said. "To get back-to-back here at Daytona, it's really special. That's three wins for me now, two in the Xfinity, one in the truck here. We came from the back two different times.

"I hope everyone enjoyed it. It was such a blast. I had so much fun. We won at Daytona! Let's go!"

Hill's first thought, however, was for Mayer. Contact between Hill's No. 21 Camaro and Mayer's No. 1 Chevrolet sent Mayer spinning and then flipping upside down until his car hit the infield grass and landed upright.

Mayer was treated and released from the infield care center. "When I saw the 1 (Mayer) and the 7 (Allgaier) get together, I just went to go squeeze them, and the 1 came down, he started getting loose, and then you can't lift—it's last lap," Hill said. "I hope Sam is OK, man. That was a heck of a flip there."

Allgaier, who was credited with a third-place finish, had another close call in the race that has eluded him.

"I've been short my whole life, so I guess it's just fitting,"

quipped the 5-foot-6-inch driver. “But really proud of everybody at JR Motorsports. Our Chevy Camaros tonight were absolutely blazing fast.

“Obviously, I’m glad Sam is OK. He had a heck of a run there at the end.”

Rookie Parker Retzlaff finished a career-best fourth, followed by Myatt Snider. Riley Herbst, Joe Graf Jr., Ryan Sieg, Cole Custer and Justin Haley completed the top 10.

Hill won the first stage, but only through Allgaier’s benevolence. On the final lap of the stage, Hill steered down the track to block Allgaier’s Chevrolet. Allgaier backed out of the throttle to give Hill room, as the rear bumper of Hill’s Camaro slid uncomfortably close to the nose of Allgaier’s car.

“If I don’t lift, I wreck the whole field,” Allgaier said on his radio. “It’s stupid racing.”

“Justin really cut me a break,” Hill acknowledged. “I really appreciate that from him.”

Allgaier must have gotten some karmic benefit from his magnanimity. When Parker Kligerman turned Sheldon Creed’s Chevrolet while bump-drafting near the entrance to Turn 1 on Lap 40, Allgaier’s Chevrolet spun sideways onto the apron behind the initial wreck.

After a tape job to the left rear of his car, Allgaier returned to the track, started at the rear of the field and quickly charged back into the lead on Lap 54. Allgaier went on to win the second stage, with Mayer close behind him.

“To go to the back and have that spin and just battle our way through, it’s crazy how fast our car was tonight and how good we were in traffic,” Allgaier said.

Unfortunately for the veteran driver, speed, maneuverability and good karma could carry him only so far.

Zane Smith wins second straight Daytona Truck Series season opener

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. — On the fifth try, rain finally got the better of Daytona International Speedway—and that was perfectly all right with reigning NASCAR Craftsman Truck Series champion Zane Smith. NASCAR called Friday night’s NextEra Energy 250 after 79 of a scheduled 100 laps, making Smith the winner when the fifth rain shower of the evening thwarted track-drying efforts.

In front of the largest crowd for a NASCAR Craftsman Truck Series race at Daytona since 2011, Smith won the season opener for the second straight year, having taken the lead for the final time on Lap 65.

The race would feature only four more green-flag laps after that, as rain continued to interrupt the proceedings.

“I tried to play that race as smart as possible,” said Smith, who will race in the Daytona 500 for the first time on Sunday. “When it was getting really aggressive, I was getting out of it. I knew these patches of rain were a thing in our Ford meeting earlier in the day. I didn’t think it would stick around for this long.

“I just wanted to be there after Stage 2 was over. You never know what can happen. A huge, huge shoutout to all the race fans. I apologize so much that we couldn’t go back racing for you all. Hopefully, we’ll give you guys a good show tomorrow



Austin Hill, driver of the #21 Bennett Transportation Chevrolet, celebrates in victory lane after winning the NASCAR Xfinity Series Beef. It’s What’s For Dinner. 300 at Daytona International Speedway on Feb. 18, 2023, in Daytona Beach, Fla. At right, Austin Hill and Sam Mayer, driver of the #1 Accelerate Pros Talent Chevrolet, race at Daytona Saturday.



(in Saturday’s NASCAR Xfinity Series race), and I’ll be out there Sunday—so super excited about that.”

Despite suffering minor damage in two multicar wrecks, Tanner Gray was second when the race was stopped. Christian Eckes earned a third-place finish, with Colby Howard and Grant Enfinger completing the top five.

“Obviously, with the way our night was going, second is a good night for us,” said Gray, whose finish was a career-best in 72 starts. “Not as smooth of a race as we’d like—I got caught up in about every wreck there was.

“All in all, came out with a good finish. That’s all we can ask for.”

Racing for the newly-minted Tricon Garage team, Gray said his Toyota had suffered damage to the front splitter during the two earlier incidents.

On Lap 58 of a scheduled 100, the No. 24 GMS Racing Chevrolet of Rajah Caruth broke loose and applied the coup de grace to the Silverados of Matt DiBenedetto and Daniel Dye, whose trucks had escaped serious harm in earlier incidents.

Smith surged into the lead after a restart on Lap 65 and held the top spot when rain slowed the race for

the fourth time. On Lap 74, NASCAR brought the trucks to pit road and halted 6th action. After track drying, the field ran five more laps under caution before rain struck again.

With 12 laps left in the second stage, the No. 84 Toyota of Clay Greenfield spun sideways near the entry to the tri-oval and ignited a seven-car wreck that ruined the ThorSport Racing debut of Hailie Deegan, who No. 13 Ford was severely damaged in the melee.

The trucks of DiBenedetto, Dean Thompson, Gray, Daniel Dye and Bret Holmes also suffered varying degrees of damage in the incident.

“I saw the 84 (Greenfield) sideways, and that was pretty much that,” Deegan said after her truck was towed to the garage. “I saw him going down the track, so I went up. It was a split-second decision.

“You just go right or left, and they ended up bouncing back up off another truck, so it is what it is. We know that Daytona is one of those races where you either finish in the top 10 or you end up on the trailer home.”

Moments after NASCAR called the fourth caution of the race because of the wreck, rain interrupted the proceedings for the third time, after having caused two short earlier cautions for light sprinkles—first in Turns 1 and 2 and later in Turns 3 and 4 on the massive property.

After the action resumed, the No. 99 Ford of Ben Rhodes turned the No. 52 Toyota of Stewart Friesen into the outside wall on the final lap of Stage 2, with Friesen, who was running at the front of the outside lane, admitting he threw a late block that went awry.

The trucks of Codie Rohrbaugh, Howard, Parker Kligerman and Holmes also sustained damage, as Tyler Ankrum won the stage under

caution.

Eckes won the first stage, which was twice put under caution because of the rain.



Zane Smith, driver of the #38 Love’s/Speedco Ford, celebrates in victory lane after winning the rain-delayed NASCAR Craftsman Truck Series NextEra Energy 250 at Daytona International Speedway on Feb. 17, 2023 in Daytona Beach, Fla.

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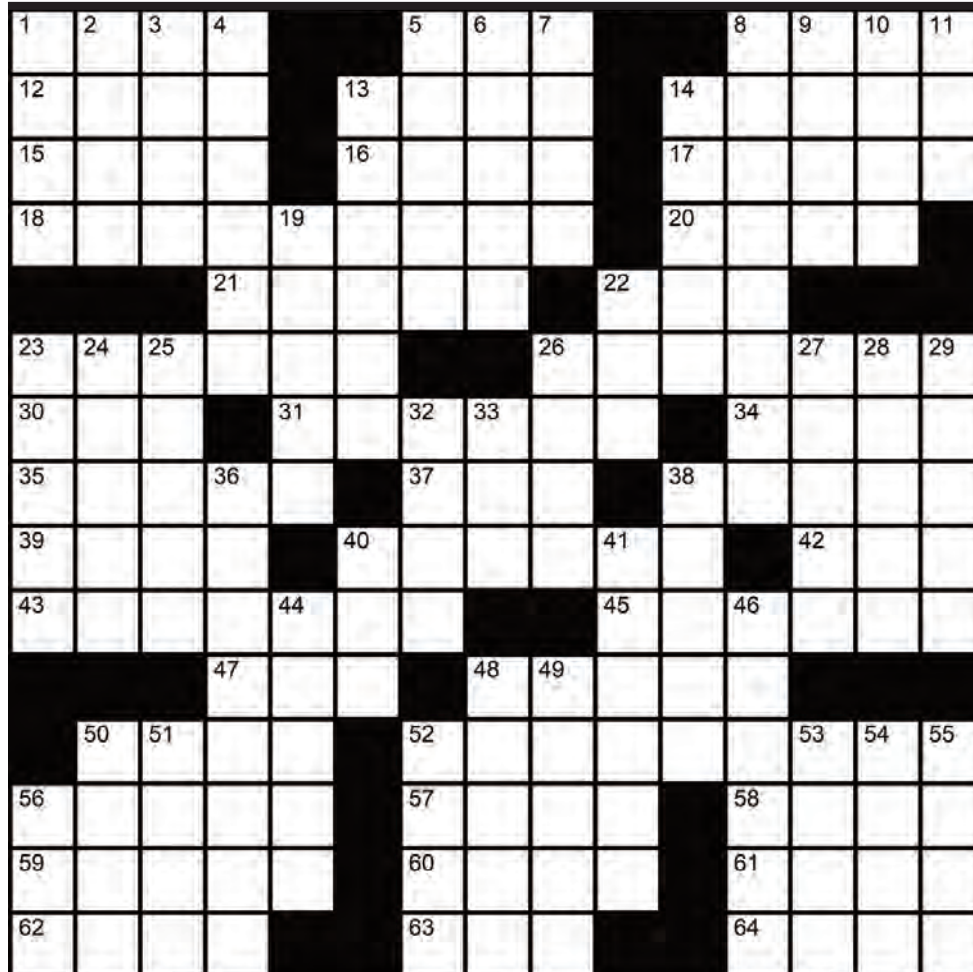
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THEME: ON YOUR FEET

ACROSS

1. Pampering places
5. * ___ de trois
8. Lend a criminal hand
12. Toy block
13. As old as time?
14. Milan's La ___
15. Drug addict
16. Craving
17. Some primatologists' study object, for short
18. *Shoe, not a titular character in Henry James' novel
20. What spirits and culprits have in common
21. Falstaffian in body
22. Jack Kerouac's ___ Paradise
23. *Shoe, not lazy person
26. Concealing plant, in a painting (2 words)
30. Not leg
31. ___ help
34. Poet Pound
35. *Sound of Wellington boots
37. U.N. labor issues org.
38. Twig of a willow tree
39. Database command
40. Type of purse
42. "Platoon" setting, for short
43. Canadian province
45. Overly preoccupied with something
47. Motion of assent
48. Louisiana swamp
50. Like list of chores
52. *Animated movie about a dancing penguin (2 words)



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56. "All About Eve" star
57. Biblical birthright seller
58. Generic dog name
59. Are not
60. What snob puts on
61. Cogito, ___ sum
62. Mountain, in Germany
63. Trinitrotoluene, for short
64. Movie tape

DOWN

1. Yarn defect
2. 100 centavos in Mexico
3. A long time ago
4. Somewhat (2 words)
5. City on the Seine
6. Pool growth
7. ___ but not heard"

8. *Rupturing this will take you off your feet
9. Can of worms
10. Deciduous tree
11. *Percussion with one's feet
13. Piano adjusters
14. Scrawny one
19. Caribbean religious and healing practice
22. Noble title
23. Apple TV+ coach
24. Acrylic fiber
25. Amortization root
26. *0.3048 meters
27. Web mag
28. Domains
29. Agricultural enterprises
32. Narc's unit
33. Contagious bug
36. *On your feet
38. Exclamation of delight or dismay (2 words)
40. El ___
41. Nutrias
44. Fowl perch
46. Bear pain
48. Bowl-shaped vessel
49. Like exes
50. Container weight
51. Last word on army radio
52. Furnace output
53. Republic of Ireland
54. Part of a seat
55. Hammer or sickle
56. Internet meme move

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Tinker is a 1 year old female that has been at the shelter since November.



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The Classifieds

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DIESCHER ELECTRIC Professional Service Reasonable rates. NC Licensed and fully insured. 20+ years experience. (845)807-1326.

RUN ERRANDS Dr. Appointments. Grocery Store/Pharmacy. References. In Home Aid. CNA Trained Caregiver. Over 15 Years Experience. (828)342-3750.

DAVID CHEEK'S WELL Pumps, Sales Service & Installation of Pumps and Iron Removal Systems. For All Your Water Needs. (828)369-5176.

CRANE BROS. WELL Drilling, 6" Drilled Wells for Farms Homes and Industries, Free Estimates. 248 Crane Circle, Franklin. (828)524-4976.

MASONRY SERVICES Block, Rock, Cultured Stone, Stucco, Also New Construction, Repairs. 30 Years Experience, (828)200- 4478.

STALLSWORTH PAINTING Interior/Exterior, Pressure Washing, Handyman, 35 Years Experience. Insured. Cell (239)860-0117, home (828)332-4382.

CAROLINA PAINTING & Remodeling, Pressure Washing, Painting, Home Repairs, 28 Years Experience in WNC. Cell (828)371-9754.

HANDYMAN HOME REPAIRS Carpentry, Pressure Washing, Gutter Cleaning, Decks, Drywall, Painting, Electrical/Plumbing, Repairs of any kind. 40 Years, Fast/Reasonable/Reliable. (828)332-7247.

NEW CREATIONS Landscaping LLC. Landscaping Projects, Cleanup, Annual Color, Mulch, Pine Straw, Aerating, Fertilizing, Hardscapes, Steps, Retaining Walls, Grading, Gravel, Design, Grounds Maintenance, Firewood and Much More! Licensed & Insured, Free Estimates (828)524-6959.

FRANKLIN OTTER WASH Exterior pressure washing, decks and RV's you name it. I can bring my own water and your estimate is free! For any questions call (828)200-5298. We're happy to help!

PROFESSIONAL KNIFE and scissor sharpening Mon-Sat. Kitchen Sink Inc. 72 E. Main Street, Franklin (828)524- 2956.

MURPHY'S PAINTING CO. Interior and Exterior Painting, Sheetrock repair, wallpaper removal, Log Homes, Decks, Insured. Free estimates. (828)332- 0525, (828)421-8600.

GRADING, FIINISH Grading, Hydroseed, Driveways, Roads, Hauling, Land Clearing, Chipper. Install Septic Systems, Retaining Walls, Rock Work, Boulders, Patio, Perez. (828)524- 8650, (828)347-6793 Excellent References.

FREE ESTIMATES Rain Gutter Clean Out. Yard Clean Up & Care, Mulch. Pressure Cleaning. No Yard Too Large or Too Small. Bob (828)342-5273.

MELTON'S ROOFING Gutter Cleaning and Chimney Sweeping. Give Us a Call at cell# (828)421-6712 With All Your Roof and Gutter Needs.

Help Wanted

PART-TIME RV Park Manager. Seeking office person to fill-in on Park Manager's off days. 20-24 hours per week. Customer service and telephone experience preferred. Park is located in Franklin. Contact Mike at mgrizzwc@yahoo.com.

RV PARK MANAGER Seeking couple to manage medium size RV park in Franklin. 2 person team. 1 office and 1 outside maintenance. Office- Customer service, telephone and book-keeping experience. Outside Maintenance- Light plumbing, electrical and grounds maintenance experience. Small tools repair and maintenance experience preferred. Long term commitment. Send resume to mgrizzwc@yahoo.com.

OPENING FOR Children's Ministry Director (F/T or P/T). First United Methodist Church in Franklin. Experience in providing leadership in ministry with children and families preferred. Email discipleship@firstumcfranklin.org for job description.

Wanted

LOOKING TO FIND Old Muzzle Loading Gun with initials carved in stock. No questions asked. Will pay reasonable price. (828)524-7681.

Boats & Campers

5' SPEEDBOAT Rinkerbuilt Tri Hull, New Battery, Nice Condition, 85hp Mercury. (828)349-0061.

Community Fundraisers

BINGO American Legion Hall, 614 W. Main St., Every Wednesday. Doors open at 3:30 p.m., bingo 4 p.m. Snack Bar Available.

APPALACHIAN ANIMAL Rescue Thrift Store, Open Tuesday thru Saturday, 9am- 4pm, 1521 Old Murphy Rd., (828)369-3046.

HABITAT RE-STORE 56 W Palmer St., Franklin. Furniture, Lighting, Plumbing, Building Materials, Doors & Windows, Appliances & More! (828)524-5273. Sylva Re-Store, 1315 W. Main St. (828)586-1800. Hours for both Stores Mon./Wed./Fri./Sat. 10-4pm.

REACH FOR BARGAINS in Heritage Hollow, open Tuesday-Friday, 10am-6pm, Saturday 10am-4pm, Benefits Victims of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault in Macon County. Information call (828)369-2040.

Commercial Rentals

OFFICE FOR RENT Large 1 Room Suite in Franklin, Court-house Plaza Building. Rent includes power, heat and air. \$250/monthly. (828)524-7799.

OFFICE FOR RENT Large 2 room suite in Franklin, Court-house Plaza Building. Rent includes power, heat and air. \$790/month. Office available for third room. Call (828)524-7799.

Animals

POM-A-POO PUPPY Beautiful little apricot girl. Sweet and spunky. 9 weeks old. All shots current. \$250. (828)200-5101.

ADOPT A PET AARC Animal Shelter, 851 Lake Emory Rd., Franklin. Call for an Appointment. (828)524-4588.

VOLUNTEERS & DOG Walkers Needed at Macon County Animal Services. 18 years and older. Call Debbie (941)266-7084.

LOOKING FOR A LOVING Pet or Lost Pet? Macon County Animal Services, Open M-F by appointment. Call (828)349-2106. Pictures of Lost and Available Pets, www.facebook.com/macconanimal

Misc. For Sale

LA-Z-BOY COUCH 2 End Sections Recline. Excellent Condition, Teal Green. \$185.00 or BO. (828)349- 3140.


SIDE LOFTED Storage Barn 10x20, Brown & Stone, 2 windows 2 lofts, 6 months old urethane siding, Good Condition, Original \$7,000 now \$6,000 Buyer pays to move. (828)349-6022.

B & M MILITARY SURPLUS MRE'S Military Boots, Clothing, Rain Gear, Cold Weather Gear, Sleeping Bags, Vests, Packs, Bags, Field Gear, W/C Poncho Liner, Woobie. We Buy, Trade all Types Military Clothes, Field Gear. Open Monday-Friday 9-6, Saturday 9-5, 329 Bennett Ridge Rd. Franklin, (828)349-3140. bandmsurplus@gmail.com

FARMERS MARKET 10-12, Every Saturday. Please Come Out and Support Your Local Farmers Market. Vegetables, Honey, Soap, Pastries, Preserves, Eggs. 200 Block East Palmer.

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