

THE COMMUNICATOR

Phone: (336) 835-2511

Email: wifm@wifmradio.com

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June 2024

N.C. Trail Days

The fifth annual North Carolina Trail Days runs from May 30 through June 2 in Elkin and Jonesville, home of three great state trails. The festival celebrates the great outdoors and recreation culture found in the Blue Ridge foothills. NC Trail Days is always held on the same weekend with National Trails Day on the first Saturday in June.

Elkin and Jonesville, on opposite sides of the Yadkin River, are at the confluence of three great state trails: the N.C. Mountains-to-Sea Trail, the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail, and the Yadkin River State Trail. The area also has an ever-growing network of trails with unique history, such as the Elkin & Alleghany Rail Trail and Jonesville Greenway, or with special appeal including North Carolina's first "Forest Bathing" Trail, several birding trails, the Yadkin Valley Wine Trail, and first-class road and mountain bike trails.

Elkin and Jonesville also are just below the Blue Ridge Parkway and between the Stone Mountain and Pilot Mountain State Parks that offer exceptional rock climbing, fishing, and camping.

People seeking variety in outdoor recreation will find it here. Outdoors enthusiasts should bring their boots, bikes, and boats or kayaks to enjoy the weekend with trail lovers from all over. N.C. Trail Days offerings include themed and self-guided hikes, river clean-ups and excursions on the Yadkin River, group rock climbing, environmental and adventure film screenings, free live music, activities for children, a speaker series, and a vendor village full of outdoor recreation organizations with gear demos and an overland vehicle showcase.

For the complete schedule of NC Trail Days events, visit the website at nctraildays.com/2024schedule. NC Trail Days is a great celebration of this beautiful region, and we encourage you to come find your trail.

Ground Steak Festival

Surry County claims to have two unique specialty foods: sonkers, a kind of deep-dish pie or cobbler, and the ground steak sandwich, a loose-meat, melt-in-your mouth cousin to the hamburger which was born in the diners and burger joints of Surry

County during the Great Depression.

The North Carolina Ground Steak Festival, hosted by the Dobson Tourism Development Authority, celebrates Surry's unique sandwich on the second Saturday in June. The upcoming festival will run from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Saturday, June 8, on the historic courthouse square in downtown Dobson.

Dobson's Central Café, one of many restaurants on the Surry Ground Steak Trail, will dish out ground steak sandwiches along with the Flat Rock Ruritan Club, famous for serving the ground steak sandwich each year at the Autumn Leaves Festival in nearby Mount Airy.

The festival will include more than 75 artisans and crafters, children's games and activities, and bluegrass and old-time string music. The 2024 North Carolina Ground Steak Festival is proud to introduce this year's Title & Band Stand sponsor: Chatham Nursing And Rehabilitation.

For more information about the festival, see the Events page and Discover Dobson on Facebook or visit the Surry Ground Steak Trail's website at groundsteaktrail.org.

Yadkin Valley Carnival

The Yadkin Valley Carnival on June 7-8 will be bigger and better than ever, according to the Yadkin Valley Chamber of Commerce. The carnival brings together families and friends for days filled with fun, food, and festivity, creating lasting memories for everyone involved. Hours this year are 2 to 10 p.m. Friday and Saturday.

The Downtown Elkin area will be transformed into a vibrant hub of excitement. Vendors of all sorts sell food and crafts under brightly colored tents around the Yadkin Valley Heritage and Trails Visitors Center at 257 Standard St. Laughter and chatter fill the air as families gather to enjoy rides operated by R&D Amusements. HDK Ranch will be set up with inflatables, pony rides, and a petting zoo. The Yadkin Valley Carnival is a cherished tradition in which community members and visitors create unforgettable memories.

For more information about the festival or being a vendor please contact Yadkin Valley Chamber of Commerce at 336-526-1111 or go on the web to yadkinvalley.org/festivals-events/carnival.

NASCAR Returns to North Wilkesboro Speedway

The NASCAR All-Star Race returned to North Wilkesboro for the second straight year. Joey Logano dominated the short track at North Wilkesboro Speedway on May 19, leading all but one of 200 laps to win his second All-Star Race and \$1 million.

The North Wilkesboro Speedway has been renovated, refurbished, and rejuvenated to host the NASCAR All-Star Race. In the leadup to this year's race, the track was newly paved. Logano said, "We were so fast. We came here before for testing and ran over 800 laps and really figured out what it was going to take to win the race."

North Wilkesboro Speedway officials announced that the track will host the NASCAR All-Star exhibition race for the third straight year on May 18, 2025. The NASCAR truck series also will return as part of the All-Star race weekend.

"I think it is a good thing," Cup Series driver Chase Elliott said. "This place has been around for a long time and is in the heart of NASCAR land with Charlotte being right down the road. Personally, I was excited to see that they spent a lot of money to repave the place because that told me it was going to be around for a while. The fan turnout was great, and I hope that continues."

The only disappointment this year was intense rains that disrupted the racing schedule on Saturday, leaving portions of the track under about a foot of water. The weather was so severe that it brought down power lines on the road outside of the race-track, cutting off power and internet access to the track. However, the rains blew out on Sunday when the postponed Trucks Series race was run.

A Bed And A Book

The Rotary Club of Mount Airy, Surry Sunrise Rotary, Mount Airy City Fire Department, Mount Airy City Police Department, and Pyles Jiu Jitsu came together in mid-May to support "A Bed and A Book" in Surry County. Volunteers from all over the county assembled 10 bed kits in record time for delivery to children in eight families from the Surry County Schools and Mount Airy City Schools.

Each child received a brand-new bed, mattress, pillow, sheets, and a book. They also get to meet our hometown heroes: police and firefighters.

We salute the volunteers for contributing their time and efforts for each child. Service above self!

A Bed and A Book is a non-profit charitable organization based in Winston-Salem that provides underprivileged children with books and a bed to read them in. For more information, visit A Bed and A Book's page on Facebook or ABedandABook.com on the web.

Elkin Library Renovated

Elkin Public Library's new private rooms for remote work, tutoring, or meetings; new shelving to make graphic novels and audio books more accessible; and new furniture were on display at a recent open house. The additions and improvements complete the second phase of two-part interior remodeling and renovation program started in 2018.

Donors and agencies that funded the renovations received thanks during a brief ceremony. Northwestern Regional Library Board Chairman Jonathan Bledsoe said the folks at the Elkin library were "great to work with" and said the new renovations were beautiful. NWRL Library Director Joan Sherif expressed gratitude to the Surry County Board of Commissioners for its ongoing support of the area libraries. The Surry County government's Invest in Surry grant program provided part of the funding for remodeling and other improvements at the Elkin library. Additional funding came from the Garland Johnson Fund for the Benefit of the Elkin Public Library, Elkin Public Library Endowment, Friends of the Elkin Public Library, and the Winston-Salem Foundation.

As part of the open house event, the library displayed paintings from the late local artist Harold Click. His daughter, Ruthie Click Rosenstein, attended the open house and exhibition.

Elkin Public Library is at 111 N. Front St. Hours are 8:30 a.m.-8 p.m. Monday and Thursday, other weekdays 8:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m., and 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Saturdays. The library is closed Sunday. For more information visit the Northwestern Regional Library's website at NWRL.org.

Telecommunicators Honored

Surry County Emergency Services honored its telecommunicators during National Telecommunicators Week for their achievements in 2023.

Karen Ratliff received the Director's Award and Michele Hernandez and Taylor Douglas were cited as Telecommunicators of the Year. The two telecommunicators credited with the most "Life Saves" in 2023 were Ryan Miller for eight Life Saves and Amber Burcham for seven Life Saves. Surry EMS recorded 75 Life Saves in 2023.

The Telecommunications Center operates 24/7/365 to take calls from citizens in distress, gather vital information, and communicate it quickly and accurately to law-enforcement officers, medical responders, and firefighters. At times the telecommunicators give life-saving instructions to callers to help themselves or others until responders arrive.

The telecommunicators' work is mostly behind the scenes, but they are truly on the front lines. We salute all of the honorees and their colleagues at Surry EMS for their service and dedication.

Apprenticeship Program Wins N.C. Pinnacle Award

Northern Regional Hospital in Mount Airy, Surry Community College, and Surry-Yadkin Works have received one of the inaugural Pinnacle Awards from the North Carolina State Board of Community Colleges for their commitment to providing apprenticeships for young people exploring career choices.

The three organizations partnered to specifically address the nursing shortage in Surry County and Yadkin County and increase access to healthcare at Northern Regional Hospital. Since 2021, Northern Regional Hospital has enrolled 105 students in its pre-apprentice program. Training as certified nursing assistants and patient care technicians, the young people gain invaluable hands-on experience and earn high school or college credit for their employment. Moreover, they receive a monthly stipend for travel expenses facilitated through Surry-Yadkin Works and funded by Northern Regional Hospital.

Surry-Yadkin Works Executive Director Crystal Folger-Hawks explained, "Our goal is to start with students during the career planning phase of middle school and continue throughout high school, so they can learn about their career options in this field and have personal attention with the Health Science Student Success Advisor."

Carrie McKeaver, one of the first students to go through the program, now is a Registered Nurse at Northern Regional Hospital. She said, "Once I got into the nursing program at Surry, I transitioned to becoming a registered apprentice, and through that program, they provided assistance to help pay for your schooling and working PRN at the hospital. I was getting to work alongside nurses and gain valuable experience."

Northern Regional President and CEO Chris A. Lumsden said, "For nearly 40 years, I have been privileged to work and partner with many successful community college workforce training programs. I consider this particular partnership and program with Surry-Yadkin Works and Surry Community College among the most creative and important ones to NRH and the residents of this rural region of North Carolina. This 'Grow Our Own' strategy is paramount to the long-term sustainability of Northern and a key to successful economic development in Surry County and our neighboring rural counties."

Surry Community College President Dr. David Shockley said, "I am elated that Northern Regional Hospital and Surry-Yadkin Works were selected by the N.C. Community College System for this most prestigious award. Together, Northern Regional Hospital, Surry-Yadkin Works, and the commissioners from Surry and Yadkin counties have leveraged the resources to create the first youth-apprenticeship program for healthcare in North Carolina. This

effort will strengthen the healthcare systems while providing highly desired career opportunities for our students who desire to live here."

At the heart of the collaborative effort is Surry-Yadkin Works. It brings together the support and resources of the four public school systems in Surry and Yadkin counties — Elkin City Schools, Mount Airy City Schools, Surry County Schools, and Yadkin County Schools — as well as Surry Community College, to create a unique approach to a regional internship program.

The mission of Surry-Yadkin Works is to support the economic vitality of the region by matching interns with business partners to meet the needs of the community. The school systems prepare students for work-based learning, assist with industry-recognized credentials, and aid in enrolling in career and technical college courses. In addition, Surry-Yadkin Works provides mutually beneficial links between students and employers with the goal of increasing skilled workers in the community.

Word Match Game

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

- | | | |
|---------------|-------|------------------|
| 1. plebe | _____ | A. bovine |
| 2. raconteur | _____ | B. gambler |
| 3. miser | _____ | C. shallow |
| 4. punter | _____ | D. obsolete |
| 5. glib | _____ | E. lavish |
| 6. podcast | _____ | F. freshman |
| 7. genres | _____ | G. opinionist |
| 8. virulent | _____ | H. argue |
| 9. pundit | _____ | I. lacking |
| 10. opulent | _____ | J. harmful |
| 11. Brangus | _____ | K. deadly |
| 12. pestilent | _____ | L. courageous |
| 13. archaic | _____ | M. footballer |
| 14. novice | _____ | N. hoarder |
| 15. rampant | _____ | O. firebrand |
| 16. assertive | _____ | P. conversation |
| 17. gutsy | _____ | Q. flourishing |
| 18. trite | _____ | R. similarity |
| 19. mundane | _____ | S. dull |
| 20. quibble | _____ | T. forceful |
| 21. Messi | _____ | U. inexperienced |

(See answers on Page 7)

Mount Airy Sports Hall of Fame

We congratulate the 2024 Greater Mount Airy Sports Hall of Fame inductees. Mount Airy is blessed with a long and storied sports history. Its Sports Hall of Fame recognizes individuals and teams who made a significant impact on sports in our area. It officially inducted its Class of 2024 with a ceremony at the Andy Griffith Playhouse on Rockford Street followed by a reception at the Municipal Building.

Members of the Greater Mount Airy Sports Hall of Fame Class of 2024 are:

- **Frank Fleming**, a veteran race car driver who has recorded more than 60 event-feature wins, including at Bristol Motor Speedway and North Wilkesboro Speedway, along with 21 feature event victories coming at Bowman Gray Stadium.

- **Kelly Holder**, a longtime head football coach at Mount Airy High School who guided the Bears to the 2008 state championship. As a student athlete he was a standout quarterback at North Surry High School and Elon University.

- **Steve Forrest**, a 1968 Mount Airy High graduate who captured the Carolinas Golf Association amateur championship twice in the early 1970s and qualified for the NCAA National Championship as a collegiate golfer.

- **The 2008 Mount Airy High School Varsity Football Team** that brought home the school's first state title in 60 years. Players include Bruce Griffin, Alex Wells, E.J. Valentine, Aaron Culler, Reece Barbour, Tyler Hull, Chris Lister, Justin Collier, Jessie Salazar, Devin Wagner, Andrew Harris, Michael Dobson, Aaron Wheeler, Drew Joyce, Josh Penley, Christian Zamora, Stephen Hart, Brooks Mayberry, Anthony Moore, Dorian Gwyn, Luke Wheeler, Andy Temoney, Robert Hiatt, Caleb France, Jordan Swartz Chase Smith, Ryan Goins, Josh Smith, Daryle Valentine, Will Maybry, Ben Hinson, Bryce Holcomb, Christian Easter, Danny Belle, Demetrius Rucker and Ronald Brown. The staff led by Head Coach Kelly Holder includes Darron Taylor, Justin Moore, Dennis Moore, Chris Johnson, Tom Wunderle, and Donald Price.

- **Cathy Cloukey**, a long-serving veteran of the Mount Airy Parks and Recreation Department who now is its assistant director, received the Granite City Award. It recognizes an individual who made major contributions to the promotion of local sports.

The Greater Mount Airy Sports Hall of Fame solicits nominations every other year and inducts four individuals or teams every two years and a Granite City Award designee. Their names are memorialized on a stone monument at the Municipal Building.

Among them are athletes, coaches, administrators, referees, umpires and other officials that have left a significant impact in the Mount Airy area. For more information about the Sports Hall of Fame, visit facebook.com/greatermountairysportshallof fame.

Jane Motsinger Is "Good Scout"

The Old Hickory Council of the Boy Scouts of America annually presents its Good Scout Award to individuals who exemplify the principles of scouting through their efforts to improve lives and serve the people in their local area. This year's honoree in the Elkin area is Jane Motsinger for her service with the Feed the Elderly program and The Ark.

Originally from Winston-Salem, Motsinger moved to State Road in 1979 and in 1982 became a volunteer with Feed the Elderly. She has served as the agency's interim director since 2023.

Motsinger also volunteered at Tri-County Christian Crisis Ministry and served as its Director in 1994-98. While at Tri-C she spearheaded a community movement to establish The Ark Homeless Shelter, then served as its Director in 1999-2006. She also helped establish the Surry Homeless & Affordable Housing Coalition to create and provide affordable housing options for people moving out of homeless shelters in Surry County.

Motsinger is an active member of Galloway Memorial Episcopal Church, where she has served as Senior Warden and currently serves as Treasurer. She was licensed as a Lay Preacher in 2016. She is also a past member and president of the Yadkin Valley Rotary Club. Since 2009 she has been a volunteer for Big Brothers Big Sisters and became a mentor for two sisters ages 9 and 11, one of whom graduated from N.C. A&T University in 2022.

Motsinger is the first woman in the Elkin area to receive the Old Hickory Council's Good Scout Award. Previous recipients include Dr. Jim Harrell Sr., Fred Norman, Dr. Hal Stuart, Tom Gwyn, Scooter Parker, Dr. Bill Blackley, Gary York, Dr. Steve Erlandson, and Larry Irwin.

Female Athlete Of The Year

A former Mount Airy High School Lady Bears superstar soccer player is Guilford College's 2024 Female Athlete of the Year.

Baylee Greenwood, daughter of Kristy and Frank Greenwood, was fourth in the nation in scoring and second highest in North Carolina in her senior year (2018-19) under Head Coach Will Hurley at Mount Airy High School.

In her freshman year playing soccer at Salem College in Winston-Salem, Baylee finished among the top five in four major statistical categories: goals, points, assists, and shots. Returning to Salem after the COVID pandemic, she led the Spirits in goals, assists, and total points in 2021.

She transferred to Guilford College in Greensboro in 2022. In 2023 she led the Lady Quakers in points (29) and goals (14) and was selected for the All-ODAC First Team in the Old Dominion Athletics Conference.

Surry County Schools Honors Volunteers Of The Year

Each year in the Surry County Schools district, individual schools select a volunteer to represent them and to compete for the coveted title of Surry County Schools Volunteer of the Year. Liesa Hawks is the 2024 Surry County Schools Volunteer of the Year. She serves Franklin Elementary School where Principal Sharia Templeton said, "Mrs. Hawks has volunteered at our school for several years, but has truly gone above and beyond this year to make her presence felt by both our students and our staff. She can often be found helping in the media center to shelve books, clean, or even run the Book Fair. She has packed food bags, filled the clothing closet, washed clothes, glued together warm fuzzies, created bulletin boards, helped to hide hundreds of Easter eggs, and simply been a willing person to help in any way she may be called upon."

Principal Templeton continued, "She takes time to sincerely talk to students and staff, and is described as being kind, caring, upbeat, positive, and always having a smile to share whenever you see her in the hallways. Like most volunteers, she frequently works behind the scenes and never expects recognition from anyone in return. Mrs. Hawks has shown through her efforts that she is dedicated to helping Franklin Elementary be a place that is inviting and supportive for us all. She has truly made an impact on our school and we give her a huge PAWS HIGH as our 2023-2024 Volunteer of the Year!"

Superintendent Dr. Travis L. Reeves thanked all of the school system's volunteers at an annual recognition event. He said, "Surry County Schools is so fortunate to have so many volunteers working with our students in our schools.... We are grateful that you return day after day, week after week, month after month, and year after year to donate your time and energy to the success of our students."

The schools and their nominees are:

- Cedar Ridge Elementary: Chester McMillian
- Central Middle: Ricky Thomas
- Copeland Elementary: Ashley Bingman
- East Surry High School: Mindy Chilton
- Flat Rock Elementary: Melissa Wight
- Gentry Middle: Debbie Jarrell
- Meadowview Magnet: Jessica Montgomery
- Mountain Park Elementary: Debbie Money
- North Surry High School: Donald Bingman
- Pilot Mountain Elementary: Charlotte Cassell
- Pilot Mountain Middle: Bethany Riddle
- Rockford Elementary: Mollie Coe
- Shoals Elementary: Kimberly Snow
- Surry Central High School: Beth Atkins
- Surry Early College: Tina Beasley
- Westfield Elementary: Heather Johnson
- White Plains Elementary: Judy Joyce

Mountain Valley celebrates Woltz Hospice Home's 15 years

Mountain Valley, a local hospice and palliative care organization, celebrated a significant milestone this spring: 15 years of service to parents and families by the Joan & Howard Woltz Hospice Home in Dobson. The event at the hospice home, 945 Zephyr Road in Dobson, N.C., was led by Mountain Valley President and CEO Tracey Dobson.

Reflecting on the past 15 years, Dobson emphasized the organization's mission to provide unparalleled care every time to every patient and family. She said that Mountain Valley strives to serve patients wherever they call home, whether it be a residence, hospital, or assisted living facility. When health care needs cannot be met at home, patients have the option of receiving care in one of two hospice care centers (the other is in Yadkinville).

Since 2009, over 7,400 patients and their families have received care at the Woltz Hospice Home.

"We are immensely proud of the services and support we have been able to provide over the past 15 years," said Dobson. "Our dedicated team of doctors, nurses, CNAs, social workers, chaplains, volunteers, and other professionals have exemplified excellence in hospice care, bringing comfort and understanding to those in need."

For more information about Mountain Valley and its services and facilities, visit its website: mtnvalleyhospice.org.

Old-Time Contra Dancing

Monthly contra dances in Sparta resumed in May and will continue on the third Friday of each month. What's a contra dance? It's a form of American folk dance, the older cousin to the square dance, accompanied with string-band dance music rooted in the Appalachian mountains of North Carolina and Virginia.

The Alleghany Arts Council held a successful contra dance in February and it proved so popular that with additional support from the North Carolina Arts Council there will be contra dancing on the third Friday of every month at the Sparta United Methodist Church.

The Alleghany Arts Council says no fancy footwork is needed. All the dance moves are taught and called. Organizers added, "No need to bring a partner to join our friendly dance community, and it is appropriate for all ages."

Beginner lessons start at 6:30 p.m. The dancing gets under way at 7 o'clock in the church at 190 N. Main St. in Sparta. Tickets cost \$10 per person at the door or online. Under 12s will be admitted free with a ticket holder. Refreshments will be available.

For more information visit AlleghanyArtsCouncil.org.

Mount Airy City Schools Names New Superintendent

Dr. Phillip Brown is the new Superintendent of Mount Airy City Schools. He came to the school district in 2017 as executive director of teaching and learning. He currently is Deputy Superintendent of Human Resources and Academics. During the past seven years, Brown has been involved in applying nearly \$12 million in grants to programs that provide greater opportunities to students and staff.

"Accepting the position of superintendent at Mount Airy City Schools fills me with excitement, especially as a Granite Bear," Brown said. "Leading this esteemed institution, steeped in tradition, is a dream come true. I eagerly anticipate furthering my collaboration with the talented staff, motivated students, and supportive community to uphold our proud legacy. This opportunity ignites my passion for shaping the future of our school district while honoring our Granite Bear heritage. Go Bears!"

Dr. Brown is a Montgomery County native who earned his bachelor's degree from St. Andrew Presbyterian University, his Master of School Administration from University of North Carolina Pembroke, and his doctorate from Wingate University. He and his wife, Mandy, have one son.

He has served in public education for 24 years. He has been heavily involved in both the district work and the community. He is a Past President of the Mount Airy Rotary Club and former Youth Services Chair, a Paul Harris Fellow, and the founder of the Satellite Rotary Club of Mount Airy. He is the Education and Collections Committee Chair for the Mount Airy Museum of Regional History. He is a founding board member of the Blue Bear Foundation and Young Entrepreneurs of Surry (YES-Surry).

He succeeds Dr. Kim Morrison who now is senior project director with The Innovation Project.

HCH Auxiliary Thrift Shop

About 40 Hugh Chatham Health Auxiliary members, friends, and associates attended the ribbon-cutting ceremony to officially open the newly renovated HCH Auxiliary Thrift Shop at 103 W. Main in Elkin.

The store features a collection of formal wear — perfect for proms, weddings, and quinceañeras — and can arrange for free alterations. Among its other offerings are clothing and accessories, linens and pillows, stuffed animals, furniture, kitchenware, glassware, and toys.

If you haven't had a chance to visit the Thrift Shop, stop by and find your next treasure or donate your gently used items. The store accepts donations during its regular business hours: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Wednesday through Saturday. For more information, visit the store's Facebook page.

Yadkin County Schools Has New Superintendent

Anthony Davis will become the next Superintendent of Yadkin County Schools on July 1, the Yadkin County Schools Board of Education announced. He will be a familiar face to some people in the school district, because he is a past teacher, coach, and principal at schools in East Bend.

Davis currently is the Director of Federal Programs and Career and Technical Education in Davie County Schools. Prior to that, he served as Principal of Forbush Middle School and Forbush Elementary School. Earlier he was a teacher and coach at Forbush High School for 13 years, including six years as the school's Athletics Director. In Elkin City Schools he was an administrator for four years.

With 26 years' experience, Davis brings a wealth of instructional knowledge and educational leadership to Yadkin County Schools. The Board of Education is excited that he is returning home to serve as its next Superintendent, and we welcome Superintendent Davis back to Yadkin County Schools.

New Football Coach At ESHS

East Surry High School's new Varsity Football Head Coach is Caleb Pardue, the defensive backs coach for the Mount Airy High School Granite Bears.

Coach Pardue graduated from Starmount High School and in 2013 received a degree in Social Studies Education from Appalachian State University. He has an additional certification in K-12 Physical Education. His career began as a teacher and athletics coach in public schools. He brings extensive experience in all football coaching positions.

Coach Pardue said, "I am thrilled to embark on this new journey at East Surry, a community renowned for its passion for football and commitment to success. The incredible tradition and unwavering support, evidenced by top-notch facilities and community involvement, make East Surry what I believe to be one of the best jobs in North Carolina. My family — Molly, Stella, Monroe, Graham, and I — are deeply grateful to Mrs. DuPlessis and the administration for entrusting us with the opportunity to lead such a storied program and become part of this wonderful community. As one of our favorite family sayings goes, 'The best is yet to come.'"

ESHS Principal Shannon DuPlessis said Coach Pardue "is energetic and passionate about our program. Coach Pardue sets high expectations for himself and those around him. He brings a vision that will develop student-athletes into good citizens through accountability and believing in something more than themselves." ESHS Athletic Director Chad Freeman said Pardue's "passion and leadership will help our young men excel on the football field, in the classroom, and in the community."

Coach Jim Forest

We are saddened by the loss of James "Coach Jim" Forest, a great servant and supporter of the Men's Basketball Team at Mount Airy High School who passed May 8 at age 85. He coached for years and also sponsored a scholarship for a graduating senior member of the team. His favorite saying, "Work hard and enjoy the journey," is memorialized on a white board in the school's new locker room.

Coach Jim "retired" from the sidelines this year when the high schools' men's basketball season ended. Coach was a valuable member of the staff, giving his time, sharing his knowledge of the game, and providing whatever resources were needed to make the program a success. Broadcaster Kelly Epperson said, "He touched the lives of many, and had a gift of making young athletes believe in themselves. He will be sorely missed."

James "Jim" Ishmael Forest of Pilot Mountain was born in 1938 in Forsyth County. He retired from the U.S. Air Force after 20 years' service as a Tech Sergeant. He then began a career as a purchasing manager at RJR Dental Care. He decided to become a business owner and started the first of several Assisted Living Homes. He continued building this legacy for 25 years before he retired.

Jim's life-long love was basketball. He played for Mount Airy High School and played and coached throughout his military career. While raising his children, he devoted many weeknights and Saturdays coaching Rec Ball. Later on, he was able to return to Mount Airy High School to coach for 17 years.

He is survived by his wife of 53 years, Vicki Ann Tysinger Forest; by three children and their spouses, Maizi Marie Forest Chilton and Grant, Joshua Robertson Forest and Tanya, and Katherine Lynette Forest Huffman and Ikey; and by a number of grandchildren and great-grandchildren. In lieu of flowers, the family asks for donations to be made to Amazing Grace Baptist Church. Rest in peace, Jim.

New United Way Director

United Way of Wilkes County is welcoming a new Executive Director. Kinsley P. Walker is a Wilkes County native with a bachelor's degree in business administration and minors in finance and marketing from High Point University. At Wells Fargo she served as a banking analyst and associate.

Dr. Westley Wood, president of the United Way of Wilkes County Board of Directors, stated, "Wilkes County is fortunate to have Mrs. Walker as the new Executive Director. Mrs. Walker is passionate about the community that she grew up in and continues to call home. She has a strong desire to be a servant leader in the community."

Walker succeeds Clara Hickman, who recently announced her retirement as executive director.

Oliver Receives Agora Award

Barbara Oliver, who served for a quarter century on Mount Airy's Historic Preservation Commission, is the latest recipient of the Agora Award. It is the highest honor bestowed by city officials to recognize individuals who demonstrated a special love for the Mount Airy community and service above self.

Oliver "has been instrumental in championing the need for, and appreciation of, historic preservation," according to a resolution adopted by the Mount Airy Board of Commissioners, and is "especially passionate about the protection of historic properties in and around Mount Airy... She has helped foster a sense of community while improving the city by donating her time, skills and preservation efforts to make Mount Airy a better place to work, visit and live... (She) demonstrates a genuine commitment to historic preservation through extraordinary leadership, research, philanthropy, promotion and personal participation" and also "has inspired others to join the vital mission of historic preservation, ensuring that our heritage continues to thrive for generations to come."

Barbara and the late Judge Otis "Bud" Oliver were married for 61 years. He passed in 2021. The couple has a son, Marty, who accompanied her to the award presentation. In her remarks, Barbara noted that she also served on the Mount Airy Appearance Commission for years, helping to launch beautification projects that remain visible today.

Mount Airy inaugurated the Agora Award in 2023. Mayor Jon Cawley said the name comes from a Greek word for a special sense of togetherness and bond within a place which is created through one's deeds. Previous Agora Award recipients are Betty Wright, Robbie Curlee, and Gary York.

Juneteenth In Wilkesboro

There will be a Juneteenth Freedom Celebration at the Carolina West Wireless Community Commons in downtown Wilkesboro from 4 to 8 p.m. June 16.

Activities will include live music and cultural showcases, and food vendors will be on hand.

This event is sponsored by the Town of Wilkesboro to commemorate the struggle for freedom for Black Americans.

Word Match Game answers

(from Page 3)

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

The Communicator

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

**“In all your ways submit to him,
and he will make your paths straight.” Proverbs 3:6**



Congratulations Class of 2024!



2116 North Bridge Street, Elkin - (336) 835-1600