

THE COMMUNICATOR

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Veterans Day

Mount Airy honors military veterans at the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month at the city's War Memorial on the corner of Rockford and South Main streets. The Nov. 11 Veterans Day observance is a 40-year tradition in our community.

Kelly Epperson of radio stations WPAQ, WSYD, and WBRF is our emcee, and the ceremony is broadcast live. Featured this year were VFW Honor Guard members Arlis Thomas, Ronald Hull, Kem Byrd, Johnny Goins, Harlan Hawks, and Rick Cromer. Speakers were Mayor Jon Cawley, City Commissioner Deborah Cochran, U.S. Army E-2 (ret'd.) Stephanie Melton, and Surry County Commissioner Larry Johnson. The North Surry High School Greyhound Sounds performed. Participating uniformed units included North Surry's Air Force JROTC, the Mount Airy police and fire departments, and the Mount Airy Rescue Squad. Mark Barr was the program director. As usual, pulling everything together behind the scenes was City Clerk/ Executive Assistant Nicki Brame.

Prior to the ceremony, the annual Veterans Day parade on Main Street featured the North Surry High School Marching Band, floats, motorcyclists, and 18-wheelers decorated with patriotic themes. Following the ceremony were a variety of activities at Veterans Memorial Park where the North Carolina National Guard's 440th Army Band performed.

Mount Airy State Champions

The Mount Airy High School Women's Tennis Team won their third straight and sixth overall NCHSAA 1A Women's Dual Team Tennis State Championship with a dominating performance Nov. 4 against Voyager Academy at the Burlington Tennis Center.

Also for the third consecutive year, the Mount Airy High School young women swept the championship match. The Granite Bears lost only nine games in the championship's six singles matches while winning 60. Carrie Marion, fresh off a runner-up finish in the NCHSAA 1A Individual Doubles Championships, won her match 6-2, 6-0 and was named Most Valuable Player. Both Ella

Brant and Lynn Meadows won their matches 6-0, 6-0. Lily Morris won her match 6-3, 6-1 and Audrey Brown won 6-0, 6-2. Emmie Brant was leading her match 6-3, 3-0 when it was stopped because Mount Airy already had clinched the title match.

Sophomore Audrey Brown received one of two 1A Women's Tennis N.C. Farm Bureau Sportsmanship Awards. NCHSAA is committed to recognizing athletes who demonstrate the ideals of outstanding character and sportsmanship throughout their season. The association in partnership with North Carolina Farm Bureau confers Sportsmanship Awards on two players at each championship event.

Other members of the Lady Bears' 2023 team are Emma Rudisill, Greer Tidd, Hannah Burney, Kathy Moran, and Melanie Hernandez. The Lady Bears' Head Coach is Luke Graham.

The Mount Airy women won all 25 tennis duals this season and 190 individual matches while losing only eight. The Lady Bears are 68-1 over the past three seasons. Only three Division 1A schools have won back-to-back-to-back consecutive NCHSAA Dual Team Tennis State Championships and Mount Airy is the only school to achieve that record twice: in 2011-2013 and 2021-23.

Agora Award

As the result of Mount Airy City Commissioner Phillip Thacker's nomination, the City of Mount Airy gave me its Agora Award for community service. In my acceptance remarks at the Nov. 2 city council meeting, I shared that the city has rewarded me generously and that it:

- Promotes giving people second chances.
- Supports citizenship.
- Fosters working in teams.
- Recognizes selfless achievement.
- Includes all races and creeds.
- Has employees who look for good in others.
- Is a haven for opportunity.
- Promotes a safe environment.
- Listens.
- Is open to change and growth.
- Celebrates diversity.
- Works toward environmental excellence.

Ron Ellis

My dear, dear friend Ron Ellis, 79, passed on Nov. 4. We met on the Mount Airy Little League fields and became soulmates in 1958 as I entered Mount Airy High School for the 10th grade. When I visited his home and met his parents, Luther and Louise, I felt a special love I had never experienced. In high school we were baseball teammates in a wonderful group that won a few games. In spite of his superstar status, he never belittled, chastised, or berated any players.

We stayed close and treasured our 65 blessed years. In 2011 he came to Fisher River Park as I was being inducted into the Surry County Sports Hall of Fame's Ring of Honor. Ron was forever bringing unexpected bits of joy. He was selfless, giving, and unique, and loved to highlight a friend.

As practicing, devout Christians, Ron and his family were regulars at Mount Airy's First Baptist Church. As a businessperson, he was a leader at Quality Mills and owned a Management Recruiters franchise. He led many aspirants to lofty opportunity and fulfilling careers. In essence, he answered the high calling, showing people their potential and how things work. He walked closely with God, was his family's champion, and masterfully lived to pick up the pieces of shattered lives. His God was huge and all else small, and he lived a big you and little me. His family knew he always had his priorities in order.

His smiling heart showed constantly on his face, and he could see past the noise of life. He was our region's best shag dancer and his Tennessee Walker, Motown, was a jewel. One of his admirable traits was often showing up at events being the only non-family guest in attendance. He was a quiet leader who lived compassion and forgiveness. His servant's heart showed and glowed. He sought and found ways to serve God, family, friends, and worthy causes. He exuded grace, salvation, love, and hope, and to the end Ron Ellis lived a life well done with faithfulness. Diana, son Jeffrey, and daughter Paige are truly blessed.

Mr. R.O. Lanier

Ralph Odell "R.O." Lanier Sr. of Dobson would have been 103 on Dec. 12. He passed away peacefully in the company of his family on Nov. 8.

He grew up near Welcome, N.C., and credited his 10th-grade English teacher, Mrs. Beasley, with leading him to a college degree. Starting at Brevard Junior College, he earned degrees in Education at High Point College (now High Point University), and Appalachian State University. He devoted his professional life to education and enjoyed a 40-year career. He came to Surry County in 1958, lured here by Superintendent J. Sam Gentry to teach

mathematics and science. He became the first principal of Surry Central High School in 1961 and his tenure there continued until he retired in 1982. His efforts to encourage students to stay in school and graduate were legendary; he rescued many striving and struggling young people who cherish their diplomas to this day.

Professional colleague and dear friend Gene Everette joined R.O. in 1961 and countless stellar educators followed, including Catherine White, Linda Brown, Phil Bowers, Ruth Freeman, and Sandy White. Surry Central's 1966 Golden Eagles football team won the NCHSAA 3A State Championship. R.O. and Gene Everette brought the AFJROTC to Surry Central in 1973. The Science and Technology Wing, a 2002 addition, is named in his honor. When the Surry County Educational Foundation was established in 2011, it christened its first endowed scholarship in Mr. Lanier's name.

In R.O.'s later years, a group of senior men lunched and shared during their 90s. The group included Mr. Lanier, Vernon Ball, Dr. Jim Harrell Sr., Fred Norman, Fred Patterson, Pete Carroll, and Howard Reynolds. They were priceless and infinite.

I served the 1966-67 school year under Mr. Lanier's guidance and from 1990 to date we were close friends and confidants. I'm grateful for his mentorship. I'm honored to have played a part in his committal on Nov. 15-16 in Dobson and Lexington. Devoted followers praised his humility, faith, hope, loyalty, credit-sharing, compassion, and family values with his lifelong influence. I'll treasure his appreciation for caregivers whom he treated with ultimate respect.

Devoted wife Glenna was his life partner for 72 years. Their children are Judy Lanier Crutchfield, the late Ralph O. Lanier Jr., and Connie Lanier Johnson. They had three granddaughters and numerous great-grandchildren, nieces, and nephews. Mr. R.O.'s ever-present smile was his legacy and gift to us all.

Sharing Moments

Most who make achievements are called to the moment — they feel the urge to act. Who knows how it happens? It starts by being in the moment and feeling a nudge and accepting the opportunity to serve. Oftentimes we are the answer to our own prayers when the Lord shows us where we belong. Here is sage advice for those who act:

- Choose friends carefully.
- Be assured sin has forgiveness.
- Plan daily.
- We can seek repentance.
- Build a solid reputation.
- Come with solutions, not just problems.

The late Ruby Lambert, R.O. Lanier, and Ron Ellis radiated sunshine, hope, and inclusion.

Elkin Schools Superintendent

Dr. Steven Hall took the oath of office from Judge Thomas Langan on Sept. 27 to become Superintendent of Elkin City Schools. He officially started work Oct. 2. A native of Stokes County, Dr. Hall began his career in education as a teaching assistant and school custodian. His family, wife BriAnne, and sons Elliot and Kameron, joined the swearing-in ceremony.

Here are excerpts from his acceptance remarks:

By Dr. Steve Hall

Elkin City Schools has a rich history of academic, arts, and athletic excellence; a strong commitment to community engagement; and a tradition of fostering student success. As we move forward, it is my pledge to uphold and build upon these traditions. I look to the future with the conviction that our collective efforts will lead to a bright future for Elkin City Schools where we can achieve greatness and continue to set the standard for educational excellence.

I want to express my heartfelt appreciation to the Elkin City Schools Board of Education for their confidence in my leadership. I look forward to working closely with them to ensure we continue to provide our students with the highest quality education and opportunities for growth.

To our teachers and staff, I commend your steadfast dedication to our students. Please know I value every role in our school system and the impact you have on students' lives. Your passion for education is the driving force behind our success. I am committed to supporting you in every possible way as you cultivate the love of learning in your classrooms. You not only impart knowledge of your content, but you are creating lifelong learners, critical thinkers, and responsible citizens.

To our students, you are the reason we are all here. Your potential is limitless, and I am here to ensure each of you has the tools, resources, and support needed to achieve your dreams and aspirations. I encourage you to be curious, ask questions, and to explore your interests. Your journey through Elkin City Schools is an opportunity for growth and discovery. I am looking forward to meeting each one of you.

To the parents, families, and adults invested in these students' lives, your involvement and partnerships are crucial to our students' success. Together, we can create a strong, collaborative community that nurtures the growth and development of our young learners. And to this entire community, please know the safety and security of the students and staff of Elkin City Schools is an ever-present thought in my mind. I believe our school campuses should be places where everyone feels safe, valued, and where the

joy of learning is palpable.

Thank you for your warm welcome. I am genuinely thrilled to serve as your Superintendent. As we endeavor on this journey together, let us never lose sight that doing what is best for our students is always the right decision. With that clear and collective purpose, we can be sure Elkin City Schools remains a place where dreams are nurtured, futures are shaped, and excellence is the standard.

Devoted Siblings

The eight daughters of the late Lila and Mack Combs meet monthly for fellowship and bonding. I was honored to visit the ladies in Mount Airy at Joy Gardner's home. They are:

- Marcelle, Glade Valley.
- Peggy Sue, Glade Valley.
- Barbara Lou, Clemmons.
- Dianne, Dobson.
- Kathy, Jonesville.
- Judy, New Bern.
- Donna, Clemmons and South Port.
- Joy, Mount Airy.

Brother Virgil "Sonny" Combs, passed in 2010.

Word Match Game

Match the word on the right with its definition from the left.

- | | | |
|----------------|-------|-------------------|
| 1. schism | _____ | A. learned |
| 2. bombastic | _____ | B. together |
| 3. cunning | _____ | C. perplexing |
| 4. innocuous | _____ | D. disharmony |
| 5. baffling | _____ | E. continuation |
| 6. zealous | _____ | F. self-important |
| 7. pompous | _____ | G. nature |
| 8. erudite | _____ | H. religious sect |
| 9. Messi | _____ | I. morally wrong |
| 10. orator | _____ | J. accomplished |
| 11. agora | _____ | K. ...the noise |
| 12. sheaves | _____ | L. swindler |
| 13. character | _____ | M. harmless |
| 14. see beyond | _____ | N. energy |
| 15. backhand | _____ | O. inflated |
| 16. vice | _____ | P. blustering |
| 17. sequel | _____ | Q. swine |
| 18. grifter | _____ | R. deceitful |
| 19. Mennonite | _____ | S. Lionel |
| 20. Ramallah | _____ | T. West Bank city |
| 21. vitality | _____ | U. stroke |
| 22. Tamworth | _____ | V. reaped grain |

(See answers on Page 7)

Surry Sports Hall Of Fame

On Nov. 4, dedicated advocates celebrated our induction class of the most coveted Surry County Sports Hall of Fame and Ring of Honor. The ceremonies started at our county granite monument at Fisher River Park and continued at the Surry Community College Auditorium in Building A. We compliment the staff of Surry County Parks and Recreation: Director David White and his team including Event Coordinator Bradley Key, Chrystal Whitt, and Andrew Romaine, and committee persons Scott Reynolds, Linda Davis, and Donna Collins. A delicious lunch was provided at the Knights Grill by Cheryl Langen, Kristin Leonard, and Kelsey Williams.

We are honored to be blessed by this rich tradition and its legacy. The vision of the late committeeman Eddie Wilmoth receives credit for the Hall of Fame inception in 2004.

Inducted this year into the Hall of Fame are:

- Harry Odell Downs, East Surry High School.
- Donald C. Harbour, Copeland High School.
- Stephen M. Holloway, Elkin High School.
- Richard "Rick" Hurt, Elkin High School.
- Anthony Moore, Mount Airy High School.
- Zim Zimmerman, Gardner-Webb University.

Inductees into the 2023 Ring of Honor are:

- 1955-59 Elkin High School Men's Tennis Team led by Attorney Lewis Alexander.
- Leah Tunstall, East Surry High School swim coach and Armfield Recreation Center director.

Elkin Men's Tennis

The 1955-1959 Elkin High School Tennis Team was inducted into the Surry County Sports Ring of Honor this year. Attorney Lewis Alexander was the tennis coach. Team members grouped by graduating class are:

Class of 1955

Bobby Carter, deceased
Eddie Carter, deceased
Allen Hall, deceased
Dick Hodel
Donald Koontz, deceased
Ralph Triplett, deceased

Class of 1956

Chris Glenn, deceased
David Myers, deceased

Class of 1957

Bill Davis*
Bob Noe*
Richard Royall

Class of 1958

Gale Eidson*
James Graham, deceased
Bob Hartness*
Wally Holcomb, deceased

Lawrence Laxton
Larry Niven*
Jim Shore, deceased

Class of 1959

Dick Evans*
George Hart, deceased
Allen Laxton, deceased

Class of 1960

Kent Eidson*
Gordon Chatham, deceased

*Attended Ring of Honor induction ceremony

Elkin High Women's Tennis

Retired dentist Dr. Jim Harrell Jr. in his first year as the Women's Tennis Head Coach at Elkin High School invited me along with assistant Jan Adams, families, friends, and staff to join the team for a season-end celebration at Mazzini's Italian Restaurant on North Bridge Street in Elkin. The ladies posted an 8-7 record, placing third in Division 1A standings, and in the words of Mount Airy High School Head Coach Luke Graham were the most-improved team his young women faced "and an up-and-coming contender, soon."

My brief remarks included my gratitude for the opportunity, my appreciation and respect for Coaches Harrell and Jan Adams, praise for parents supporting their daughters, and my optimistic hopes for future success that hard work will produce. I also depicted the influence of the iconic Lionel Messi, the world's best soccer player, whose contributions on the field make every player on the field a better player. Messi has won eight MVP awards in his 18-year career.

I encouraged each Elkin player to play with character, follow training regimens, be a good sport, develop great team spirit, be on time, support teammates, and seek and find ways to serve God, family, friends, and worthy causes.

Here in alphabetical order are the Elkin High Women's Tennis players and their contributions highlighted by coaches Harrell and Adams:

- Molly Adams, Best Hustler.
- Elissa Dickerson, Coaches' Award for Most Dependable, All-Conference.
- Kendall Eads, Captain-Leadership, All-Conference.
- Jocelyn Johnson, Coaches' Awards for Most Wins and Best Competitor, All-Conference HM (honorable mention).
- Ella Kleinheksel, Best Player, All-Conference.
- Adamari Morales, Captain-Leadership, All-Conference HM.
- Carrie Nations, Perseverance Award.
- Diana Rodriguez, Most Improved.
- Madison Vangordan, "Team First" Award.
- Marley Wolfe, Spirit Award.

N.C. Business Summit On Public Education

Ralph Harding, Marty Roberts, Brent McKinney, and Gary York were honored to have been invited to spend the day at the North Carolina Business Summit on Public Education on Nov. 8 at the RTP Sheraton. The meeting brought together business leaders from across North Carolina who care about the future of education and who are interested in working with education leaders and policy makers to take tangible action to improve student outcomes. Topics shared were:

- Student performance and population trends.
- School funding and fiscal health.
- Building the teacher pipeline.
- How to engage business leaders.
- How to crack the nut.
- Building the leadership pipeline.
- The future of high school.
- Reducing complexity, increasing transparency.

Those in our group were the guests of Dr. Don Martin, former Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools superintendent and current chairman of the Forsyth County Board of Commissioners. Noted participants were Donna Bledsoe, North Carolina Wells Fargo Principal of the Year and principal at Surry County's Cedar Ridge Elementary School in the Beulah community; Dr. Kim Morrison, Superintendent of Mount Airy City Schools; forum leader Tom Oxholm; Dr. Anthony Graham; Valerie Truesdale; Paul Fulton; and Charles Bowman from Bank of America whose closing remarks were terrific.

Defining Moments

Shortly before his passing in October, dear friend Dennis Thompson sent a note complimenting my organizational skills, which I'll forever appreciate. I do regret my return thank-you note did not arrive before his passing. I can credit my intentions to catch up after my 30 years of alcohol and drug abuse. My defining moments are:

- In 1990 I became an Earl Nightingale "Insight" audio cassette listener and in a monthly tape he said, "The day I started to accept personal responsibility for all behavior, by me and others, in my life things immediately started to improve."

- In October of 1986 I attended a seminar by behavior guru Charlie Farrell entitled, "The Right Stuff," in which he challenged us in every day and every way to "do what we say."

- In November of 1986, Johnson-West Associates presented a Winston-Salem Chamber of Commerce program in which they challenged us to adopt a Day-Timer® goal-writing habit. Changing behavior for 21 days becomes a habit. To this day, 37 years later, I plan each day at 4:30 a.m.

D.H. Griffin

D.H. Griffin Companies, headquartered in Greensboro, was founded in 1959. It's led by second-generation siblings David Jr., Melody, and Benita. Its 2022 revenues were \$340 million. It has 1,000 employees. It was the largest company demolishing the World Trade Center after 2001. It also demolished the old Fulton County Stadium in Atlanta and prepared the site for a new stadium.

Local men serving D.H. Griffin Companies are Chris Carter and Jeremy Johnson. They specialize in demolition, project management, and excavation.

D.H. Griffin Companies' clients include Amazon, Boeing, Duke Energy, Google, and Disney. It supports numerous charities and nonprofits including the Elkin Rescue Squad and the Elkin Pickleball Courts. We are grateful for the legacies of the D.H. Griffin Companies.

Thanks Be To Friends

Jeff Eidson attended the Surry County Sports Hall of Fame ceremony and thanked me for the induction of the Elkin High School Men's Tennis Team of 1955-59. I had suggested that for a person to be inducted into the Sports Hall of Fame, he or she must be nominated and go through a selection process. There are many, many worthy persons who have not been nominated. The Surry County Hall of Fame Selection Committee includes Dr. Paige Badgett, Donald Davis, Linda Davis, David Diamont, Todd Dockery, Ronnie Eaton, Lin Hamilton, Darren Lewis, Adam McComb, Scott Reynolds, Tony Searcy, Robert Smith, and Jim Wilmoth.

Those Elkin teams at one stretch were 60-0 and their competition was mostly 4A teams. Coach Lewis Alexander would schedule any high school on a home-and-home basis. They even defeated a Wake Forest University team of freshmen.

Donald C. Harbour

Don Harbour, a 2023 inductee to the Surry County Sports Hall of Fame, was the best male player ever at Copeland High School that was consolidated into the Surry County Schools system in 1961. He was dating Carolyn, his future wife, when I remember seeing them at the Reeves Y in 1956 in Mount Airy where they were playing in the Surry County basketball tournament.

Jim Jessup

Teacher and coach Jim Jessup coached brother Jim York's baseball team at North Surry High School in 1974. He later ran a charter bus operation. We reconnected at the 2023 Surry County Sports Hall of Fame induction. He was successful in education, coaching, and bus touring.

Honey Hobby

Being close to Paul Madren Jr. of Mount Airy and Jim and Rhonda Hughes of State Road, 100.9 WIFM Radio is sponsoring a weekly program about honey and bees on Wednesday afternoons at 5:05 p.m. It is hosted by Joel Hooper and Jim Hughes.

Paul Madren is one of only 15 Master Craftsman Beekeepers in North Carolina and among the first people to earn that distinction. He gifted me a book he published entitled "Honey Is My Hobby." It's most interesting. Paul writes, "I dedicate this book to my mentor and friend, Dr John Ambrose, Professor of Entomology, N.C. State University, (1975-2012) and Executive Secretary of the North Carolina State Beekeepers Association (NCSBA). His leadership, support and vision help make the Association the largest hobbyist beekeepers association in the United States with about 5,500 members. He designed and implemented into the Beekeepers Association the four-level Master Beekeeper Program. I am proud to be one of the first members to achieve all four levels to the Master Craftsman level."

Here is an excerpt from Paul's book:

Sweet nectar

The honey bee collects nectar from many different flowers and tree blooms and processes it into honey for food. Thus the color and taste of every honey will be different.

Some honey may crystallize (or "sugar") over time. Crystallized honey is not bad honey. The sweetness of honey comes from glucose and fructose and the ratio in each nectar varies as gathered by the bees from the flower source. If the nectar comes mostly from ground plants or early spring blooms, the general rule is that these will yield a higher glucose ratio and thus the honey may crystallize. Nectar from tree blooms in mid May, or later, will usually yield honey with a higher fructose ratio; this honey probably will not crystallize.

To restore crystallized honey back to liquid, you need to put it in warm water up to 125° F or carefully in a microwave. Be very careful not to microwave for more than 15 seconds at a time.

Sources of nectar found locally are:

Dandelion	Mimosa
Red Bud	Wild Cherry
Purple Deadnettle	Mint
Maple Trees	Yaupon Holly
Silver Maple	Black Locust
Red Maple	Privette Hedge
Strawberry	Rhododendron
Forsythia	Gourds, Cucumbers
Red Oak	Squash, Zucchini
Chestnut Oak	Watermelon, Melons
Tulip Poplar	Pumpkin
Nellie Stevens Holly	Golden Paintree

Dutch Clover	Jasmine Blooms
Apple Blooms	Black Gum Blooms
Bradford Pear	White Sumac
Sourwood	Red Sumac
Blue and White Aster	Fall Goldenrod

High Point University

Having received his bachelor's degree at High Point University and after serving as an HPU trustee, Dr. Nido Qubein became the university's president and CEO in 2005. Few of us have experienced such growth and change in any organization. Here are some stats on its growth:

Year	2005	2022	Chg.
Total enrollment	1,673,	6,000	259%
Graduate enrollment	223	1,000	348%
Full-time faculty	108	382	254%
Campus size (acres)	91	520	471%
Square footage	659k	4.5M	592%
Buildings & facilities on campus (new and acquired)	28	288	929%
Total positions	385	2,285	494%
Economic impact	\$160M	\$765M	377%
Operating and capital budget	\$38M	\$384M	911%
United Way giving	\$28k	\$270k	864%

A few years ago, I called Dr. Qubein's office at 6 a.m., hoping to leave a message, and to my surprise he answered. After some brief small talk, he shared his intention of rivaling Harvard, Yale, Stanford, and Princeton universities.

Guilford Early College

On the campus of Guilford College in western Greensboro, Guilford County's first "Early College" high school, which was founded in 2002, was selected recently by U.S. News & World Report as America's top-performing Early College. Nearly 25,000 schools were considered.

The approximately 200 students at The Early College at Guilford exceed expectations in state tests on mathematics, science, and reading. The school had a 100% graduation rate and earned a perfect 100% rating on college readiness. Students earned qualifying marks on International Baccalaureate and Advanced Placement examinations. The school ranked ninth in the U.S. for science, technology, and engineering studies.

Principal Pete Kashubara says it starts with a shared vision for excellence — the school feels it's a calling. He says, "We are working on humbling ourselves and try to keep getting better." Dr. Kashubara credits Guilford County Schools Superintendent Whitney Oakley for the passion and energy to stay on top.

Perry "Ty" Lowe III

The Wilkes County Agricultural Hall of Fame on Nov. 16 inducted Perry "Ty" Lowe III as its 23rd honoree since the Hall of Fame was established in 2005. Ty Lowe is an N.C. State University graduate and a fifth-generation orchardist. He and several sixth-generation Lowes family members cultivate 40,000 trees with 40 varieties of fruit.

The induction celebration was at the Wilkes County Agricultural Center in Wilkesboro. Committee Chairman Dr. Bill Davis Jr. was the emcee. Some 150 invited guests enjoyed a chicken supper provided by Tyson Foods and its employees. We were blessed with comments from Dr. Davis, Ty Lowe III, Perry Lowe, Friends of the Association, and Wilkes Soil & Water Conservation District Director Rob Baldwin.

Noted sponsors were AgSouth Farm Credit ACA, Appalachian Lumber Co., Blake Farms LLC, B&W Farms LLC, Blue Ridge Tractor, Tyson Foods, and Wilkes County Farm Bureau

Tim Wakefield

Friend Warren Bates saw some words of advice from the late baseball pitcher Tim Wakefield and thought of sharing them with The Communicator's readers. Wakefield won 200 games as a Major League pitcher and helped the Boston Red Sox win two World Series championships. He was noted for community service and giving back. He hosted a golf tournament that raised over \$10 million for a pre-school program for children with special needs. Here is what Tim Wakefield wrote:

"Never forget where you came from."

"Be a mentor to others."

"You didn't get where you are today by yourself and no matter what status you accomplish in life, you should assume the responsibility to help those who are less fortunate than you."

"I've been involved with different charities my whole career and I can tell you that I've received much more than I've given."

"I've also learned it doesn't matter how much money you've made, how big your house is, or what kind of car you drive. What matters most is: did you make a difference in someone else's life?"

News And Notes

- N.C. Commissioner of Insurance and State Fire Marshal Mike Causey wrote a same-day thank-you note after receiving a campaign donation. Public servants are resilient. Mike was defeated in his first run for office, was elected, was re-elected, and is running for re-election in November 2024. His response time to needs is always same-day.

- Freddy Harrison moved over to PTC when

we sold to Circle K in December 2011. When he and co-driver Stacy Wells were switching drivers in Jonesville recently, I stopped to chat and asked them to please never forget me. To which Freddy quipped, "Gary, don't worry. To this day I pick up every piece of litter in my path and I learned that habit from you. You would say, 'Clean parking lots will stay clean when we all do our part.'"

Children's Health Foundation

In 1967 I became interested in the football career of Jerry Duncan, a 1962 graduate of Sparta High School who was an All-SEC offensive tackle for the legendary Coach Bear Bryant at the University of Alabama. After years of hoping to meet Jerry, Judge Richard Doughton of Alleghany County pulled us together in the spring of 2022. Another connection was late mutual friend Grey Boyles who influenced Coach Bryant's offering Jerry the opportunity to star for the Crimson Tide.

Jerry has become a significant contributor to the Elkin Rescue Squad. He has shared his life's Roll Tide legacy with Eddie, Matthew, and Sheila Settle.

He has had a relationship since 1968 with the Quarterbacking Children's Health Foundation in Jerry's hometown of Birmingham, Ala. Every head coach at Alabama since 1958 (Coach Bryant's first year back at Alabama) has spoken at the foundation's traditional breakfast in the week of the Alabama-Auburn epic football battle.

The foundation is the charitable arm of the Monday Morning Quarterback Club of Birmingham. Members have a passion for the game of football, but their most impactful work takes place off the field. The foundation annually grants millions of dollars — \$1.85 million in 2022 alone — to health-care and supportive services for children and young adults in Alabama.

The following statement defines the foundation. It reads, "Football brings us together, fundraising sets us apart. Our passion to make a difference goes beyond the football field. From the earliest beginnings supporting Alabama children with polio, the Quarterbacking Children's Health Foundation has continued to fulfill its founders' vision of channeling the popularity of sports into generosity for those in need." Its motto is, "The game is raising money. The opposing team is disease."

Word Match Game answers

(from Page 3)

1. D	6. F	11. B	16. I	21. N
2. O	7. P	12. V	17. E	22. Q
3. R	8. A	13. G	18. L	
4. M	9. S	14. K	19. H	
5. C	10. J	15. U	20. T	

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

"I am the light of the world.
Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness,
but will have the light of life." John 8:12
Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!



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