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Smiley Butler,

Bus Director/
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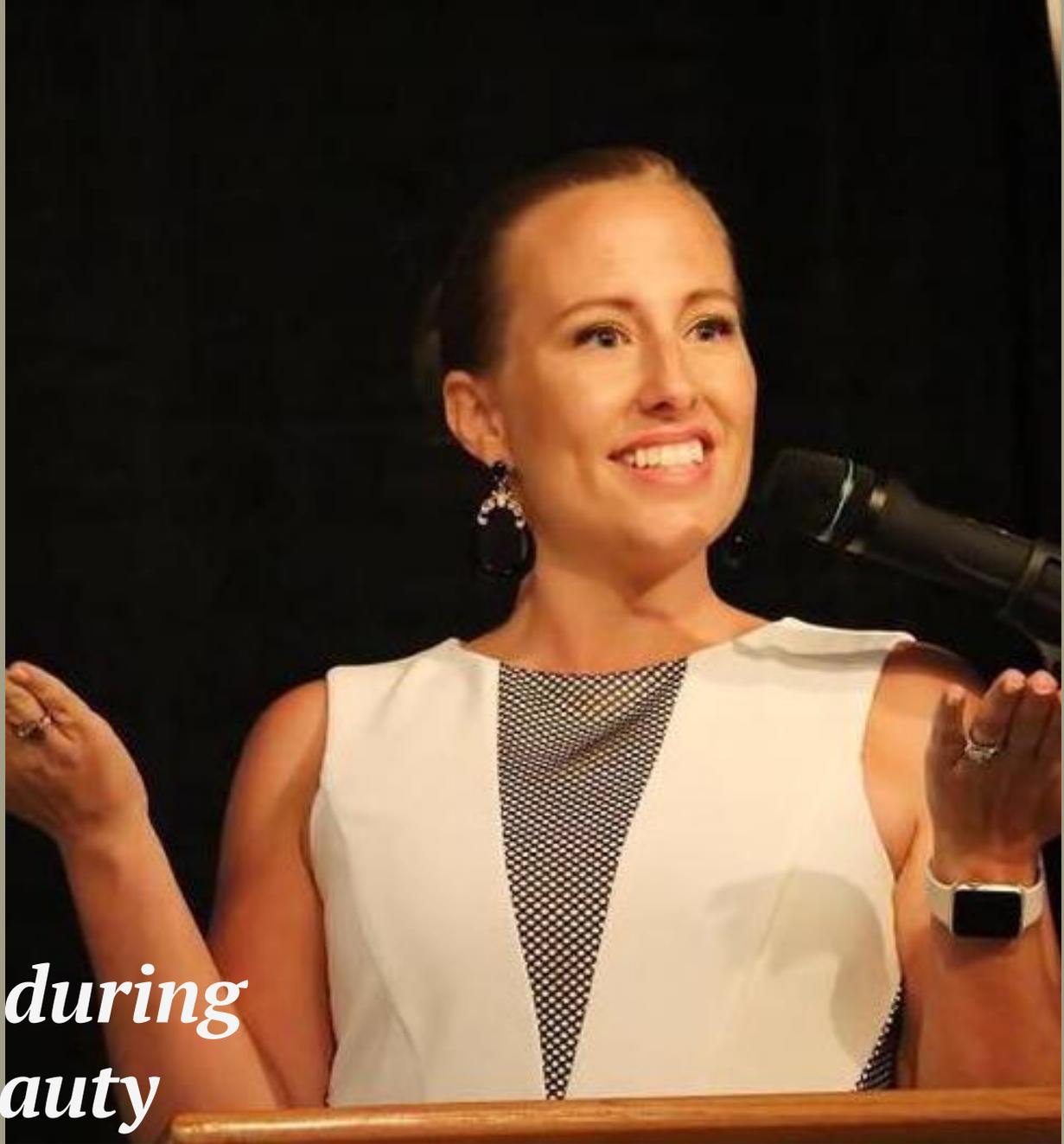
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Enduring Beauty

This year has called for an extra helping of forbearance. As I was thinking about all the beauty that shines through during difficult times, I realized we needed to highlight how Bladen County has - Enduring Beauty.

Usually, when one thinks of beauty, an image of an attractive muse comes to mind. But, let us take a more in-depth look into the subject.

Enduring Beauty goes beyond the eye of the beholder to the heart of the matter. Kahlil Gibran, a poet, once said, "Beauty is not in the face; beauty is a light in the heart."

Bladen County, called the "Mother County," by those who adore her, shines! We have beautiful landscapes with refreshing waters and rich soil for healthy farming. We have gorgeous people like Ms. Minnie Price and Mr. Walter Bullard who, have decades of dedicated service working with our youth. Let's not forget the remarkable example Alise Pait and Scott Bowen set for us.

In 2018, the couple forfeited West Bladen homecoming votes and crowned, Sage McDonald and Grayson White, Queen and King with royal status.

Bladen County's citizens have persevered through wars, depressions, social conflicts and now a Pandemic.

Therefore, we wanted to spotlight some Enduring Beauty in Bladen County with this magazine. Essential workers, inventors, war heroes, and others take the spotlight with their Enduring Beauty in this publication. I hope you find true beauty in this magazine, county, and in the world around you.

Stay safe, healthy, and happy!

Charlotte Smith

Charlotte Smith
President and Publisher

Thoughts While Shaving

by Robert G. Hester



Years ago, I thought I wanted to move away and never return...You may have had the same thoughts; maybe you executed your plan and then returned....

Over the years I have been blessed, Bladen is a great place to live work and play...For years, folks would say, and I believed... there's nothing to do here...no opportunities, no jobs...bet you have heard some of that type conversation....

Allow me to make the case Bladen is a great place to live, work and play.... I'm not attempting to persuade anyone that improvements are not needed...they are...

Over the years, job opportunities have quadrupled....DuPont, Smithfield Foods, Gildan Yarns, SPT (formally Danaher), and numerous others, many locally owned...Enjoy farming? Blueberries, corn and beans, peanuts, cotton, tobacco, swine and more.

Looking for summer fun in the sun? Begin with White Lake or Bay Tree or one of the many others lakes in the county. Enjoy fishing, so many great places, including the Cape Fear River, and numerous other rivers, streams, lakes, and ponds.

Enjoy hunting? Allen Brothers near Bladenboro is one of several locations...

Golfer, none finer than The Vineyard near White Lake...

Schools (public, private, church & Charter) are improving and Bladen Community College offers numerous opportunities for young and old alike....

I have always lived in Bladen County, so I am prejudiced...I plead guilty....I traveled to all 100 North Carolina counties annually for 25 years....The best part of any trip was seeing the Bladen County sign as I returned home.



Photo by Jamie Corbett,
WhiteLakeLifeNC.com

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Bladen County:



Finalist in beard contest.



Judges Ricky Leinwand, Dr. E.C. Bennett, and Bobby Guyton.
Left to right; Lewis Smith, Slater Hair Sr., Leslie Johnson, ?, ?, Richard Bridges, Frank Baker, Edwin Smith, and Billy Fisher.



Back In The Day...

by Norgie Hester

Old folks around Bladen County have consistently talked about "the good ole' times". It is presumed that "the good ole' times" is what each individual remembers. It might be 50 years ago...or it might be week before last. In this particular instance, we are going to look back to the 1950-60 era. We must remember that Bladen County was established in 1734 and has a varied history that could take hours and hours to tell.

Education in the 50's found kids attending high schools all over the county. Today we have two mega high schools in the county. Is the education better than it was when the county had smaller high schools?

That is an opinion to be decided by the individual. We have Bladen Community College, which started as Bladen Technical Institute, and offers varied educations.

Entertainment in the county has had a varied past. There was a time when there were five "walk-in movie shows" in Bladen, along with two drive-ins.

"The Good Ol' Times"

People in that era devised their own entertainment with social gatherings, basketball games on Tuesday and Friday nights, and gatherings around the piano to sing after prayer meetings on Wednesdays. Today, with the advent of technology, you push a button and receive 10,000 movies on demand.

Politics have shifted in Bladen in the past years. The county used to be total Democratic whereas today the R's, D's and Independents divide the political scene. Bladen once had five county commissioners and today we are governed by nine.

The agriculture scene has certainly shifted from an economy that was 90% dependent on tobacco to today's dependence on hogs, poultry, corn, peanuts, soy beans, and the "coming back" of cotton.

Years ago Bladen's industrial scene was dominated by cut and sew operations. It is hard to find any of these operations still in the county. Technology rules the roost. Timber is still a great source of income in our county. As one of the old heads stated "we have hogs and logs."

Folks who live in Bladen have a habit of saying, "Boy, things are tough around here...but I wouldn't want to live anywhere else."



View more Southeastern Times newspaper photos by stopping at the BladenOnline office.

Withstanding the Test of Time

by Cara Beth Lewis

New Light Church is a place of worship that has withstood the test of time. Founded in 1924 and still serving Bladen and surrounding counties today, New Light is visited online and in-person by hundreds of believers weekly. It started as a small community church on Chestnut Street in Bladenboro, built on land donated by Mr. Ben Ludlum. Throughout the years, it has grown exponentially due to the members' and leaders' dedication to serving God and the community.

Recently, the new twenty-first century-style location has been completed. Two services are happening there each Sunday in order to follow Coronavirus (COVID-19) social distancing protocols. The old building that has been New Light Church (NLC) for nearly a century will now serve exclusively as a Kids' Church, offering teachings to each child on his or her level.

Sharing, showing, and spreading the love of God is the mission, and Pastor Dale Hester is dedicated to fulfilling it. For the last ten years, many great changes have been faced under his leadership.

According to Creative Pastor Cory Hester, "When I started ten years ago, all we had was a basic website and audio recordings of our sermons, but now we are able to stream live HD video every Sunday. We also have the New Light App, which is available to download for free on every major device."

There are always new ideas, new ways to serve the surrounding areas and local community, and new ways to bring people to know the love of Jesus at New Light Church. According to Lead Pastor Dale Hester, "local and foreign missions are the heartbeat of the church because mission ministry comes from the heart of God."

That is why NLC currently supports over five hundred churches in North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, and seventeen foreign countries, in addition to the ministries in Bladen County and neighboring counties. Pastor Cory Hester also details one of the newest ideas, which is the #ForTheThree campaign.

He states, "Too many churches are known for what they are against, but we want to be known for what we are for. We launched the #ForTheThree campaign because we are for the three counties that surround our church: Bladen, Robeson, and Columbus." It is ideas just like this that have progressed the church over the years and will continue to do so for years to come.



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- Abbottsburg P H Church
910-648-6456
14258 Twisted Hickory Road,
Bladenboro, NC 28320
- Abe Branch Holiness Church
910-866-5740
965 Marsh Road,
Bladenboro, NC 28320
- Adoracion Ministerio
123 S. Poplar Street
Elizabethtown, NC 28337
- All Lady of Snow 910-862-4998
107 N Robeson Street,
Elizabethtown, NC 28441
- Ammon PFWB Church
7855 old Fayetteville Road,
Garland, NC 28441
- Apostolic Faith Holiness Church
242 Diamond Trail,
Elizabethtown, NC 28337
- Apostolic Way Church
8900 53 Hwy E,
Kelly, NC 28448
- Baldwin Branch Missionary
Baptist Church 910-645-2396
4047 Hwy 242 S,
Elizabethtown, NC 28337
WBLA 910-862-2000
512 Peanut Plant Road,
Elizabethtown, NC 28337
- Bakers Creek AME Zion
Church 910-578-9991
656 Center Road,
Bladenboro, NC 28320
- Bluefield United Methodist
Church 910 647-3181
8967 Lisbon Road
Clarkton, NC 28433
- Briar Branch Church
910-588-4909
42 Lula Long Rd. HWY S.
Elizabethtown, NC 28337
- Bladen Baptist Association
108 Mercer Mill Road,
Elizabethtown, NC 28337
- Bladen Charge United
Methodist 919-931-9783
PO Box 96,
117 Gum Spring Road,
White Oak, NC 28399
- Beard's Chapel
409 Beard's Chapel Loop Road
Garland, NC 28441
- Bethel Baptist Church
910-862-4963
707 Old Highway 41 Road
Dublin, NC 28332
- Bethel Holiness Church
910-863-4862
204 Bethel Street
Bladenboro, NC 28320
- Bethlehem Holiness Church
910-863-4214
9590 NC 131 Hwy
Bladenboro NC 28320
- Bethlehem United Methodist
Church 919-931-9783
PO Box 96, 72
Bethlehem Methodist Church
Rd. White Oak, NC 28399
- Bladen Church of Christ
910-862-3838
803 E. Swanzy Street
Elizabethtown, NC 28337
- Bladen Union Church
910-865-5627
2224 W. Bladen Union Church Rd.
Fayetteville, NC 28306
- Bladenboro Church of God
910-863-3898
702 W Seaboard Street
Bladenboro, NC 28320
- Bladenboro First Baptist
Church 910-863-3618
500 S. Main Street
Bladenboro, NC 28320
- Browns Creek AME Zion
Church 910-645-6996
394 Browns Creek Church Road
Elizabethtown, NC
- Butters Baptist Church
1877 Berry Lewis Road
Bladenboro, NC 28320
- Bryant Swamp Baptist Church
61 Bryant Swamp Road
Bladenboro, NC 28320
- Calvary Church
405 S Main Street
Bladenboro, NC 28320
- Carvers Creek AME Zion Church
910- 669-2452
210 Carvers Creek Church Road
Council, NC 28434
- Carvers Creek United Methodist
Church
16904 NC 87 HWY E
Council, NC 28434
- Center Missionary Baptist Church
910-648-6740
19569 NC 410 HWY
Bladenboro, NC 28320
- Center Road Baptist Church
910-876-2897
2484 Center Road
Bladenboro, NC 28320
- Central Presbyterian Church
7280 N Hallsboro Road
Clarkton, NC 28433
- Centerville Baptist Church
910-669-2488
18577 NC 53 HWY E
Kelly, NC 28448
- Christ Community Baptist
Church 910-866-4300
4761 W NC 53 HWY W
White Oak, NC 28399
- Clark Chapel Church
910-862-4402
14743 NC 87 HWY
Tar Heel, NC 28392
- Clarkton First Baptist Church
910-647-4371
10233N College Street
Clarkton NC 28433

A matter of FAITH

by Pastor Jason Lee

God's Word clearly communicates what it means to be saved: it's entirely a matter of FAITH.

F is for Forgiveness: We can only receive eternal life with God's forgiveness of our sins (Ephesians 1:7)

A is for Available: God's forgiveness of our sins is available to all through faith in Jesus Christ (John 3:16)

I is for Impossible: It is impossible for God to allow sin into heaven (Romans 3:23, Revelation 21:27)

T is for Turn: To turn means to repent from sin & self to faith in Jesus Christ (Luke 13:3, Romans 10:9-10)

H is for Heaven: Eternal life in heaven is ours by faith in Jesus Christ alone (John 14:1-6)

We come to faith in Jesus Christ through:

Renunciation: No longer trying to gain God's favor, forgiveness, or eternal life through our own works (Philippians 3:8-9)

Reliance: Instead, we trust in who Jesus is (God) and what He has done for us (died to pay for our sins) to gain God's favor, forgiveness, and eternal life (Romans 3:25)

Reception: Our trust in Jesus Christ alone, is how we receive && believe in the salvation God offers and are guaranteed eternal life with Him forever (John 1:12)



Dublin First Baptist Church



Our Purpose

To glorify God by enjoying Him forever.
(*Psalm 16:11*)

Our Mission

To make the name of Jesus treasured in our community, nation, and around the world by fulfilling the Great Commission.
(*Matthew 28:18-20*).

Our Vision

A community of devoted followers of Jesus Christ who glorify and enjoy God by denying self, joyfully taking up their cross, and following Jesus.
(*Mark 8:34-35*)

Dublin First Baptist Church

7275 Albert Street
Dublin, NC 28332
910-862-2277

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Church Directory



Clarkton Pentecostal Church
910-648-2963
24 S Page Road,
Clarkton NC 28433

Clarkton Presbyterian Church
910-647-2341
10433 N College Street
Clarkton NC 28433

Colly Chapel Church
9447 NC 41 HWY E
Harrells, NC 28444

Community Baptist Church
910-863-4320
3107 NC-410
Bladenboro, NC 28320

CornerStone Holiness Church
12530 NC 211 HWY E
Council, NC 28434

Council Baptist Church
322 Council Baptist Church
Road
Council, NC 28434

Covenant Presbyterian Church
910-918-1217
95 Mitchell Ford Road
Clarkton, NC 28433

Cromartie Hill Ame Zion
Church 910-862-6376
5670 US 701 Hwy S HWY
Clarkton, NC 28433

David's Chapel Church
910-669-2489
627 Barney Coe Road
Kelly, NC 28448

Deliverance Church
910-669-2432
2291 S Elwell Ferry Road
Council, NC 28434

Dublin First Baptist Church
910-862-2277
7275 Albert Street
Dublin, NC 28332

Elizabethtown Baptist Church
910-862-4538 or 910-879-0004
1800 W Broad Street
Elizabethtown, NC 28337

Elizabethtown Church of God
910-862-9901
1767 NC 242 HWY N
Elizabethtown, NC 28337

Elizabethtown Presbyterian
Church
910-862-3736
PO Box 576,
800 W Broad Street
Elizabethtown, NC 28337

Faith & Deliverance Ministries
NC 87 HWY
Tar Heel, NC 28392

Faith Baptist
15976 NC Hwy 53 W
White Oak, NC 28399

Faith Tabernacle Church
910-865-5252
3744 NC 20 HWY
St. Pauls, NC 28384

First Assembly of God
910-809-0048
12553 NC 131 HWY
Bladenboro, NC 28320

First Baptist Church
910-862-4649
501 Martin Street
Elizabethtown, N.C. 28337

First Baptist Church
910-863-3575
500 S. Main Street
Bladenboro, NC 28320

First New Light Church
910-866-4401
5146 River Road
White Oak, NC 28399

Friendship Baptist Church
910-588-4396
1989 Bull Street
Garland, NC 28441

Foundation Bible Church
910-549-0661
909 S Poplar Street
Elizabethtown, NC 28337

Galeed Baptist Church
910-863-3407
571 Galeed Baptist Church Road
Bladenboro, NC 28320

Good News Baptist Church
11371 Center Road
Bladenboro, NC 28320

Grace Baptist Church
910-648-6913
17061 NC 131 Hwy
Bladenboro, NC 28320

Graham Chapel AME Zion
Church 910-655-3749
458 East Arcadia Road
Riegelwood, NC 28456

Greater Vision Freewill Baptist
Church
329 Singletary Mill Pond Road
Bladenboro, NC 28320

Greater McKoys Chapel Church
910-862-2750
283 Center Road
Elizabethtown, NC 28337

Haw Bluff Baptist Church
910-669-2965
24276 Hwy 210 E
Kelly, NC 28448

Hickory Grove Baptist
910-648-6894
6414 Center Road
Bladenboro, NC 28320

Higher Plains Cowboy Church
15427 NC Hwy 131
Bladenboro, NC 28320

J & L Britt's Holy Ghost
Baptized Holiness Church
91 8th Street
Dublin, N.C. 28332

Jehovah's Witnesses
910-648-6393
6084 NC Hwy 131
Bladenboro, NC 28320

Jerusalem Baptist Church
910-645-4944
10133 NC 211 Hwy E
Council, NC 28434

Church Directory

Joy Fellowship Outreach
Ministry 910-862-3440
18336 NC Hwy 87
Tar Heel, NC 28392

Just As I Am
2836 Mercer Mill Road
Elizabethtown, NC 28337

Kingdom Hall 910-253-6800
1088 Britt Road
Clarkton, NC 28433

Lake Church 910-862-2277
1930 White Lake Drive
White Lake, NC 28337

Lennon's Chapel FBH Church
133 S Smith Street
Clarkton, NC 28433

Liberty Worship 910-840-4325
89 N Grove Street
Clarkton, NC 28433

Lisbon Baptist Church
910-645-4196
4568 Lisbon Road
Clarkton, NC 28433

LiveOakUnitedMethodist
Church
919-931-9783
832LiveOak Methodist Ch. Rd
White Oak, NC 28399

Love Grove Baptist Church
50 Main Street
Tar Heel NC 28392

Martin Chapel AME Zion
Church 910-866-4383
2353 NC Hwy 53
White Oak, NC 28399

Moore Swamp Church
910-669-2145
1545 Moore Swamp Road
Kelly, NC 28448

Mt Carmel Holy Church of
Worship
910-866-4509
1999 Tar Heel Ferry Road
White Oak, NC 28399

Mt Elam Baptist Church 910-
588-6284
6869 NC 210 Hwy
Garland, NC 28441

Mt Horeb Presbyterian Church
& Cemetery 910-796-6779
24 Lisbon Road
Council, NC 28434

Mt Olive AME Zion Church
910-645-6332
32 Mt Olive Church Road
Elizabethtown, NC 28337

Murphy Chapel AME Zion
Church 910-532-4626
6250 NC Hwy 210 Hwy E
Harrells, NC 28448

Natmore Baptist Church 910-
990-0448
4157 Natmore Road
Kelly, NC 28448

New Beginnings Holiness
Church 910-645-4032
1369 Vause Road
Clarkton, NC 28433

New Center Baptist Church
19814 NC 131 Hwy
Bladenboro, NC 28320

New Graham Tabernacle
Church
281 Grand Road
Clarkton, NC 28433

New Hope Baptist Church
910-645-6464
1604 White Plains Church
Road
Clarkton, NC 28433

New Light Baptist Church 910-
863-3582
307 Chestnut Street
Bladenboro, NC 28320

New Mt Calvary Church 910-
916-2432
3637 Airport Road
Clarkton, NC. 28433

New Testament Missionary
Church 910-645-4965
464 McKoy Road
Clarkton, NC 28433

New Zion AME Zion Church
910-645-6796
2422 Lisbon Road
Clarkton, NC 28433

Northside Baptist Church
898 Sunset Park Road
Bladenboro, NC 28320

Open Door Ministries
910-862-1566
2704 E. Broad Street
Elizabethtown, NC 28337

Oak Grove Original Free Will
Baptist Church
Hwy 242 N.
Bladenboro, NC 28320

Peace Baptist Church
910-863-3288
125 Elizabethtown Road
Bladenboro, NC 28320

Philadelphia 7th Day Church
910-645-4836
1855 Microwave Tower Road
Council, NC 28434

PierceChapel AME Zion Church
595 Porterville School Rd #90
Clarkton, NC 28433

Pilgrim Hill Baptist Church
957 Elkton Road
Clarkton, NC 28433

Piney Grove Church
910-669-3353
851 Brady Plantation Road
Council, NC 28434

Pittman's Chapel Church
5002 Hwy NC 211
Bladenboro, NC 28320

Pleasant Hill Baptist Church
910-647-8351
426 BookerTWashington Sch.Rd.
Clarkton, NC 28433

Pleasant Hill Holiness Church
910-588-4794
2020 Johnstontown Road
Elizabethtown, NC 28337

Pleasant Union Missionary
Baptist Church
1437 East Arcadia Road
Riegelwood, NC 28456

Pleasant Hill Church
910-669-2662
1350 Natmore Road
Kelly, NC 28448

Church Directory

- Purdie United Methodist Church
910-876-0091
11567 Hwy 87 N.
Tar Heel, NC 28392
- Rehobeth AME Zion Church
910-645-6250
475 Rehobeth Church Rd. #635
Clarkton, NC 28433
- Renacer
Hwy 701
Garland, NC 28441
- Richardson Baptist Church
694 Bryant Swamp Road
Bladenboro, NC 28320
- Richardson Chapel Holy Bible Church Of God
7950 NC 53 Hwy W
White Oak, NC 28399
- Riegelwood Wesley United Methodist Church
104 NC Hwy 87 E.
Riegelwood, NC 28456
- Riverside Missionary Baptist Church
910-532-4709
5043 NC 210 Hwy S.
Harrells, NC 28444
- Riverside PFWB Church
2247 Airport Road
Elizabethtown, NC 28337
- Greater Robinson Temple Holiness Church
910-549-7395
173 Robeson Temple Church Road
Elizabethtown, NC 28337
- Round Branch Baptist Church
910-648-6026
10295 Center Road
Bladenboro, NC 28320
- Rowan PFWB Church
910-669-2413
20759 NC 210 Hwy E
Ivanhoe, NC 28447
- Sand Hill Baptist Church
910-648-6130
15580 Twisted Hickory Road
Bladenboro, NC 28320
- Sandy Plain Missionary Baptist Church
910-647-0471
903 Farmers Union Road
Clarkton, NC 28433
- Sandy Grove Baptist Church
910-648-4581
8299 NC 242 Hwy S
Bladenboro, NC 28320
- Shady Grove AME Zion Church
910-645-2049
1060 Microwave Tower Road
Council, NC 28434
- Savannah Temple AME Zion Church
910-645-2176
9907 Lisbon Road
Clarkton, NC 28433
- Second Chance Community Church
205 S Poplar Street
Elizabethtown, NC 28337
- Second Presbyterian Church
910-862-3288
208 W. Dunham Street
Elizabethtown, NC 28337
- Singletary United Methodist Church
910-862-2421
241 Third Street
Dublin, NC 28332
- Sojourners Chapel
215 E Poplar Street
Bladenboro, NC 28320
- Spring Branch AME Zion Church
910-862-7271
1205 Spring Branch Road
Tar Heel, NC 28392
- St. James AME Zion Church
910-669-2190
1630 Over Lyon Road
Kelly, NC 28448
- St. Luke AME Zion
410 Martin Luther King Drive
Bladenboro, NC
- St. James Holy Church
917 S Braddy Plantation Road
Council, NC 28434
- St. Rest Holiness Church
910-588-4720
5397 Johnstontown Road
Elizabethtown, NC 28337
- St. Thomas AME Zion Church
910-866-4123
5673 NC 53 W
White Oak, NC 28399
- Straightway Holiness Church
704-626-8357
200 Monroe Street
Bladenboro, NC 28320
- Suggs Grove Church
16618 Hwy 53 W.
Fayetteville, NC 28312
- Sweet Home Holiness Church
4159 Sweet Home Church Road
Elizabethtown, NC 28337
- Tabernacle Holiness Church
910-669-2458
573 Youngstown Road
Riegelwood, NC 28456
- Tar Heel Baptist Church
910-862-3908
521 Tar Heel Ferry Road
Tar Heel, NC 28392
- Tar Heel Freewill Baptist
Main Street
Tar Heel, NC 28392
- The Greater Mckoy Chapel
283 Center Road
Bladenboro, NC 28320
- Trinity AME Zion Church
910-669-3194
2614 Baltimore Road
Council, NC 28434
- Trinity United Methodist Church
910-862-3706
901 W. Broad Street
Elizabethtown, NC 28337

The photo to the right is Trinity AME Zion Church in the Carver's Creek area.



Church Directory

Trinity United Methodist Church
16550 NC 53 Hwy E.
Kelly, NC 28448

True Vine Holiness Church INC
910-645-6943
1503 Harrelson Road
Clarkton, NC 28433

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Tar Heel, NC 28392

Victory is Mine Ministries
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Bladenboro, NC 28320

WesleysChapelUnited
Methodist Church
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2409 Peanut Plant Road
Elizabethtown, NC 28337

West Bladenboro Baptist
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703 Village Street
Bladenboro, NC 28320

White's Creek Baptist Church
910-645-4642
6938 Airport Road
Clarkton, NC 28320

White's Creek Missionary
Baptist Church 910-645-4646
6062 Mercer Mill Road
Clarkton, NC 28433

White Lake Baptist
910-876-3462
7585 NC 41 Hwy E
White Lake, NC 28337

White Oak Family Worship
Center 910-866-5343
1932 Burney Road
White Oak, NC 28399

White Plains Presbyterian
Church 910-645-4973
6155 White Plains Church Road
Council, NC 28434

WilsonChapelMlssionary Church
833 Over Lyon Road
Kelly, NC 28448

Windsor United Methodist
Church
12863 NC Hwy 242 N
Elizabethtown NC 28337

Zion Chapel AME Zion Church
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Photo below shows church members in Tar Heel helping schools deliver food to students during the COVID-19 Pandemic.





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FARMERS

Vacation Viddles Program Provides Fresh Produce



by Olivia Barnes

Randolph Keaton of Men and Women United for Youth and Families has found a way to involve youth and provide fresh produce for local communities.

The Vacation Viddles Program engages youth like 4-H'ers and Youth Ambassadors to learn about sustainable agriculture and how important farming is to our communities. Middle and High schoolers can grow and distribute fresh produce like cucumbers, squash, tomatoes, and blueberries with the help of local farmers. Not only does it benefit local youth, the program also provides economic growth for farmers. The Vacation Viddles Program helps communities thrive economically in addition to investing in youth by opening the door for more opportunities, influencing their career choices, and offering internships.

Randolph Keaton says that the program "helps young people understand the importance of having access to fresh produce and engaging in a healthy lifestyle."

The Vacation Viddles Program works closely with Bladen, Brunswick, and Columbus counties and the NC Cooperative Extension to bring fresh produce to those who may not have access to it. This program is especially important during the COVID-19 pandemic because the program offers delivery services.

The Vacation Viddles Program partners with various organizations and is open to partnering with organizations to serve the citizens of local communities.

For more information, visit
<https://www.menandwomenunited.org>.

COMMUNITIES WORKING TOGETHER

N.C. pecan growers expect plentiful crop



After several years of weather-related setbacks, North Carolina pecan growers are reporting a strong crop. That is welcome news for farmers such as Tim Haithcock, who has been growing pecans for over 25 years.

"My trees have been heavy," Haithcock said. "They are looking very, very good with plenty of pecans on every variety."

Haithcock owns Indian Springs Pecans in Goldsboro. The 107-acre farm has about 30 acres of pecan trees as well as a nursery that grows trees for other commercial pecan operations. Haithcock attributes the good crop to adequate moisture and sunshine throughout the growing season. In addition, no major storms impacted eastern North Carolina during this year's hurricane season.

"Consumers should have no trouble finding North Carolina pecans this season," said Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler. "Local pecans will be available in retail stores, at area farmers markets and directly on the farm. Wherever you shop, be sure to look for the Got To Be NC logo to know you're getting a quality product from North Carolina farmers."

There are several areas around Bladen County offering pecans for sale each season.

North Carolina is one of the top 10 pecan-producing states in the nation. Local farmers grow between 4-5 million pounds of in-shell pecans annually. While pecan trees can be found across the state, most commercial orchards are in eastern and southeastern North Carolina. To find a local orchard near you, go to www.buyncpecans.com.

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Larrell Murchinson's Long Journey to His NFL Dream



John Clark



Elizabethtown native Larrell Murchinson is currently fulfilling his dream of playing in the National Football League, and his long road to the NFL has included twists and turns and one very big bump in 2018 - but Larrell has stayed constant in his faith and his devotion to his family.

As a rookie Murchison has seen playing time on the defensive line recording 3 tackles for the Tennessee Titans in 4 games as Tennessee has posted a perfect 5-0 record despite all the distractions in the 'Season of COVID.'

The Titans won their first 3 games before being sidelined for 16 days as 14 players - 10 from the team's active list - were placed on the reserve/COVID-19 list. Murchison shared that there were days when the team couldn't practice together, but could have virtual meetings. The players contact with non-teammates has been limited due to precautions against the spread of the disease.



"I am blessed," said Larrell. "When I stop and think how far I have come, it has been a long journey, but I have always kept the faith, and I am ready for whatever is next."

Back in high school at East Bladen in 2014, Larrell was named All-Conference as a defensive lineman/fullback in his senior year running for 545 yards and 5 touchdowns and making 83 tackles on defense.

But it was another Murchison - twin brother Farrell - who garnered most of the headlines for Coach Robby Priest's Eagles. Farrell piled up 2,491 yards rushing and scored a whopping 38 touchdowns as East Bladen posted a 10-3 record.

The Murchison brothers stayed together as they continued their football career at Louisburg College. Larrell totaled 18 tackles, including 6 tackles for loss in his freshman year then racked up 41 tackles, 17.5 tackles for loss and 5.5 sacks to become an All-American top 50 JUCO recruit after his sophomore year.

A number of big-name schools came recruiting including Texas, Kentucky, North Carolina, Houston and Georgia. Larrell gave an oral commitment to Mississippi, but then Georgia appeared to be his destination until they 'over signed'. North Carolina State jumped in the fray at the last minute, had a scholarship left and snatched him up.

Larrell redshirted in 2017 at N. C. State, while Farrell who had been named the Offensive Player of the Year at Louisburg in 2015 was playing his junior season at Winston-Salem State and rushing for 542 yards and 4 touchdowns.

Then came the 'big bump in the road' for the Murchisons as Farrell was diagnosed with testicular cancer in August, 2018. There was a time of conflict and worry for Larrell, but he eventually channeled the worry into an opportunity to play for Farrell and for his family.

As a junior Larrell recorded 32 tackles, 8 tackles for loss and 4 sacks for the Wolfpack and received both the Cary-Brewbaker Award (Defensive Lineman of the Year) and Alpha Wolf Rising Award (Most Improved Player).

By the time the 2019 season rolled around, Farrell had recovered, and Larrell celebrated with an All-Atlantic Conference performance that included 48 tackles, 12 tackles for loss and 7 sacks.

Larrell was invited to play at the Reese Senior Bowl where The Athletic listed him as one of "14 prospects who made money in Mobile." At the NFL Combine Larrell benched 225 pounds 29 times, broad jumped 9 feet, 10 inches, ran a 5.05 40-yard dash and measured 29 inches in the vertical jump.

On April 25th, 2020 the call came on Larrell's cell phone, and Milton and Glenda Murchison's house (his parents) exploded in celebration. The Titans were going to make him the first Bladen County player to ever be drafted in the NFL draft. Larrell was chosen in the fifth round with the 174th overall pick.

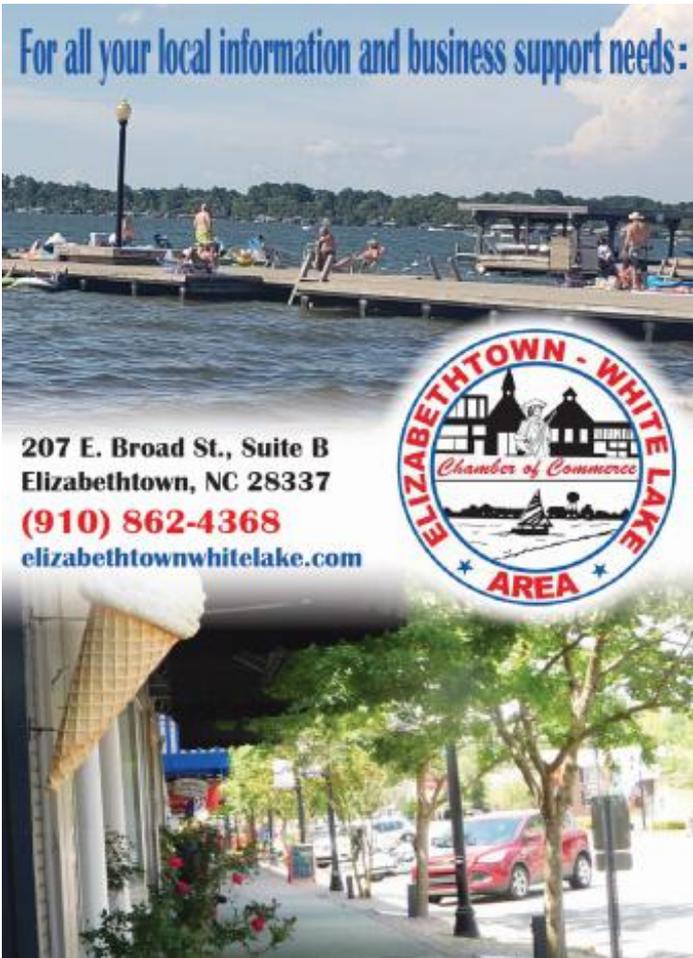
All through the draft process numerous analysts had described Murchison as a 'high motor' player. "My teammates and coaches are part of my family," he said. "I play for them. So when you think of high motor I am playing for my guys and I am playing to win."

In May Larrell signed a 4-year contract with the Titans valued at just under \$3.6 million.

Right now Murchison is "just concentrating on making himself better. It is totally different at this level, and I am just trying to adjust, so I can handle business."

One highlight for him was that Farrell and the family were able to come to Nashville and attend last week's game. The Titans will host another 5-0 team, the Pittsburgh Steelers, Sunday.

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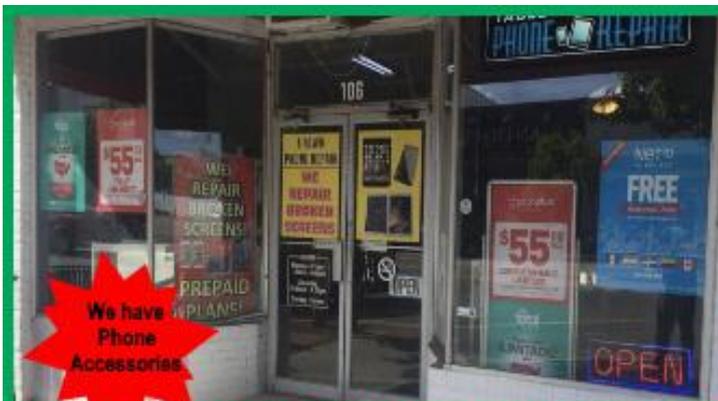
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Four County EMC Rounds Up for Veterans

Trustees for the Four County EMC Operation Round Up® TRUST fund recently awarded \$4,500 to a local non-profit organization that provides services and support to disabled American veterans in Bladen County.

This grant helped the chapter install a much-needed roof at their meeting center located in Elizabethtown. While more repairs are needed, the new roof now allows the group to hold meetings and assist veterans at the center, located at 502 South Cypress Street.

The chapter received its charter in 2017 and currently has 80 members. The namesake, Robert Curtis Hester, was a strong advocate for veterans and was instrumental in organizing the group. Hester passed away one week before they received their charter. The DAV's mission is to help veterans obtain the healthcare, disability, employment, education, and financial benefits they've earned. In addition to the Elizabethtown location, the chapter also offers an outreach program in Bladenboro to reach veterans in rural areas. Their goal is no veterans left behind.



"All we can promise is that we will do our best to get our veterans what they deserve," explains David Brown, the chapter's commander.

DAV chapters receive funding through donations and chapter fundraisers held throughout the year. To learn more about the DAV, Ch. 99, contact Luther Wright at luther.wright.1975@icloud.com.

Four County members support organizations like the DAV by participating in Operation Round Up®, which rounds up their monthly bills to the next dollar. This spare change goes into a fund that is overseen by a nine-member Board of Directors. Over 27,000 Four County members participate in Operation Round Up® and with every penny, we give back, we strengthen our communities. Four County is proud to play a part in making the communities we serve strong today and for years to come.

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- Florence Nightingale

Saluting the Service of Lieutenant Colonel Janice Ryckeley



She was an Air Force Veteran, entered into eternal rest on Monday, February 25, 2019 at the age of 63. Janice leaves behind her husband Micheal F. Ryckeley, two sons; Christian Butler Ryckeley and Clinton Micheal Ryckeley, and other friends and family who miss her greatly.

Lieutenant Colonel Ryckeley's education path started in Bladen County with East Bladen High School and continued with the University Of North Carolina-Greensboro; Bachelor of Science in Nursing, Central Michigan University, Master of Science in Health Services Admin, Chapel Hill, Masters Of Public Health Occupational Health Nursing, and Duke University School of Nursing Adult Cardiovascular Nurse Practitioner. She was a North Carolina certified Adult-gerontology nurse practitioner (ANP)/licensed RN and a South Carolina licensed Adult Nurse Practitioner in Cardiology.

Continued on page 22...



To all Bladen
County residents...
Wishing health and
prosperity to all.



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Blake Proctor

"Let us never consider ourselves finished nurses... we must be learning all our lives." - Florence Nightingale



She earned her Bachelor of Science degree in nursing from the University of North Carolina, Greensboro, North Carolina in 1980, and her Master of Science degree in Health Services Administration from Central Michigan University, Mount Pleasant, Michigan, in 1988. Lt Col Ryckele is a graduate of Squadron Officer School, the USAF School of Aerospace Medicine Flight Nurse Course, the Nursing Service Management Course, and Air Command and Staff College.

According to Lieutenant Colonel Ryckele's Department of the Air Force Fairwell Ceremony documents, she was commissioned directly into the Air Force Nurse Corps, completing her officer orientation in 1981 at Sheppard Air Force Base, Texas. She was then assigned to the USAF Hospital Eglin AFB, Florida, where she served on the surgical and critical care units until 1983.

She proceeded to Rhein-Main Air Base, Germany as an instructor flight nurse, and flight clinical coordinator where she planned and executed airflight (C-9, C-130, and C-141) missions to include movements of 50 burned Marines from Wiesbaden, GE to Andrews AFB, Maryland, and 39 TWA hostages from Damascus, Syria to Rhein-Main AB, GE until 1985.

Lt. Col. Ryckele was later assigned to Malcolm Grow Medical Center, Andrews Air Force Base, MD where she served in the air staging facility, coronary care, coronary step down, and hematology-oncology units. Lieutenant Colonel Ryckele is a proud recipient of the Pearl E. Tucker Award for nursing leadership, excellence in practice, and officership.

In 1988 Lt. Col. Ryckele moved to USAF Hospital Dover, DE where she served in the emergency room, obstetrics, and nursing quality arenas preparing personnel in emergency and critical procedures and practices. During this assignment, she volunteered and deployed to Operation Desert Shield/Storm where she oversaw the planning, organization, and execution of the 50-bed medical-surgical unit. She planned and prepared the hospital staff for emergency care of casualties who fortuitously never arrived.

In 1991, Lt Colonel Ryckele was assigned to the 97th Air Medical Group, Altus AFB, OK. There she served in maternal-child care, hospital quality, and risk management, guiding the medical treatment facility through the strategic planning process. Her service in OK led to the successful award of the prestigious Secretary of Defense and Presidential Quality trophies. Certified in healthcare quality, advanced cardiac life support, neonatal resuscitation, and high risk/critical care obstetrics, Lt Colonel Ryckele's team laid the foundation process for the successful accreditation of the medical treatment facility by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations.

In 1995 Lt. Col. Ryckele was assigned to Scott Air Force Base to the 375th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron and the Global Patient Movement Requirements Center, United States Transportation Command where she planned and executed patient movements via the air flight missions on C-9, C-141, C-130, and C-21 engaging joint critical care, burn and other specialty teams. In Concert with Air Mobility Command, she inspected, planned, and executed five contracts for the first DoD civilian air ambulance service. Additionally, she served as a functional advisor to the USTRANSCOM SG as she organized 150 DoD users into the first TRAC2ES users group to identify and organize requirements for key acquisition efforts leading to successful source selection.

In August 1998, Lt. Colonel Ryckele served as branch chief, aeromedical evacuation system integration, staff officer for global mobility requirements and deputy. She organized the first Joint Expeditionary Force Experiment (JEFX) senior leader conference, which led to the first Air Force level validation process for JEFX operational requirements. She served as assessor for the Mobility 2000 initiatives, information for Global Reach "Care in the Air" in JEFX2000. Additionally, she planned and managed the telemedicine requirements for Medical Commando.

On January 5, 2001, at Langley Air Force Base in Virginia, Lieutenant Colonel Ryckele was honored with a Farewell Ceremony for her twenty years of exemplary service to the Air Force.

Lt. Colonel Ryckeley's decorations include the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, the Air Force Meritorious Medal, the Air Force Commendation Medal with four oak leaf clusters, the Air Force Achievement Medal, and Southwest Asia Medals including Liberation of Kuwait and Saudi Arabia from Operation Desert Shield/Storm.

After her service in the Air Force, Ryckeley continued to offer her specialties by providing care to patients at Columbia Heart Clinic, in Columbia, SC. She worked as an Acute Care Nurse saving lives to the critically ill. She also was an active member at Dublin First Baptist Church. She always gave praise and encouragement to those around her. She loved her husband, two sons, other family members, and friends with faithfulness and integrity. In Ryckeley's retirement ceremony, she quoted two scriptures.

The first is in 2 Thessalonians 2:16-17, "May our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and by his grace gave us eternal encouragement and good hope, encourage your hearts and strengthen you in every good deed and word."

The second is 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18, "For the Lord himself will come down from heaven with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God...and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage each other with these words."

A Celebration of Life Service for Lt. Colonel Ryckley was held on Friday, March 1, 2019, at Bladen Gaskins Funeral Home in Elizabethtown with Rev. Jason Lee officiating. However, Lt. Colonel Janice Ryckeley's life will continue to be celebrated on days such as these.

Bladen Community College Educates and Trains Essential Workers

by Joy Grady

Each year, Bladen Community College educates and trains hundreds of nurses, first responders, law enforcement officers, childcare workers, and others, preparing them for careers as vital service providers in our community.

Now, in the light of the coronavirus pandemic, these professionals are even in higher demand as the "essential workers" they are – critical to the safe operation of our community. They report to work, regardless of personal risk, and they gladly answer the call.



"As a community college, it is part of our mission to support our community. It is a great source of honor and pride for our trustees, faculty and staff to provide educational opportunities for those seeking meaningful jobs that touch lives and make a positive difference especially in such challenging times." remarked Dr. Amanda Lee, President of Bladen Community College.

The term essential worker was not used for the first time with the COVID-19 pandemic. Whenever an emergency, crisis or natural disaster arises, such as a hurricane, certain functions in the workforce are deemed to be essential, requiring the individuals who perform them to respond.

We can all name people, family, and friends alike, who fall into this category. These include doctors and nurses, utility workers, law enforcement and fire protection personnel, and IT technicians, among others. Basically, these are the people who allow the rest of us to deal with a crisis situation with a minimum of danger or discomfort.

First responders are not the only essential workers. Front-line workers, people who stock shelves in grocery stores and other retail staff, mail carriers, meat plant workers, warehouse and transportation workers, farmers, and custodians and janitorial staff, joined the ranks of recognized essential workers.

Many healthcare, safety and front line occupations, require skills training, a postsecondary certificate or degree as the minimum educational requirement.



Community colleges, such as Bladen Community College, play a significant role in preparing students for essential occupations. Students can work towards a two year associate degree in their chosen field such as nursing or agri-business technology. Some students pursue a credential, including an industry-recognized certification or receive training as part of an employer paid program such as Mechatronics. Individuals who desire to change careers or start on a different path can seek workforce development training in an area such as client services representative certificate.

Bladen Community College partners with local employers in apprenticeship programs. While most of the apprenticeship programs are in the traditional fields of construction trades and manufacturing, some are termed as a new breed of apprenticeship programs many including essential occupations in healthcare, information technology, agriculture, and financial services.

Area residents interested in furthering their education and learning a new skill now have an unprecedented opportunity at Bladen County Community College because of a program called GEER. Bladen Community College recently received over \$93,000 from the Governor's Emergency Education Relief (GEER) Fund to expand educational opportunities and workforce development programs during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The GEER funds specifically will be made available for students who may have been impacted by COVID-19, through loss of a job, reduction of hours, increased transportation or childcare costs or having to become a caregiver for a sick family member. These funds are available until September 30, 2022. Students who have been impacted by COVID-19 qualify for the scholarships, up to a maximum of either \$750.

Scholarships help cover the cost of tuition, fees, books, supplies, credentialing tests, transportation, childcare and other components as deemed necessary. Workforce Training classes that are less than 96 contact hours or not tied to an industry-recognized credential, as well as personal enrichment classes, are not covered under scholarships.

"This critical funding provides scholarships that will help our students obtain the skills they need to build a better future for themselves, their families, and our community" said Sondra Guyton, Vice-President for Continuing Education. She added "Bladen Community College now can help every student who earns a high school equivalency diploma also earn an industry recognized credential such as nurse aide, pharmacy technician, EMT, or NC Firefighter."

Eligible students may qualify for a scholarship for a variety of courses in healthcare, emergency services, construction, criminal justice, industrial/manufacturing, information technology, or fire and rescue services. For additional information, contact the Workforce and Continuing Education Department at 910-879-5568 or 910-879-5539. Early registration is advised. Call now to get the information you need to get started! Visit our website at www.bladenc.edu to learn more about what Bladen Community College has to offer.

10

YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF UNITED WAY DAY OF CARING SET TO HAVE BIG IMPACT



Bladen County United Way Day of Caring has reached its 10 year anniversary. Stacie C. Kinlaw and Barbara Knight co-chairs of Bladen County's United Way Day of Caring announced the upcoming plans to celebrate the 10 year anniversary of the event.

Continued on page 25

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David Currie and Cory Nance with DuPont confirmed DuPont was stepping up yet again to support the annual event. The company will be donating \$5,000 as a corporate sponsor and their employees will also be participating in the Day of Caring planned projects. DuPont has been a corporate sponsor of Bladen County's United Way Day of Caring since its inception. Mr. Nance said DuPont has been helping United Way for 40 years. Mr. Currie explained the United Way Day of Caring allows neighbors to help neighbors.

This year the Day of Caring will be a week long event offering community project opportunities for people to participate in while practicing safety measures during the COVID-19 Pandemic. The caring projects in the community will start Monday, November 2 and end on Saturday, November 7, 2020.

"We need volunteers from businesses, churches and civic organizations to help make this year the best ever," Mrs. Knight said.

Mrs. Kinlaw said, "We have plenty of projects for volunteers to choose from to help with this year's United Way Day of Caring."

Volunteers are needed and may choose from a variety of projects. Registration is open until October 28, 2020. Find the registration link on Facebook or BladenOnline.com.

The non-profit is also seeking sponsors and donations to United Way of Bladen County for the Day of Caring. Donate by sending a check to United Way of Bladen County, P.O. Box 2636, Elizabethtown, NC 28337.

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Essential Workers

Following are the Best of the Best Contest Winners in the order of their votes.

Best of the Best Doctor

Dr. Stephen Bridgers, Southeastern Health
Dr. Robert Rich, Bladen Medical Associates
Dr. Shaun Hines, Bladen Medical Associates

Best of the Best FNP or PA

Allison Priest, Southeastern Health
Shelley Brown, FNP Bladen Medical
Ashley Marlowe, Bladen Medical Associates

Best of the Best Nurse

Zach Davis, Bladen County Emergency Room
Audra Bateman, Bladen County Hospital
Patricia Smith, Bladen County Hospital

Best of the Best CNA

Yvonne Hall, Lower Cape Fear Life Care
Anna Grace Long, Bladen County Hospital
Gloria McLaughlin, Lower Cape Fear Life Care

Best of the Best Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Worker

Mary Beth Britt, Bladen County EMS
David Howell, Bladen County EMS
Donna Cagle, Bladen County EMS

Best of the Best Dentist

Dr. Charles D. Allen, Jr., Dr. Allen's Dentist
Office
Dr. Annie Greene, Elizabethtown Family
Dentistry
Dr. Tracey Vestal, Vestal Dentistry

Best of the Best Dental Hygienist

Melissa McNeil, Dr. Allen Dentist's Office
Amy Britt, Elizabethtown Family Dentistry
Meredith Barnes, Dr. Allen Dentist's Office

Best of the Best Optometrist

Dr. Mollie Glenn, Fairmont Eye
Dr. Mary Ann Masters, Carolina Vision Center
Dr. Eric Schmidt, Bladen Eye Center

Best of the Best Mental Health Services Worker

Jeff Campbell, Southern Professional
Counseling
Betty Wilds, Carolina HomeCare
Meredith DuBose, DreamWorks

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Essential Workers

Following are the Best of the Best Contest Winners in the order of their votes.

Best of the Best Pharmacist

Bruce Dickerson Dickerson Pharmacy
Rebecca Hester, Medicine Shoppe
Gena Anderson Peed, Anderson's Drug Store

Best of the Best Maintenance Worker

Keith Burney, BC Maintenance Department
Charlie Roller, Oak Estates & McLeod Village
Jackie Smith, Elizabethtown Nursing Center

Best of the Best Healthcare Worker

Stacey Howell, BC Hospital
Tiffany Pait, BC Health Department
Linda Shelton, Cape Fear Medical Center

Best of the Best Professional Driver

Stanley Sasser, Reliable
Wesley Brennon, Cape Fear Transport
Lee Starnes, BC Schools Bus Driver

Best of the Best Fitness Trainer

Ulysses Baxley, DreamWorks
Donna Campbell, DreamWorks
Tracy Miller, Bladenboro Primary

Best of the Best Food Service Worker

Patricia Watkins, Elizabethtown Primary
Paul Boswell, Cape Fear Vineyard
Sarah Benson, Benson's Grill

Best of the Best Social Services Worker

Debbie Storms, Dept. of Social Services
Rhonda Cabellero, Dept. of Social Services
Marian Coe, Bladen County Schools

Best of the Best Veterinarian

Dr. Johanna Parker, Bladen Animal Hospital
Dr. Gensel, Elizabethtown Veterinary Hospital
Dr. Jeff Burroughs, Columbus Veterinary Service

Best of the Best Transportation Worker

Heather Strickland, DMV Office
Sandra Kemp, BC Division of Aging
Smiley Butler, Emereau: Bladen

Best of the Best Custodian

Lisa Parnell, Bladenboro Primary School
Smiley Butler, Emereau: Bladen
Greg Sykes, West Bladen High School

Emereau: Bladen

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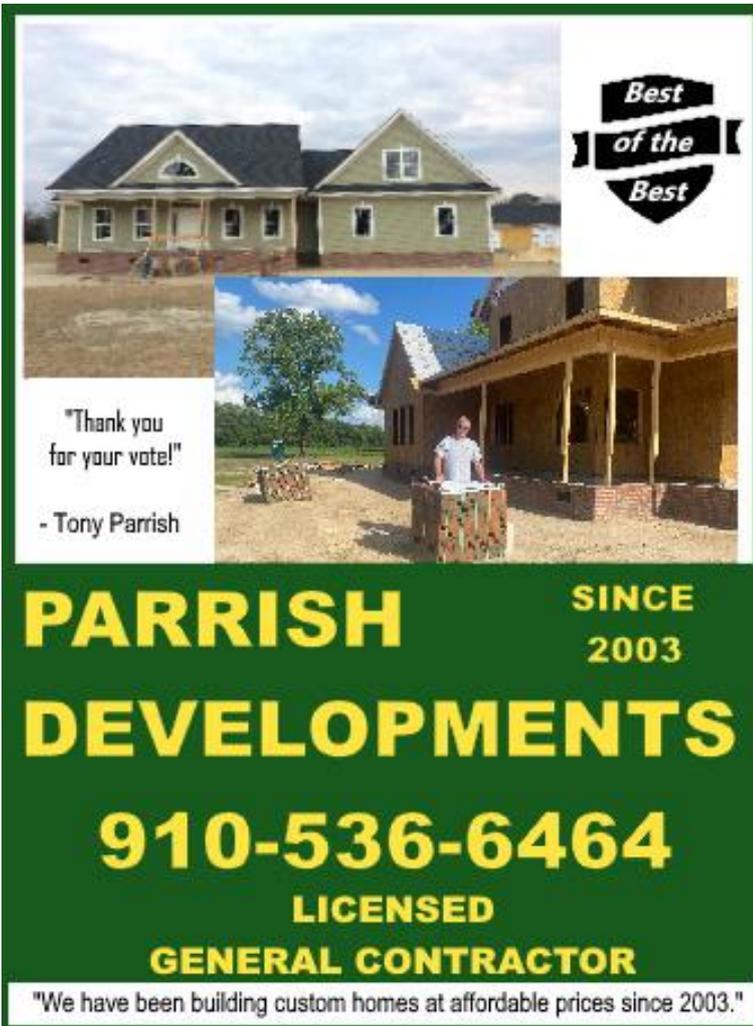
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Essential Workers

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 Penny Perkins Britt, Bladen County
 Mark McLean, Dept. of Transportation

Best of the Best Teacher

Meredith Dowless, Bladenboro Primary
 Cassie Hancock, Emereau: Bladen
 Gaye Davis, West Bladen High School

Best of the Best Assistant Teacher

Judy Ard, Bladenboro Primary School
 Nancy Howell, Bladen Occupational School
 Gail Hester, Bladenboro Primary

Best of the Best Coach

Pam Stephens, West Bladen High School
 Gaye Davis, West Bladen High School
 Patty Evers, East Bladen High School

Best of the Best Librarian

Martha Walters, Bladenboro Primary School
 Elizabeth Priest, Plainview Primary School
 Shantell Faircloth, Elizabethtown Primary

Best of the Best Principal

Elizabeth Cole, Emereau: Bladen Charter
 Dr. Jason Wray, East Bladen High School
 Deborah Guyton, Bladenboro Primary School

Best of the Best Farmer

Dan Ward, Ward Farms
 Ryan Young, Young Farms
 Harrellson Brothers, Harrellson's Family Farm

Best of the Best Agricultural Worker

Shirley A. Britt, USDA, Elizabethtown
 Becky Spearman, Bladen County Extension
 Casey McQueen, McQueen's Produce

Best of the Best General Contractor

DeVane Builders
 Eric Davis Construction
 Tony Parrish Developments

Best of the Best Plumber

Bo Pharr, Pharr Plumbing
 Eric Bryan, Bryan Plumbing
 Vic Shaw, Shaw Plumbing & Electric



Essential Workers

Following are the Best of the Best Contest Winners in the order of their votes.

Best of the Best Telecommunications Worker

Penny Perkins Britt, BC Communications
Patti Yandle, BC Communications
Daniel Duncan, BC Communications

Best of the Best Firefighter

Jackie Coleman, Bladenboro Fire Department
Mike Hinson, North Carolina Forest Service
Nick West, Elizabethtown Fire Department

Best of the Best Law Enforcement Officer

Sheriff Jim McVicker, BC Sheriff's Office
Cpl. Matt Long, BC Sheriff's Office
Cpl. Daniel Miller, BC Sheriff's Office

Best of the Best Probation Officer

Sue Ann Long, Bladen County
Laura Singletary, Bladen County
Justin Suggs, Columbus County

Best of the Best Realtor

Ginger Tatum, Tatum Realty
Steve Cox, Cox Realty Bladenboro
Dean Hilton, Hilton Auction and Reality

Best of the Best Salesperson

Ricky Leinwand, Leinwand's
Amy Johnson, Amy's Boutique
Clint Hester, Clinton Nissan

Best of the Best Receptionist

Shannon Ventura, Elizabethtown Veterinary
Sherry Ludlum, Bladen Medical Associates
Karen Pope, SRMC



"Thank you for your vote and your business!"

- Ginger Tatum

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Contributed photo by the Bladen County Sheriff's Office



Essential Workers

Following are the Best of the Best Contest Winners in the order of their votes.

Best of the Best HVAC Technician

Daine Smith, Cape Fear Heating & Cooling
Russell Benson, Benson Air
Timmy Brisson, Carroll's Heating and Air

Best of the Best Water/Waste Mgt. Worker

Alan Edge, Bladen County Water
Tom Rigsbee White Lake
Sherry Lanier, Town of Bladenboro

Best of the Best Electrician

Kevin Robeson, Ellis Robeson Electric Inc.
Blake Rich, Wire Nut Electrical
Alton Johnson, Alton's Electric

Best of the Best Logger

Mark Woodell, Tar Heel
Kenny Merritt, Merritt Logging
Archie Bordeaux, Taylor Timber

Best of the Best Carpenter

Terry Nance, DeVane Builders
Stan Simmons, Still Water
Danny Stanley, Bladenboro

Best of the Best Pest Control Technician

Jeremy Dowless, Down East Pest Control
Danny Litner, McDuffie Pest Control
Dallas Hammond, McDuffie Pest Control

Best of the Best Linemen

David Faircloth, Four County EMC
Anthony Raynor, Four County EMC
Jamie Kinlaw Four County EMC

Best of the Best Wildlife Officer

Garrett German
Kevin Crabtree
Lane Garner

Best of the Best Military Service Member

Anthony Bryan, Army National Guard
Caleb Hatchell, U.S. Marine Corps
Mamie Hill, U.S. Air Force

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Essential Workers

Following are the Best of the Best Contest Winners in the order of their votes.

Best of the Best Cashier

Jackie Lesane, BC Clerk of Superior Court
Office
Bertha Washington, Walmart
Rusty Kelly, Walmart

Best of the Best Restaurant

Georgio's Restaurant & Pizza
San Jose Restaurant
Cape Fear Vineyard & Winery

Best of the Best Auto Mechanic

Scott Gordon, Bladen Off-Road
Harold Smith, Cape Fear Tire
Steve Roy, Hester Tire

Best of the Best Small Engine Mechanic

William Thompson, Thompson Small Engine
Mike Melvin, Melvin Automotive
Scott Gordon, Bladen Off-Road

Best of the Best Furniture Store

Kinlaw Furniture
Ray's Furniture
Badcock Furniture

Best of the Best Non-Profit

Bladen We Care
Boost the Boro
A Shelter Friend

Best of the Best Florist

Maurice Williams, Whimsical Florist
Joyce Cain, Leta Belle Designs
Larry Beltz, Whiteville Florist

Best of the Best Retail Store

Leinwand's
Amy's Boutique
Walmart

Best of the Best Business Owner

Ricky Leinwand, Leinwand's
Reynold Hester, Hester's Tires
Bruce Dickerson, Dickerson's Pharmacy

Best of the Best Local Manufacturer

Taylor Manufacturing, Elizabethtown
Delton, Elizabethtown
Gildan, Clarkton

Best of the Best Hardware Store

Bladen Hardware
Bladen Builders Supply
Big Blue Store

Best of the Best Best Auto Parts Store

NAPA Auto Parts, Elizabethtown
Peterson Auto Parts, Clarkton
O'Reilly Auto Parts, Elizabethtown



Essential Workers

Following are the Best of the Best Contest Winners in the order of their votes.

Best of the Best Photographer

Kenneth Armstrong, KenArmPhoto.com
Diane Vitale, Photography By Di
Monica Brooke Photography

Best of the Best Radio Broadcaster

Don Chase, WKML
Sister Debbie, WBLA 1440
Robert Hester, Retired

Best of the Best Reporter

Charlotte Smith, Bladen Online
Frances Weller, WECT News
Joy Warren, Bladen Online

Best of the Best Television Broadcaster

Frances Weller, WECT
John Evans, WECT
Ashley Kosikowski, WECT

Best of the Best Personal Care Business

Dennis Hawes, Bridgers Barber Shop
Danielle Bordeaux, Joseph D Salon
Denise Everette, New Attitudes

Best of the Best Pastor

Pastor Charleston Guyton, Butters Baptist Church
Pastor Warren Hill, Bethel Baptist Church
Pastor Dr. Louie Boykin, Baldwin Branch
Missionary Baptist Church

Best of the Best Sunday School Teacher

Randy Sykes, Butters Baptist Church
Russell Benson, Northside Baptist Church
Ray Sheppard, Dublin First Baptist Church

Best of the Best Choir Member

John McDougald, Clarkton Presbyterian Church
Mt. Olive AME Zion Church Choir
Melanie Wholford, Elizabethtown Methodist Church

Best of the Best Financial Planner

John Taylor, CLC Financial Services
Mary Jo Walter, Edward Jones
Landon Bordeaux, CLC Financial Services

Best of the Best Accountant

Bryon Scott, Thompson Price Scott & Adams
Phil Byrd, S. Preston Douglas
Amy Butler McQueen, Till & Butler CPA

TO ALL
ESSENTIAL WORKERS

**Thank
You!**

I Finally Make my Journey to the Wall



by Blake Proctor

In the late 1990s, I was a director of the National Army Security Agency Association. Since I was consulting in Ohio at the time, the NASAA Board asked me to travel to DC to lobby Congress on Veterans' issues; during those trips, I just could not bring myself to visit the Vietnam Veterans Memorial for emotional reasons, as 78 ASA members' names were chiseled onto that granite wall. On my fourth visit in August, 1999, I finally steeled myself and made an hours-long tour of the Memorial, visiting every one of my compatriots, taking rubbings from each, and leaving my eight-ribbon medal bar in their honor. Gazing at the Wall before departing, I instead sat on the knoll, put pen to paper and, with only minor changes, wrote what you read below:

Homecoming

Lightly he touches the stone, tracing a memory.
Across the years comes the face
Of a boy he once knew;
Someone knew him still – a dozen red
Roses crumble in the sun.

He stoops, peers, spies another friend
And turns at the sound of a laugh,
But no one is there.

"Happy Father's Day – you're a grandpa now"...
A picture of a woman-child holding a babe.

Memories flood back of other pictures, standard
Black-and-white, of a wife, a girlfriend, a
family,
Perhaps even of that child,
Passed proudly around when sickness
For home became nearly fatal.

Decades too late, black granite glistens
In the sun, as their flag
Gently salutes a breeze.
So many of their stories came to rest here
In the town that denied them their glory.

Some may call them murderers, some may
Call them heroes. No matter to him – for he
Will always call them friends.



*Thank you to all members of
our Military- in all branches - past and present.*

Sincerely,

BladenOnline Staff Members

Carvers Creek has long, rich history

by Wesley Stephens

The Carvers Creek community is in southern Bladen County and is surrounded by Lisbon to the north, East Arcadia to the south, Council to the west, and Kelly on the east across the Cape Fear River.



The main highway is NC 87 and the most important waterways are the Cape Fear River and the creek that shares its name. The headwaters of Carvers Creek are near Council and it flows for several miles, crossing NC 87 just below Carvers Creek Methodist Church and emptying into the river about a mile downstream from the Elwell Ferry. The area was settled in the early-to-mid 1700s and named for a Mr. Carver who owned a mill along the creek.

The early settlers included Quakers, Huguenots, and slaves of African descent, among others. Prior to the 20th century, the local economy was based on naval stores due to the abundance of pine forests and a high demand for tar and pitch used in ship building.

A Quaker meeting house was established in the mid 18th century and it closed by 1790. The Quakers were strong abolitionists and left the area because of their opposition to slavery. The church and grounds were turned over to a new Methodist congregation founded by Francis Asbury in 1790. The original log building was destroyed by fire and the current building was opened in 1859. Many Quaker graves in the church cemetery are still visible, though they are unmarked. Little, if anything is known about the Native Americans who once inhabited the region, but artifacts such as arrowheads and pottery are occasionally found. The most prominent landmark in the area is Oakland Plantation, which was the home of Revolutionary War General Thomas Brown.

The Elwell Ferry crosses the river from Carvers Creek to Kelly. It is a two-car ferry that is diesel-powered and guided across by a cable anchored to each bank. The cable is lowered to the bottom when the ferry is not in operation. It was established in 1905 by John and Walter Russ of Kelly and came under state operation in the 1930s. There are currently only two inland cable ferries left in the state, and the Elwell Ferry serves as the only river crossing between Elizabethtown and NC 11 near East Arcadia. However, in May, the North Carolina Department of Transportation announced the ferry would be closed through December 2020. There is a public boat ramp at the ferry landing.

The community is home to several churches- Carvers Creek Methodist, Carvers Creek AME Zion, Trinity AME Zion, Piney Grove Baptist, Kitchen Branch Baptist, St. James United Holy Church, and Tabernacle Holiness. Agriculture and forestry are the only industries, with the main crops being corn, soybeans, peanuts, turf grass, and cotton. Baltimore Center is a community center in the former Baltimore School building and there is a Head Start adjacent to it. Carvers Creek Volunteer Fire Department has served the area since the early 1980s. The main cemeteries are located at Carvers Creek Methodist Church and Carvers Creek AME Zion Church, but there are many family cemeteries throughout the community.



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WHEN THIS IS ALL OVER

by Jefferson Weaver

Two conversations with dear friends got me to thinking the other day about what things will be like when “this is all over.”

Whether “this” is the pandemic, the quarantine, the civil unrest, the safety social media offers cowards, the election, the growing decay of upbringing and manners – or all of the above and then some – I honestly don’t think I can remember so much pure, true hatred being spouted so readily.

Hatred is a strong word, but when that’s really the only one I can see that fits, and it saddens me. I was thinking about the growing meanness the other day when I pulled in for lunch, and John called me over to his truck.

I don’t want to use his full name, since I don’t want to possibly embarrass him. He has some serious health issues, and has to use a walker. There are some other things we’ve talked about that I won’t share here, since it would serve no purpose. He was waiting for his order to be brought out, and was a bit lonely.

John is of the generation where one does not express touchy-feely expressions of emotions, but he is unashamed of his faith, whilst being ashamed of what society has become in less than his lifetime.



I had a drawn-out, pointed, and very passionate debate with a fellow online the other night. I can’t say we are friends – yet – but we could be. We disagree on virtually everything regarding politics and the American system of government, elections and the role of the bureaucracy.

Yet, we stayed civil. We stayed friendly. We defended each other when attacks from less diplomatic friends threatened to derail the conversation.

Then there’s another fellow whose friendship I once treasured.

“What is wrong with people?” he said, knowing that I had no more idea than he did beyond a drifting away from when our country put godly principles, if not God, first in the family.

He described to me an angry outburst he had witnessed in the parking lot of a department store, and how there was no need for the outburst, much less the language that followed. Like me, he had read about the latest (to that point) attack on a police officer. Someone had told him to vote early, since there would be people trying to block voters on Election Day.

His heart hurt, he said, as does mine.

Another conversation a day or two later was far less tender. My other friend was angry, and with good reason. Not necessarily at me, but he was furious. I happened to be available, and I was okay with that.

“When are people going to start caring about people again?” he yelled, adding a few choice modifiers which I can’t repeat here. “It’s all politics. Nobody cares about the people who are hurting.”

There was a time when Jesse Helms had lunch with Tip O’Neil. Politicians my father excoriated in editorials and columns called the house to chat; some sent notes or called when Papa passed away. One of the most heartfelt greetings I had was from one of those gentlemen a few months later. He candidly admitted that my dad never said a positive thing about him in print, but they were always respectful and friendly with each other.

Continued on the next page.

I learned a lot from him, and shared things with him that he valued as well. We spent a lot of time working together on a project we both cared deeply about. On social media he called me a name I cannot repeat here, one which does him no credit as a mold of young minds, whilst describing in great glee how he hoped the president would die from COVID-19. He wants courts convened to send conservatives to jail. This fellow is no child, by the way. He's a few years older than me, better educated, and in a job where one really should be careful when one says such things in public.

Another person wished that conservatives, especially the president, would have been aborted before they were born, and their mothers killed as punishment for having had babies who might someday become conservatives. Yet another that made the national news said that she hoped the president would die in a fire.

When I see stuff like this, I think back to the previous administration; I don't recall a thing that fellow did with which I agreed, but I never wished him dead. I never wished him harm. I voted against him, twice (while holding my nose, since both candidates were simply the lesser of the evils.) But I never wished for his children to be placed in a cage and raped, as one Hollywood celebrity said of the youngest Trump.

I do not claim that there were or are no racist comments made about the former president. I do not claim that no one ever threatened him, or wished him ill will. I am just simply saying I never did.

I trusted in the American system to allow folks to either endorse his way of doing business, or replace him through the legal process. I can't speak for other folks, but there was a lot less pure-tee hatred just a few years ago than we are seeing now.

Some of this stuff was growing then. In the last election, I was blocked in my car when I went to go vote for President Trump, and the individuals who did so made no bones about their intentions.

My life was threatened - whether in the heat of the moment or sincerely - during the campaign, when a supporter of the last president swore that "blood would be in the streets" if he was not elected, and he would be sure mine was first.

Now we have college girls assaulting little kids, teachers reporting students for hate crimes because a student has a Trump flag visible in his bedroom, and another teacher wishing one of her children would be killed, because the child's parents are Trump supporters. Thankfully, none of that has occurred around here this time, to the best of my knowledge, but you can easily find references to all three of the above incidents online with a simple search. And they are the rule, not the exception.

We have allowed a spirit of hatred to possess our country; I don't understand why, except that it's fairly obvious some folks have turned their backs on God and his word, and what the founders originally intended for this country, faith aside. There's a desire for more of anything, at any cost, without working for that reward, and jealous hatred of anyone who has worked hard or benefitted from a parent's hard work and success.

There is a media- and Hollywood-fueled ideal that if you don't want to bear responsibility for your mistakes, you don't have to, and anyone who disagrees is simply consumed with hate. What they don't realize is that they are actually the ones doing the hating, and a soulless few are profiting very well from it.

I don't have the answers everyone wants. I know my votes are based off of what I read in God's word. I try to live my life that way, too, although I fail a lot. There are those with whom I disagree, and those who consider my disagreement to be criminal. I reckon that's their right, even if it isn't right. But I cannot understand truly hating another individual or people group, regardless of whether their words deserve a sock in the jaw.

Continued on page 38

Continued from page 37

John and I talked a long time the other day about hatred, diversity, race, responsibility, even differences between denominations. Everything in the end comes down to one thing, however, for believer and non-believer, conservative and liberal, Southern and Yankee, dog-lovers and cat fanciers. He said it beautifully, I think.

"We're gonna be different," John told me, motioning to a boy with huge piercings in his ears. "Imagine how boring it would be if we were all the same. We're gonna disagree. But we gotta love each other with the love of Jesus. We just gotta. If a man can't walk, we need to help him. You can't be hatin' people." We just have to stop hatin' people, folks. Elsewise, this ain't never going to be over.

Food Processing Adapts Through the Years

Written by Leyton Ezzell

Photo by Preston Keres, USDA before COVID-19



Starting in 1809, Nicolas Appert, a French inventor, invented airtight food preservation to get French soldiers food during World War I. This invention eventually led to the process of canning foods. Two centuries later, the processing of canning food has become an essential process for food distribution.

The food industry has grown to an incredibly massive scale, from the farmers to the factories that package food. The food processing industry contributes so many jobs to our community. It makes up five percent of the United States' gross Domestic Product and ten percent of U.S. employment. In addition to those facts, the food processing industry makes up ten percent of America's disposable income. Agriculture alone has given the U.S. 1.053 trillion dollars in gross domestic product. The farming output contributed 132.8 billion dollars.

However, the backbone of food processing, the line workers, have been some of the most affected during the COVID-19 Pandemic. It's been challenging to maintain social distancing for the workers during the Pandemic.

However, this crisis has not stopped people from working. Prestage Foods, located in St. Pauls, has set up ways to keep workers safe. General Manager, Darron Ezzell, has had several safety measures put into place. He said, "We hired five people who constantly spray and wipe all of our cafeteria chairs and tables, doorknobs, and push handles on doors, toilet fixtures. Anything that multiple people touch during non-production time is wiped and sanitized continually."

Also, they mandated cafeteria table separation, put public dividers on the production line, and established the standard temperature checks and masks, except while eating and drinking.

While the COVID-19 Pandemic has caused extreme hardships, many can adapt to meet and surpass these hardships. Food processing line workers have proved to be extremely hard workers. They have been able to continue working through wars and Pandemics.

Care, for your hair

by Cheryl Thurston

Bladen County Beautiful magazine celebrates the history and beauty of the Mother County. This edition takes a look at beauty in the form of hairstyles and introduces some of the Barbers and Stylists we rely upon to keep us all looking stylish and kempt. Small locally owned businesses are the backbone to any community, and this year has presented many challenges for business owners and their clients alike.

The hair-cutting industry was hit especially hard when Governor Cooper issued an executive order in March requiring personal care businesses' closure due to the spread of the COVID-19 virus, which health care officials considered the most dangerous viral outbreak in 100 years. Barbers and Stylists were prohibited from servicing clients at their homes and subject to a fine for non-compliance. They faced the loss of license if they continued to service clients at their shops and salons.

In April, Joseph D. Kinlaw, owner of Joseph D. Salon located on W. Broad Street in Elizabethtown, explained to our staff that the self-employed might be able to apply for unemployment funding and qualify for back-payment. However, many salon and barbershop owners reported unemployment funding for business owners did not meet the needs and was a small fraction of what they earned when in business.



Joseph D. Kinlaw

By June 1st, the restrictions requiring salons to close had been lifted. We asked a few local operators about their experiences and if their clientele had returned. Most reported only 60% to 80% of their clients have returned for personal care services. All are operated by appointment to keep social distancing in place, and they have put extra safety precautions in place.



Albert Lewis, Jr.

Albert Lewis, Jr. has been a life-long resident of Bladen County, and has been in business for 30 years. He owns Headquarters Barber Styling shop at 156 S. Poplar Street in Elizabethtown.

Lewis told me that men care about their hair just as much as women do. There's something about a fresh haircut that makes you feel better.

When asked about the shelter-in-place orders and the safer at home policy, Lewis admitted that it had been tough to get through. "I'd never have thought I'd be able to survive being shut down for months, and if not for some friends, and people of faith, I wouldn't have, but God is good," said Lewis. His shop was closed from March 25th to May 26th.

Tametra "Mechie" Gathers, the owner of Helping Hands Hair Salon, 2818 W. Broad Street, in Elizabethtown, who opened her shop in July 2013, also spoke with us. She has been styling hair for more than 18 years because that is the work she likes most, and having her own salon was a dream that provided more freedom, while allowing her to create jobs for other people.

When the governor called for businesses to close in March, the regular clients of 'Helping Hands' urged Mechie to continue to serve their needs, but she was straight forward with them that doing so would endanger her license. Naturally, she had some concerns about keeping her business after months of inactivity since the monthly expenses still had to be paid even while the nation was out of work. She maintained her space because she had a rainy-day fund but still experienced some sticker shock when reopening due to the increase in prices for cleaning supplies.

The cleaning and sterilizing of surfaces were nothing new for the salon because they have been doing that as long as the business has been open, but cleaning products during the Pandemic have higher prices and are not always available.

Since reopening in June, many hair care products had to be removed from the shelves and replaced with fresh products, creating an unexpected expense. Still, the biggest change in her normal operations has been wearing masks, keeping distance between people, and limiting the number of people inside the building.

Mechie said 20% of her previously served client base were in nursing homes and long-term care facilities. Under current government ordinances, visiting those clients is considered too significant a risk.

When asked what she would like to say to the community, she responded, "Always make some good out of your bad situations. Present your best self even at the worst of times."



Tametra "Mechie" Gathers

Bladen County Beautiful magazine staff members appreciate all the local Barbers and Stylists in our community because they provide such essential services. We all want to look our best at times. Be sure to tell your Barber or Stylist how much you appreciate their time and expertise. Appointments are only a phone call away.

*Beauty comes
from inside...
Inside the salon chair.*

Local Fire Departments Receive Grants



North Carolina Insurance Commissioner and State Fire Marshal Mike Causey with local Fire Departments' Chiefs, Bladen County Fire Marshal and Bladen County Emergency Services Director.

North Carolina Insurance Commissioner and State Fire Marshal Mike Causey, who is also the Tar Heel of the Year, went across the State during the Pandemic to deliver checks to rural volunteer fire departments.

Friday, June 26, Commissioner Causey stopped by the Bladen County Emergency Services Training Center to deliver three checks to local rural fire departments.

In May, Commissioner Causey announced that Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Carolina donated \$500,000 to assist rural volunteer fire departments as part of their Rural NC Initiative for 2020.

At the time of the announcement, 94 departments in 36 rural counties were designated to receive the grant awards. Brian Taylor, Chief State Fire Marshal and Assistant Commissioner, who was also present on Friday, explained volunteer fire departments that received less than \$50,000 from municipal and county governments and who applied for the grants received \$5,000 each.

Ammon Fire Chief, Joshua Wilson and his son Mason accepted the check on behalf of the Ammon Volunteer Fire Department, Inc. Johnny Parks, Fire Chief with Carvers Creek Volunteer Fire Department, Inc., accepted the check for the Carvers Creek fire department. Bladen County Fire Marshal, Kenneth Clark accepted the check on behalf of Brandon Norris for the Kelly Volunteer Fire Department.

Clark stated East Arcadia Volunteer Fire Department was in desperate need of funding but did not apply for the grant. Commissioner Causey delivered a grant check to the East Arcadia fire department in August.

Commissioner Causey stated it was his goal was to deliver each check personally. He presented checks across the State to volunteer fire departments this summer.

The awards are to be used for safety equipment purchases to help departments protect their firefighters and operate more safely during this coronavirus pandemic.

Most rural volunteer fire departments depend on fund-raising events to supplement their government funding. The recent restrictions on public gatherings have limited their ability to raise these funds.

About 4 million people live in North Carolina's 80 rural counties.



North Carolina Insurance Commissioner and State Fire Marshal Mike Causey with East Arcadia Fire Chief and Bladen County Fire Marshall

Bladen's Best Italian Restaurant for Three Decades

by Leyton Ezzell

In 1990, Giorgio's Restaurant & Pizza first opened its doors to the public, and 30 years later, it's still going strong in Elizabethtown, North Carolina.

The owner, Mr. Giorgio Boussias, said one of his biggest challenges was finding the right people to hire and a good community to settle in. The Boussias family decided on Elizabethtown, and their business has flourished.

The restaurant has been voted Best of the Best Restaurant by fans for years now and has many loyal customers.

Winfred Johnson, a regular customer, said, "I love Giorgio's restaurant because I love Giorgio. We became close on the golf course, and I enjoy all of Giorgio's food. One of my favorite parts of summer is that I am home on Tuesday for lunch, so I can get the Greek chicken special."

Giorgio's has had a very positive effect on the people of Bladen County by offering good food, a great sense of community, and culture. Giorgio's Restaurant & Pizza is located at 502 South Poplar Street in Elizabethtown.



Find this recipe and more on [Betty Crocker's website](#).

Ingredients:

- ½ cup ketchup
- 2 tablespoons packed brown sugar
- 1 lb lean (at least 80%) ground beef
- ½ lb ground pork
- ½ cup Original Bisquick™ mix
- ¼ teaspoon pepper
- 1 small onion, finely chopped (1/4 cup)
- 1 egg



Recipes to Try During the COVID-19 Quarantine

by Hannah Davis

With plenty of free time because of the COVID-19 quarantine, you can take this time to cook up some new dishes and desserts. Now is the perfect time to experiment in the kitchen and learn new recipes. Below are recipes that range from classic sides and desserts to new and unique meals that anyone can make.

First is Betty Crocker's 30 Minute Meatloaves.

Heat oven to 450°F. In small bowl, stir ketchup and brown sugar until mixed; reserve 1/4 cup for topping. In large bowl, stir remaining ingredients and remaining ketchup mixture until well mixed. Spray 13x9-inch pan with cooking spray. Place meat mixture in pan; pat into 12x4-inch rectangle. Cut lengthwise down center and then crosswise into sixths to form 12 loaves. Separate loaves, using spatula, so no edges are touching. Brush loaves with reserved 1/4 cup ketchup mixture.

Bake 18 to 20 minutes or until loaves are no longer pink in center and meat thermometer inserted in center of loaves reads 160°F.

Second one Simple Macaroni and Cheese by AllRecipes.com

Ingredients:

1 (8 ounce) box elbow macaroni
¼ cup butter
¼ cup all-purpose flour
½ teaspoon salt
ground black pepper to taste
2 cups milk
2 cups shredded Cheddar cheese

Directions

Step 1

Bring a large pot of lightly salted water to a boil. Cook elbow macaroni in the boiling water, stirring occasionally until cooked through but firm to the bite, 8 minutes. Drain.

Step 2

Melt butter in a saucepan over medium heat; stir in flour, salt, and pepper until smooth, about 5 minutes. Slowly pour milk into butter-flour mixture while continuously stirring until mixture is smooth and bubbling, about 5 minutes. Add Cheddar cheese to milk mixture and stir until cheese is melted, 2 to 4 minutes.

Step 3

Fold macaroni into cheese sauce until coated.

Two-Ingredient Pizza Dough by AllRecipes.com

Ingredient

1 ½ cups self-rising flour, plus more for kneading
1 cup plain Greek yogurt
cooking spray

Directions

Instructions

Step 1

Mix flour and Greek yogurt together in a bowl; transfer to a work surface floured with self-rising flour. Knead dough, adding more flour as needed to keep dough from being too sticky, for 8 to 10 minutes.

Step 2

Spray a 12-inch pizza pan with cooking spray and spread dough to edges of pan.
Cook at 500 degrees F

Classic Peanut Butter Cookies by AllRecipes.com

Original recipe yields 24 servings

Ingredient

1 cup unsalted butter
1 cup crunchy peanut butter
1 cup white sugar
1 cup packed brown sugar
2 large eggs
2 ½ cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
½ teaspoon salt
1 ½ teaspoons baking soda



Directions

Step 1

Cream butter, peanut butter, and sugars together in a bowl; beat in eggs.

Step 2

In a separate bowl, sift flour, baking powder, baking soda, and salt; stir into butter mixture. Put dough in refrigerator for 1 hour.

Step 3

Roll dough into 1 inch balls and put on baking sheets. Flatten each ball with a fork, making a crisscross pattern. Bake in a preheated 375 degrees F oven for about 10 minutes or until cookies begin to brown.

Brett Kinlaw Introduces Valuable Technology



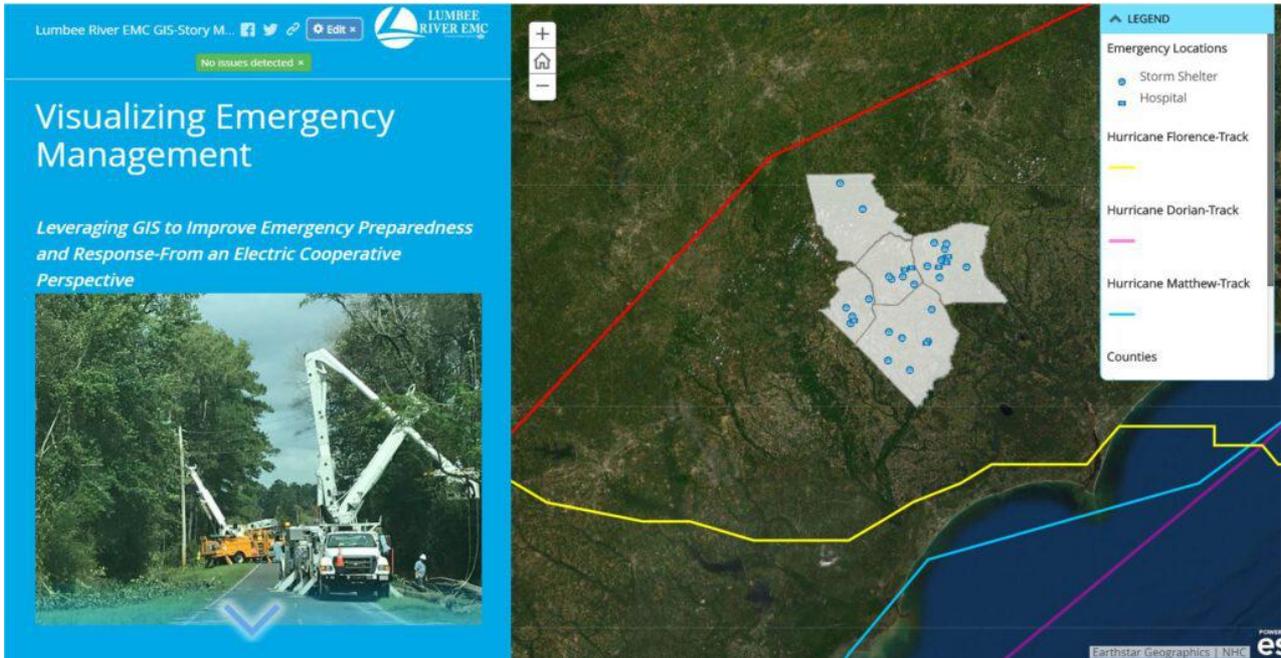
Brett Kinlaw

by Hannah Davis

Brett Kinlaw, Lumbee River EMC GIS Supervisor, is an Elizabethtown native and graduate of East Bladen High School and Campbell University. He is currently serving a three-year term on the Analytics, Resiliency and Reliability Member Advisory Group (ARRMAG) that is part of the NRECA, or the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. The group provides resources to help electric cooperatives better understand, manage, and forecast energy use and economic consequences of changes in markets, regulations, and operations.

Kinlaw introduced solutions for mapping and data management to his cooperative to improve operational workflows. He utilized two apps through GIS, or Geographic Information System, that ease the workflow of field personnel, improve their emergency response, and allow for valuable information to be given to the public. He presented this technology along with other information at a nationwide annual convention hosted by NRECA.

NRECA is the national service organization that represents America's electric cooperatives, and its convention was held in New Orleans in late February and early March. Kinlaw was selected to present in a subsection of the convention that was about technological advancements. His presentation, titled "Visualizing Emergency Management," discussed how to leverage GIS technology and how to improve emergency preparedness and response from the perspective of an electric cooperative. Kinlaw explained the importance of expanding the use of existing technology and software that most cooperatives already had access to so they could achieve more efficient emergency management. He had already implemented this information into his cooperative, and he was sharing these solutions and advancements with others.



Collector for ArcGIS and Survey123 for ArcGIS are the two apps that Kinlaw introduced to his cooperative. Collector serves for pole inspections, and field personnel use it to track inspections and their progress through GIS. They use maps provided in the app to locate the pole, then use a link that directs them to another app to complete a survey for reporting damages. It's ideal for emergency response as it allows them to track and report damages in the field after major storms or other events. Then, Survey123 allows them to track the form live.

These solutions to emergency response and management have proven beneficial to Lumbee River EMC. They have ease of use, real-time monitoring, and they can be used offline if necessary. Also, they provide a reliable tool to keep the media and public informed with valuable information. The cooperative learned that this tech allows for better emergency response plan compliance, reduces the amount of redundant and parallel workflows, and allows information to be better coordinated with the local government.

Kinlaw recognizes that it took work and cooperation from many different parts of the cooperative for this project to be successful. He stated, "Two key factors to the success of this project for Lumbee River EMC's GIS team have been our field and office personnel's willingness to learn and embrace emerging technologies, as well as the support of our Steering Team, led by CEO Carmen Dietrich."

Chris Locklear, Vice President of Engineering and Operations at Lumbee River EMC, said "The mapping and data management solutions introduced by Brett enable Lumbee River EMC to achieve operational goals with more efficiency. This information is valuable to our Employees as well as our Members."

The introduction and utilization of this technology by Brett Kinlaw have greatly improved the workflow and emergency response efficiency of the cooperative. This was all done through existing software at no extra cost to the cooperative. Employees can use this tech with ease and can improve their workflow as well as provide important information to the public. Kinlaw's innovative solutions don't stop at his cooperative, as he shared this information with other cooperatives so they too can improve their work in emergency response and management.

New Elizabethtown Fire and Rescue Building In Full Use

by Charlotte Smith

Due to COVID-19, the open house scheduled for the new fire and rescue building in Elizabethtown has been postponed. However, Elizabethtown Fire Chief, Nick West, gave us a sneak peek tour of the new Elizabethtown Fire and Rescue Building.

Hurricane Mathew destroyed the former rescue squad building in 2016. Eddie Madden, Town of Elizabethtown Manager, said funding for the new construction was provided by the North Carolina Golden Leave Foundation and the Town of Elizabethtown.

The Golden Leaf Foundation provided \$2,518,950.00 with the Hurricane Matthew Disaster Recovery Grant Program. DeVane Builders was awarded the project and is finishing up with construction, according to Chief West. The two local Elizabethtown departments started moving into the new facility in May.

The new building is located at 300 East Broad Street in Elizabethtown and was formerly the location of Jessup Motors/Dorman Motor Company.

According to a past press release, Eugene Anderson sold the property to the town at less than fair market value. The Golden LEAF grant supported the design, engineering, and renovation of the new station.



The old Elizabethtown Fire Station on Swanzy Street is used by the Public Works Department for office and shop space. The existing Public Works building on Swanzy Street will function as a garage.

Nothing is proposed to be built on the lot of the former Elizabethtown Rescue Squad building on Mercer Mill Road due to the potential of flooding.



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Come and See... Go and Tell



New Windows Installed at the Bladen County Courthouse



photo by Bladen County Sheriff's Office

It was time for an upgrade. The Bladen County Courthouse received a replacement of exterior windows this year. According to CourthouseHistory.com, the local courthouse was constructed by Dickenson Inc., in the year 1963. The courthouse is located at 106 East Broad Street, Elizabethtown, NC 28337. Below are photos of the previous courthouse built-in 1893 with an addition constructed in 1925.



BLADEN COUNTY COURTHOUSE, ERECTED JULY 4, 1893, ELIZABETHTOWN, N. C.



BLADEN COUNTY COURT HOUSE, ELIZABETHTOWN, N. C.

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