

Your Community-Minded Newspaper

# YANCEY COMMON TIMES JOURNAL

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Burnsville, North Carolina 50¢



## Strengthening Families Program holds registration

The Strengthening Families Program (SFP) is a nationally and internationally recognized parenting and family strengthening program for high-risk and general population families.

SFP is an evidence-based family skills training program found to significantly improve parenting skills and family relationships, reduce problem behaviors, delinquency and alcohol and drug abuse in children and to improve social competencies and school performance.

Child maltreatment also decreases as parents strengthen bonds with their children and learn more effective parenting skills.

Register your family today. It will be paid for by the Rural Health and Safety Education Program. Included in the registration, free of charge, is a 12 week session, with supper provided each session, as well as a family weekend, May 18-20 at Millstone 4-H Camp in Ellerbe, NC. The weekly sessions begin Tuesday, January 23, 2018.

There is a need for 5 families in our area to be involved in this initiative which equips kids and their families to avoid risky behaviors, including substance misuse.

Strengthening Families is a life-changing program for those families who adopt what is offered through the program.

If you know of any families who might benefit from this program, please share this information with them and encourage them to sign up! Contact Tres Magner at the Yancey County Cooperative Extension at 828-682-6186 for more information.

## Check out annual Burnsville Christmas parade this Saturday

The Annual Christmas Parade in downtown Burnsville will be held Saturday, December 2 beginning at 3:00 p.m. This year's theme is "Twas The Night Before Christmas". For more information contact Ginger Johnson at the Yancey/Burnsville Chamber of Commerce at 828-682-7413 or email ginger@yanceychamber.com. See you at the Parade. Photo by David Grindstaff

## What's our hospital's future? Mission Health gives some answers

By Victoria Loe Hicks

Mission Health System's decision to close the labor and delivery unit at Blue Ridge Regional Hospital scared many people in our communities. Would we lose more services? Was the hospital on the road to closing, as so many rural hospitals have done?

Since that time, a group of concerned citizens has worked hard to make sure our counties are not stripped of more vital medical services. The group, called SEARCH (Sustaining Essential and Rural Community Healthcare), has tried to get answers from Mission's leaders and to bring home to them how important the hospital is to the quality of life here.

As part of that effort, SEARCH submitted a list of questions to Mission CEO Ron Paulus and met with him and other Mission and BRRH leaders. The questions looked to the future, asking if more changes lie ahead and how members of the community can affect the hospital's future.

This article lays out Mission's responses to several key questions. Our aim in passing on this information is to inform the public of Mission's stance and to stimulate a wider discussion about what people want and need in their hospital and in their medical services generally.

We hope more people will join that discussion and become

active in SEARCH as we work for the health of our region. SEARCH's next meeting will be Tuesday, Dec. 5, at 7 p.m. at First Baptist Church in Burnsville. All are welcome.

The gist of what Mission's leaders told us is this: They plan to keep operating Blue Ridge and think it can stay afloat financially. But there will be changes in the services available and the way care is delivered.

One change already in place is that a surgeon will not be available nights and weekends. Patients who need emergency surgery during those times will be transported to other Mission hospitals.

Mission says so few emergency surgeries are performed

at Blue Ridge that it doesn't make sense to have a surgeon available 24/7. Instead, the hospital will concentrate on surgeries that can be scheduled in advance, particularly outpatient surgeries.

Blue Ridge is also cutting back on the number of hours during which a Mission-employed doctor is on-site to oversee inpatient care. In Mission's system, a patient whose regular doctor is a Mission employee is overseen during inpatient hospital stays by a different Mission-employed doctor, a "hospitalist," trained to manage care in a hospital setting. (In most cases doctors who are not employed by Mission are responsible for seeing

their patients in the hospital and supervising their care in person or by phone until they are discharged.)

Starting in January, a hospitalist will only be present at Blue Ridge from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. At other times, hospitalists elsewhere in Mission's system – primarily in Asheville – will consult as needed via video technology.

Many people refer to this as using "robots," but it is more like using Skype or FaceTime. With cameras and video screens, the nurse or physician's assistant who is at the patient's bedside shares information with and receives instruction from

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## Check out the Christmas Bazaar December 5-7

It's time for the annual Christmas Bazaar to benefit the Magnolia Day Program. Clients of the program have been busy for weeks making unique craft items and paintings to sell at their bazaar. Extra sale days have been added this year giving customers time to select from the wonderful assortment of items. The bazaar will be held Tuesday thru Thursday, December 5 - 7, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. daily at the NC Outreach building located at 24 North Main Street, next door to the Yancey Times Journal Newspaper Office, in Burnsville. All proceeds will go to help support activities for the Magnolia Day Program clients.

## TRAC receives grant for Burnsville glass gateways

The Community Foundation of Western North Carolina recently approved grants totaling \$1,446,162 to nonprofits across the region.

The awards were made in CFWNC's focus areas with \$1.15 million in People in Need grants going to nonprofits serving economically-disadvantaged populations across the Foundation's 18-county service area.

A grant totaling \$30,000 to the Toe River Arts Council for the Burnsville Glass Gateways, a public artwork that will visually connect the 19E corridor to the downtown.

The project employs artists and promotes tourism. A "Dark Sky" community, Yancey County is one of the world's 30 Dark Sky Parks and houses the largest public telescope in the Southeast. The Gateways will draw attention to that distinction. CFWNC affiliate The Yancey Fund and the Crutchfield Charitable Fund partnered with CFWNC to fund this grant.

Sixty-seven People in Need grants of up to \$20,000 totaling \$1,151,162 were awarded throughout the region. "These grants touch every county we serve and represent an investment in this region by 62 funds we steward," said CFWNC President Elizabeth Brazas. "Grant partners in-

clude our affiliate funds, current fundholders and private foundations that partnered with us to provide more than 50 percent of the funds that will help the region's most vulnerable indi-

viduals and families.

This truly is a collaborative effort." Affiliate funds who partner with CFWNC to raise local resources contributed \$140,000 to the cycle.

The Community Foundation is a nonprofit serving eighteen counties in Western North Carolina that facilitated \$18 million in charitable giving last year.



The Toe River Arts Council was recently awarded a \$30,000 grant to help with the planned Burnsville Glass Gateways. An artist impression of how the project should look when it is finished is pictured above.

## Young and McQueen announce temporary road closure

Young McQueen Grading Company in Burnsville released the following announcement concerning the temporary closure of Cane Branch Road in

East Yancey County.

The night of Thursday, November 30, Cane Branch Road will be closed to through traffic beginning at approximately 4

mile South of highway 19 for bridge construction. The road closure will begin at approximately 9:30 p.m. the night of November 30 and continue till approximately 2:30 a.m. the morning of Friday, December 1. Emergency personnel will be staged on the south side of the road closure to service any emergency that may occur.

If anyone may need to pass through this closure during the previously stated time they will need to park a vehicle on Highway 19 side of the bridge construction area, near Crabtree Creek Church. A shuttle will be provided to a vehicle parked in

the Crabtree Creek Church area if travel becomes necessary.

If anyone has any questions please contact Young and McQueen Grading Co. at 828-682-7714 or contact the NCDOT at 8287-658-9439.

Thank you for your patience and understanding in this matter. We are working hard to provide a piece of infrastructure that will serve the Cane Branch Community for many years to come, the release said.

## Art-Yard sale at Penland School

Penland School of Crafts will host an art and yard sale on Saturday, December 2 from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

The sale includes special items donated in support of assistance to Puerto Rican artists affected by the recent hurricane. Various Penland staff and friends have gathered art and other items to sell, and some artists have donated their own work to the cause.

The sale will include pieces by Cristina Cordova, Jeannine Marchand, Cynthia Bringle, Tom Spleth, and Penland's new director, Mia Hall.

The sale will take place in Ridgeway Hall, across from the Penland Gallery and Visitors Center. Penland School is located on Conley Ridge Road, just off Penland Road in Mitchell County.

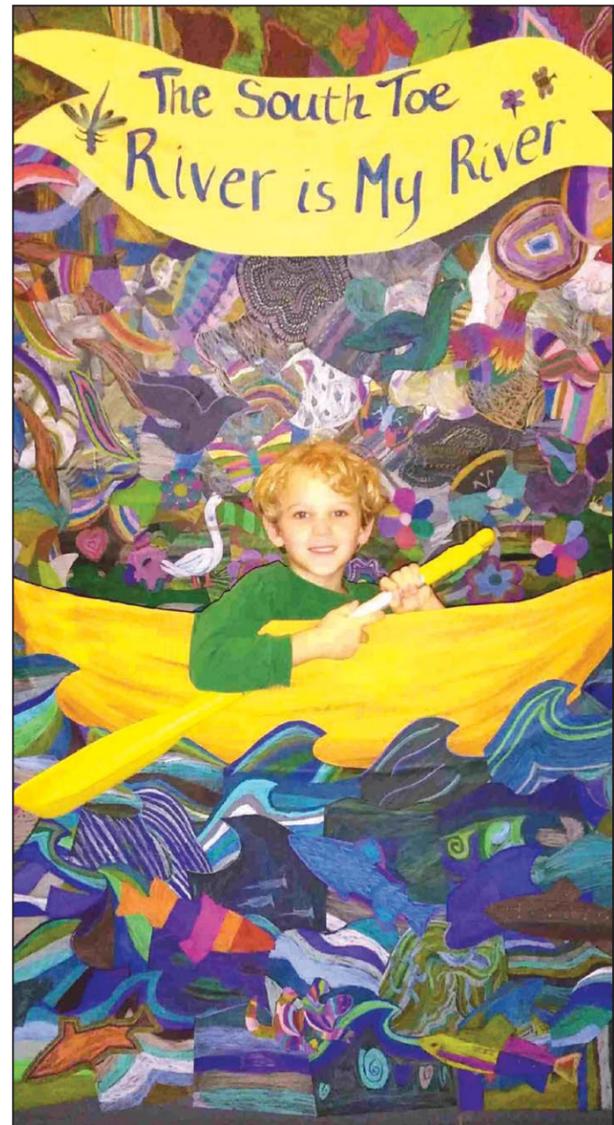
## CMLF art contest held

The 13th Annual Carolina Mountains Literary Festival is looking for original artwork to use as the image on bookmarks, posters, advertisements, note cards and all publicity for the Festival.

To see examples of past bookmarks and for complete contest rules and submission guidelines, go to [www.cmlifest.org](http://www.cmlifest.org) and click on "Art Contest." Submission deadline is February 1, 2018.

## Madison Arts Council annual Holiday sale

In recent years, the riverside town of Marshall has become one of the hottest art destinations in Western North Carolina. The Madison County Arts Council, Marshall High Studios, Flow, and Gallery Dallos are just a few of the creative spaces in town. "Art is everywhere out here," says Erich Hubner, Program Director of the MCAC. "For the past eleven years, the Annual Holiday Sale at the Arts Center on



Xylem Elliott poses on the fifth-grade Toes in the Toe photo booth at the Burnsville Ingles Market.

## 5th Grade River Art Photo Booth on display at Ingles in Burnsville

During Toes in the Toe Watershed Discovery Days in September 2017, sponsored by Toe River Valley Watershed Partnership, Yancey County fifth graders worked with Penland School of Crafts Community Collaboration staff to create a colorful Toe River interactive photo booth, sharing their vision of the importance of clean water in our lives. The booth will be in the entryway to the Burns-

ville Ingles Market through mid-December. The public is invited to use the photo booth to make fun pictures of friends and family. Special thanks to Ingles Markets for their support of this project.

Penland's Community Collaborations, including this project, is funded in part by the Grable Foundation, the Windgate Charitable Foundation, and the Hearst Foundation.

Main Street has celebrated this by bringing local and regional talent for a gift market just before the holiday season kicks off." This Sale will be in a new downtown location year. "We moved to new office space in the fall, and have a small gallery space," remarked Hubner. Luckily, there is a studio space downtown Marshall on street level at 31 N. Main Street that will make a great venue for the sale."

The Friday night preview will be one event of the Marshall Christmas Crawl. Music, food, Santa and even an Ugly Sweater contest will be part of the festivities. Saturday the Town of Marshall holds its annual Christmas Parade at 11 am and the Holiday Sale will be in full swing from 10 a.m. until 3 p.m.

More information at (828)649-1301 or at [www.madisoncountyarts.com](http://www.madisoncountyarts.com)

## What's our hospital's future? Answers

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the doctor who is farther away. Mission also intends to expand the number of primary care doctors who practice in the Mauzy Phillips building on

the hospital campus. This is in keeping with its overall strategy of bringing more doctors into its own network where they are more subject to its rules.

Other areas slated for

growth include outpatient surgery, diagnostic testing such as MRIs, CT scans and other imaging technologies, and "swing beds." Swing beds are used for patients from this area who were taken to Asheville for advanced treatment but who can recuperate here, closer to home.

With the closure of the labor and delivery unit, many people feared that Mission's strategy was to gradually force all patients to go to Marion or Asheville for care. Mission's leaders say this is not the case. They say that, except for especially complex, difficult or unpredictable cases, they actually hope to treat more patients locally rather than seeing them transferred to Asheville.

At this point, Mission says, both the volume of patients and the money they bring in are enough to keep Blue Ridge open. But they also note that many things are uncertain, including the future shape of Medicare, Medicaid, and the private health insurance system.

SEARCH's questions did not touch on Mission's conflict with Blue Cross Blue Shield, and SEARCH has no inside information on the status of that dispute.

SEARCH is not agreeing with Mission by transmitting this information. We are merely reporting their responses as a public service. Clearly, there is much to be discussed and responded to. Please come to the next SEARCH meeting on Dec. 5 to become part of that effort.

**Christmas Caroling**  
on the Burnsville Town Square  
**FRIDAY, DECEMBER 8<sup>TH</sup>**  
**BEGINNING AT 5:30 P.M.**

**Bring a chair and enjoy FREE Hot Chocolate along with these Christmas Carolers!**

- The Charles Dickens Carolers with The Mountain Heritage Choral Singers
- Lighting of The Christmas Tree by Bald Creek Kindergarten Classes with guitar music by Sonia Brooks
- Liberty Hill Baptist Church
- Jessie Duncan, Logan Boone & Friends
- Roberta Whiteside
- Nevaeh Buchanan & Kaitlyn Green
- Pete and Kim McWhirter
- The Jack Laws Family
- Fritz and Joy Young
- Dylan and Jennifer Wilson, Faye Hughes, Gordon Higgins, Jackson Hensley

*Come and enjoy the beautiful town square, spend time with family and friends, shop and eat locally and Sing Along!*

**SPONSORED BY:**  
**THE TOWN OF BURNSVILLE**  
**YANCEY TIMES JOURNAL**

CHECK OUT OUR DOWNTOWN MERCHANTS / RESTAURANTS

IN EVENT OF BAD WEATHER, AND THE CAROLING MUST BE CANCELED.... TUNE IN TO WKYK RADIO FOR ANNOUNCEMENT.



**HURRY...  
TIME IS RUNNING OUT!**

***December 15th is the last day!***  
***Don't wait until the last minute!***

**RENEW OR SIGN UP FOR  
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**MORE AFFORDABLE THAT EVER!**

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TO SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT IN ANY NC COUNTY.

MORE INFORMATION AT [WWW.ACAHEALTHCAREHELP.ORG](http://WWW.ACAHEALTHCAREHELP.ORG)