

# THE WHITE STREET JOURNAL



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WSJ30.com | 919-602-7974 **WAKE FOREST** editor@wsj30.com | ED 3 VOL 1



**WSJOPINION**

Columnist David Leone discusses the impact the arts community has had on him and how much of it there is to enjoy in Wake Forest. **Page 4**



**WSJEDUCATION**

Emily Turnage and Melissa Lloyd, retired school teachers, think COVID-19 has put strain on families trying to homeschool. **Page 5**

**CORONAVIRUS CASES AT A GLANCE**

<b>371</b> WAKE COUNTY CONFIRMED CASES	<b>3,823</b> NORTH CAROLINA CONFIRMED CASES	<b>75</b> NORTH CAROLINA DEATHS	<b>468,566</b> UNITED STATES CONFIRMED CASES	<b>16,691</b> UNITED STATES DEATHS	<b>1.6 M</b> WORLDWIDE CONFIRMED CASES	<b>95,722</b> WORLDWIDE DEATHS
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Statistics as of 04/09/20

# CLEAN UP ON AISLE NC

Some retailers have taken their own COVID-19 safety measures, but Gov. Roy Cooper announces mandatory occupancy guidelines this week

**BY KATHY HARRELSON FOR THE WSJ**

Sunday was much like any beautiful spring day in Wake Forest, except for the shopping at Walmart.

There, the store was closed off on the pharmacy/home entrance side and blocked off with shopping carts and police tape on the grocery side, with customers being herded into a waiting line to come inside.

A greeter was counting each person coming in and going out on an electronic pad.

Starting Monday, similar restrictions will be imposed on shoppers throughout the state, North Carolina Gov. Roy Cooper announced in an executive order on Thursday.

Occupancy statewide will be limited to 20 percent of a stores' fire capacity, or five people per 1,000 square feet of retail space. The rule, which mimics Walmart's, takes effect at 5 p.m. Monday, April 13.

"Most of the customers understand this is necessary," said employee Jason Smith. "Some are bothered by having to wait in line."

Smith said he has not seen a huge line since the policy went into effect on April 3 locally; maybe 60 or 70 people have been in line at one time during busy hours, he said. Wait times have not exceeded 15 to 20 minutes, he added.

The local store fell in line with a corporate order to let about 20 percent of capacity in only.

The most frustration comes from customers who want to come in the store after hours, Smith said.

"They do get mad," he said.

By mid-afternoon Sunday, only a handful of shoppers were held up as they waited for others to exit — a big-box store effort to both protect customers and store employees from potential exposure to the Coronavirus.

"I'm just glad we don't have to wait," said Princess Jackson. "All we needed to get are some napkins."

Jackson was covered well with a blue rubber glove, sunglasses, a long-sleeved shirt and a face mask, as was her friend James Banks.

Marie Kelly road up to the door in an automated cart, wearing her mask and necessary to be able to shop for necessary



Princess Jackson of Wake Forest keeps it safe by wearing rubber gloves and a face mask - protecting herself, other shoppers and Walmart employees from potential exposure to the Coronavirus. She is with friend James Banks, also in a mask. WSJ PHOTO | KATHY HARRELSON

**RETAIL | CONT'D ON PAGE 10**

## Generations lost prayerful guidance of 'Grandma Ella'

*Ella Virginia Smith and son die in house fire*

**BY KATHY HARRELSON For the WSJ**

Walnut Street was lined on both sides Tuesday night with cars full of those coming to show respect and love for a woman they all knew as "Grandma Ella" and one of her sons.

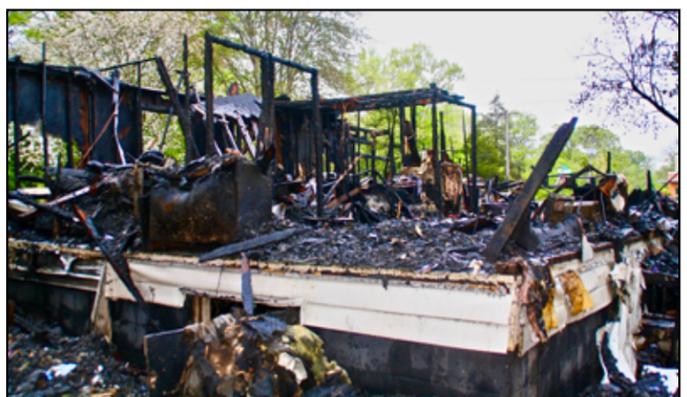
The 85-year-old, Ella Virginia Smith, along with Lawrence Williams, 69, died from injuries in an early morning fire. The losses crushed the hearts of hundreds of friends and family who had been

raised there or considered it their home away from home for nearly 60 years.

The stream of "family" into the neighboring yard where Smith's grandson, Albert Rumsey, lives, faded into the evening hours in the softening light of a full moon.

Silhouettes of people holding on to each other, wandering side by side and trying to comfort the lone mourners slowly paraded by the burned-out shell behind police tape and a white picket fence,

**ELLA | CONT'D ON PAGE 10**



Ella Smith's home stands in ruins Thursday, following back-to-back fires here on Tuesday and Wednesday mornings. Tuesday's fire claimed her life and her son's, Lawrence Williams. The first fire gutted the front of the house, and it reignited to destroy the structure. WSJ PHOTO | KATHY HARRELSON



WILLIAMSON

## Williamson earns N.C. pesticide certification

Contributed to WSJ from the Town of Wake Forest

Tree Trimming Technician I Christopher Williamson successfully passed the North Carolina Pesticide License Core Exam and N.C. Pesticide License Right of Way Exam on March 11. He joins Tree Trimming Technician II Mark Schissel as the second member of the Public Works Department's Tree Trimming Division to earn these licenses.

Among the topics covered on the core exam are current pest management applicator responsibilities, pest management methods and applications, federal pesticide laws and regulations, record keeping and pesticide formulations.

The Right of Way Exam is designed for applicators using pesticides in the maintenance of public roads, electric powerlines, pipelines, railway rights-of-way, and other similar areas.

A native of Asheboro, Williamson joined the Town of Wake Forest in 2018.



Wake Forest Fire Department and EMS respond to vehicle accident Sunday morning. PHOTO | WAKE FOREST FIRE DEPARTMENT

## Vehicle flips, occupants refuse medical treatment

FROM STAFF REPORTS

Early Sunday morning the Wake Forest Fire Department responded to a single vehicle accident.

Engine 1, Ladder 1, and Battalion 1 responded to the crash at Wait Avenue and Havisham Court. Emergency

Medical Services arrived first to find a vehicle rolled over on its roof with one patient outside the vehicle and one still inside. EMS assisted the patient still in the vehicle to get out.

Both patients refused treatment.

Crews were able to quickly clear the site.

## Beware of COVID-19/ Economic Impact Payment scams

Contributed to WSJ from the Town of Wake Forest

The Treasury Department and the Internal Revenue Service will begin distributing COVID-19 Economic Impact Payments in the next few weeks. IRS – Criminal Investigation and the US Attorney's Office in the Eastern District of North Carolina continue to warn North Carolina taxpayers to be alert about possible scams relating to these payments as well as other malicious attempts to defraud people relating to the COVID-19 pandemic.

For most Americans, the Economic Impact Payment will be distributed automatically and result in a direct deposit into the bank account designated by their 2018 or 2019 federal tax return. For eligible recipients who have traditionally received tax refunds via paper check, they will receive their economic impact payment in this manner as well. The IRS will calculate and automatically send the Economic Impact Payment with no action required by most eligible recipients.

Please note the following tips to avoid

becoming the victim of a scam:

The IRS will not contact you to ask you to pay a fee or confirm personal information prior to receiving the Economic Impact Payment.

If you receive a phone call, text, or email asking for payment or confirmation of personal or financial information, it is a scam. Do not give out your bank account, debit account or PayPal account information, even if the caller claims it is necessary to get your check or that by doing so you can receive your payment faster.

Additionally, don't click on links in texts or emails relating to Economic Impact Payments, as this could allow scammers to place tracing devices on your electronic devices and gain access to your personal information for later use.

Don't engage with scammers or thieves, simply hang up or delete texts/

emails.

It will take a few weeks before the Treasury sends the Economic Impact Payments. If you receive a "check" for an odd amount, for instance \$1,322.48, or a check that requires you to verify the check online or by calling a number, it is a fraud.



In addition to the warnings issued by IRS-Criminal Investigation, the Department of Justice is also actively formulating an investigative and legal response to fraud relating to COVID-19.

United States Attorney's Offices have developed task forces and appointed Coronavirus Fraud Coordinators to serve as the legal counsel for the federal judicial district on matters relating to the Coronavirus, direct the prosecution of Coronavirus-related crimes and to conduct outreach and awareness activities.

Any Wake Forest resident who believes he is a victim or has been targeted as a victim of a pandemic-related fraud is urged to report it by calling the Wake Forest Police Department at 919-554-6150. Victims are also urged to contact the National Center for Disaster Fraud at 866-720-5721 or email them at disaster@leo.gov.

The following are examples of COVID-19-related scams:

- Individuals and businesses selling fake cures for COVID-19 online and engaging in other forms of fraud.

- Phishing emails from entities posing as the World Health Organization or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

- Malicious websites and apps that appear to share Coronavirus-related information to gain and lock access to your devices until payment is received.

- Seeking donations fraudulently for illegitimate or non-existent charitable organizations.

For more information, visit the IRS website at [www.irs.gov/coronavirus](http://www.irs.gov/coronavirus).

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## Three new officers join the WFPD

The Wake Forest Police Department recently welcomed three new officers to its ranks. From left, Wake Forest Police Chief Jeff Leonard presents badges to Officer K. Sealy, Officer K. Livesay, and Officer K. Bobbs. The three new additions give the WFPD 86 sworn officers.  
PHOTOS | WAKE FOREST POLICE DEPARTMENT

## Cover Design Contest continues through April



Contributed to WSJ from the Town of Wake Forest

To promote community involvement, art and creativity, the Wake Forest Parks, Recreation & Cultural Resources (PRCR) Department is inviting Wake Forest-area youth ages 4-17 to create the cover of the 2020 Fall/Winter edition of RecConnect. The PRCR Department publishes RecConnect, twice each year – once in the spring and again in the fall. The program guide offers complete information on parks and recreation-sponsored programs and activities for people of all ages, including youth and adult athletics, cultural programs and classes and special events. The deadline to enter the cover design contest is Friday, May 1, and the following contest rules apply:

- Contest is open to Town of Wake Forest residents ages 4-17.
- Designs must be 8.5”(w) x 11”(h).
- Artists may submit original drawings or digital creations.
- The artists signature must be included in the design.
- Designs can be created by computer or by hand using any medium (pencil, marker, crayon, paint, charcoal, etc.).
- The design should be appropriate for any age to view.
- The artist can choose from any of the following themes: Aquatics, Nature, Recreation, Parks, Sports or Community.
- Design cannot include copyrighted imagery, including popular cartoon characters, sports team logos, or trademarks.

■ Designs created by computer should be submitted via the online entry form as a full-size, high resolution (300 dpi) JPG, PNG or PDF. Designs created by hand should be mailed to PRCR, 301 S. Brooks St., Wake Forest, NC 27587 c/o Monica Lileton. Complete information, along with the online entry form, is available at <https://bit.ly/CoverDesignContest>. The winning design will be selected by the Wake Forest Recreation Advisory Board. For more information, contact Recreation Program Superintendent Monica Lileton at 919-435-9563 or [mileton@wakeforestnc.gov](mailto:mileton@wakeforestnc.gov). RecConnect is mailed to all Wake Forest residents (over 30,000) in the 27587 zip code. To view the current version of RecConnect, visit <https://bit.ly/PRCRRRecConnect>.

## Wake Forest earns Tree City & Tree Line USA Awards

Contributed to WSJ from the Town of Wake Forest

The Town of Wake Forest has been named a 2019 Tree City USA and Tree Line USA award winner. This marks the 41st year Wake Forest has earned the Tree City USA designation and the sixth year it has been recognized as a Tree Line USA. The Tree City USA and

Tree Line USA programs are a partnership between the North Carolina Forest Service and the National Arbor Day Foundation. Awards are presented annually to communities and utilities that demonstrate a commitment to making their communities more livable by planting and caring for trees. The Tree City and Tree Line USA programs encourage management of urban trees for a healthy, sustain-

able urban forest. The additional goal of dependable utility service further highlights the need to include several key utility practices to ensure the continuation of abundant, healthy trees in close proximity with utility service lines. In 2019, Wake Forest accomplished several required criteria for these two awards: Management: Wake Forest has a tree ordinance, tree

board or department, and an annual tree budget of at least \$2 per capita. Wake Forest Power works with the Town to provide proper tree care throughout public and utility areas, while keeping the health of the trees in mind. Education: Learning opportunities have been provided to both the public and utility workers on topics ranging from tree planting and maintenance for energy conservation, to utility

worker safety when maintaining tree clearance. An annual Arbor Day observance and proclamation to celebrate trees and the many benefits they provide. In Wake Forest, the community forestry program thrives because of the combined dedication of Urban Forestry Board members, Town staff, town board, business community, homeowners and all residents who take pride in the qual-

ity of life in Wake Forest. This recognition serves not only as an award to the conscientious employees who make it possible, it also makes a statement to the community at large about cooperation, goodwill and the need for continuous and proper tree care. For more on Wake Forest's urban forestry program, contact Coordinator Luke Devores at 919-435-9565 or [orldevores@wakeforestnc.gov](mailto:orldevores@wakeforestnc.gov).

### POLICE BLOTTER

## WFPD arrests April 1-8

The Wake Forest Police Department made the following arrests from April 1 thru 8:

- Dashawn Tyrone Smith, 22, 922 N White St., Wake Forest, order of arrest for Vance County, \$500 secured bond.
- Diamonique Shawn Newton, 27, 190 Thomson Lane, public officers, no bond available.
- Michael Alexander Solano, 19, 10 Sessile Oak Way, Youngsville, driving while impaired & dwi/provisional license, no bond available.
- Dashawn Antwaune Massenburg, 24, 340 N Allen Road, Wake Forest, order for arrest, bond \$120.
- Reginald Wright, 54, 1454 Cimarron Parkway, 12, Wake Forest, assault on female, no bond.
- Rodrick Larnard Smith, 36, 30 Cranbrooke Drive, Franklinton, assault by strangulation, child abuse-misdemeanor, assault on female, \$20,000 secured bond.
- Dominic Franklin Toanone, 18, 405 Moultonboro Ave., Wake Forest, driving while impaired, dwi provisional license, Resist, delay, obstruct officer, unsecured \$5,000 bond.

■ Christopher David Martin, 48, 3025 Thurman Dairy Loop, Wake Forest, Driving While Impaired, Open container after consuming alcohol first, no bond.

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## EDITORIAL

# Is anybody out there?

There are many ways an out-of-work person can be greeted these days by the North Carolina Department of Employment Security office.

Very few people, however, are hearing it in person.

Instead the calls to file unemployment due to the Coronavirus are met with at least four variations of a recording — often double teamed by the same man and woman — that lead nowhere, except to an abrupt cutoff.

Sometimes the call doesn't even get to the recording; it just gets dropped.

The ability of the state to handle the Coronavirus claims is a disaster within itself and a failure to the people of North Carolina.

Patience is difficult when you spend hours, days, weeks just trying to get into the system, which will then give you two hours to wait for a person to speak to you. Even then, if any problems are not fixed or if the hold time runs out — the process starts all over.

Patience is next to impossible when you are feeling uncertain, knowing your last paycheck at a steady job is now written and spent and bills continue to come in.

Granted, the money is promised to the qualified. Payments are retroactive based on the date of filing, and the federal stimulus package will add \$600 a week to payments as well as extend benefits 13 additional weeks.

The package is generous to the nearly 600,000 people who have filed since the first of March, but thousands more can't even get an even start because the state has not had enough workers to handle the call volume.

The lines have not even been open at all during the weekends!

The online services are just as poorly operated. Screens freeze, and apologies from DES slap those hoping to file or get a question answered, being told that the page could take a while to load or "check back later."

In this state, which prides itself on a prepared workforce and state-of-the-art technology, North Carolina has become an embarrassment thus far in taking care of displaced workers from the virus.

In all of the support promised, it has little effect if it is not timely received. Reportedly, \$40.3 million has been paid out in benefits.

In announcing a step-up in processing claims in an executive order Thursday, Gov. Roy Cooper noted that the payments represent a foothold for those in financial stress and a key to keeping the economy stable.

He could not be more correct in his words.

Now we need to see the actions.

## END OF STORY

# I hope I have the strength

Good morning. Both my parents are alive. My Dad is 90 and my mom is 86. My brother and sister are still with me and all their kids and grandkids are still out and about in this world. And their spouses are still by their sides. I have never had to go through the tragedy of losing an immediate family member by disease, accident or age.

My first cousin died when he was thirty-nine from a blood clot he had for years and didn't know it. His last ten years of life were filled with a kidney transplant and dialysis, but it didn't stop him from living his life. Getting married and doing what most thirty somethings do with their lives.

When he was eighteen he walked in on my grandmother laying on the floor. She had died from a heart attack.

I've never faced anything like that. I was off at college when my grandmother died. I had a couple of good friends around me, so I wasn't alone and I dealt



JAY LAMM

with it fairly well. It still bothers my mom thirty-eight years later.

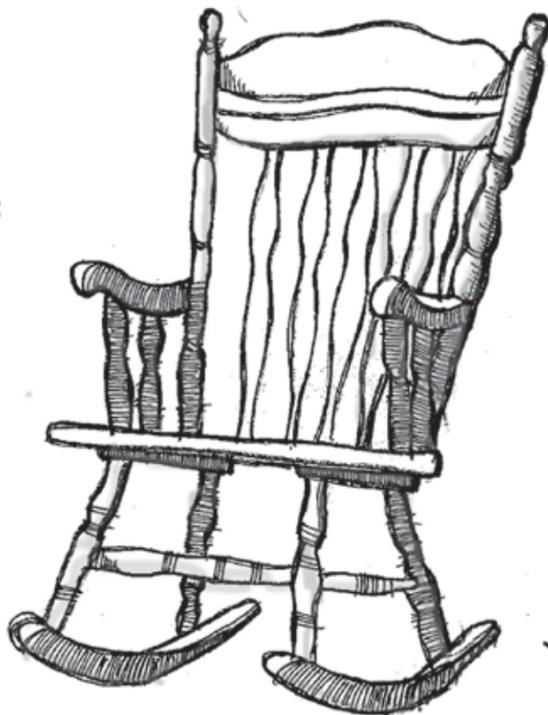
I've had a couple of non-related "aunts" pass away during the last few years from age and disease. I miss them when I think about them, but mostly moved on.

I guess the most shocking death I've had to face was when my old college roommate died trying to save someone from drowning in the Haw River, near Mebane. He was a volunteer fireman and the submerged car rolled over on the safety cable he was at-

LAMM | CONT'D  
ON PAGE 7

There's No Place  
Like Home —  
EXCEPT GRANDMA'S

IN MEMORIAM  
ELLA VIRGINIA SMITH



JAY LAMM

## THE BACK FORTY

# The art and soul of North Carolina

In western North Carolina, near the town of Tryon, up near the top of a hill, is Little Mountain Pottery. For 40 or so years it was the creative space for Claude and Elaine Graves, before Claude got sick and retired, handing off the business to an apprentice. (Claude died last week.) Not long after I moved to North Carolina in the late '90s, I'd go out to the first big kiln opening at Little Mountain with newfound friends who introduced me to Claude and Elaine.

We'd drive up the day before and pitch tents on the land next to the pottery shed and a small residence on site, catch up, and eventually, there'd be music. No radio or stereo, no CDs or record players were turned on — instead, people would produce acoustic instruments and play. There was always a fiddle, a guitar or two, and sometimes a banjo, or other instrument. I didn't play, but was allowed to sit in — a rare treat. Claude played fiddle and harmonica; Elaine had a concertina, a small bellows instrument that makes a delightful melody. The next day, Claude would unbrick one of his kilns, to show off the bowls and mugs and plates and other pieces. Those gathered around would listen to him describe each piece, or set, and the processes involved in the firing, and then we'd buy an item or two, or check out what else he had in the shop. There'd often be more music in the afternoon, and then we'd pack up and go our separate ways.

These visits, and others like them, were very special experiences. The craftsmanship, the artistry, the folk music, and camaraderie, were like nothing

I'd experienced. It was a wonderful introduction into North Carolina arts. I've very much enjoyed experiencing the arts in this community, as well — much of which I was exposed to in my days as a reporter and photographer: the gospel sounds of the Eaton Brothers at Olive Branch Baptist Church, for which I have a tape recording that I listen to time and again, tinny though it is; Nancy Farantatos' paintings on wooden slats that I liked so much at Sunflower Studio; the collection of working studios upstairs from Wake Forest Coffee at the Artists' Loft — one painter, Corey Choplin — would also metalcraft dragonflies and the like using cast off parts from her father's garage.

The local arts community held several events that I enjoyed. There was the annual Under the Oaks pottery fest, which closed up shop last year, I'm sorry to say. There was also a yearly Artists Studio Tour which exposed folks to many of the painters and craftsmen in the community. The monthly Art After Hours, which ran for years, was a delight when we had so many working art studios in town. Shops would put out wine and cheese with their displays, and host an artist of the month, including student groups from the high schools, and you could sometimes catch an artist-in-residence at his or her task: Dick Larsen painting his loveable dog portraits; that one guy who turned old plow blades into haunting aboriginal faces; Lauri Arntsen's encaustic wax creations; Jeanna Jinks painted over Polaroids from her motorcycle trip in India. There were always musicians during

those things — one young man played pop music on his accordion, another stood on the street with a clarinet, bands would rock the brewery, and so on.

For a while there were monthly performing arts events called Neck of the Woods, designed to bring talent out of the woodwork, planned, booked and run wholly by Claire Constantikes and later Cora Hemphill, both who've since moved away. I went to almost every one, held in the wine shop space that's now the Artists' Loft, and it got so cramped in there, you sometimes had to stand, and other seats were so close to the stage, if you'd stretch out your legs, it would interfere with the performance. (The event is still held, the town took it over and put it in the Renaissance Centre, and it doesn't feel the same). Neck performances featured comedians and bands, poetry readings and spoken word artists.

There was a fire dancer and several one-scene plays, including one by a group that led to the creation of the town's first community theater company — Forest Moon Theater.

I got involved and became Forest Moon's unofficial photographer for some time and have really grown to love community theater. The actors, directors, set people aren't paid; they perform solely for the love of it. I was also excited when a local woman, ballet dancer Masha Maddux, wanted to start a festival for serious students of dance. She persevered and with the help of ARTS Wake Forest and the town, it's been held annually since 2017. People known around the



DAVID LEONE

world have danced here at Joyner Park.

And I've been to more than one of the Wake Forest Listening Room performances, in which local enthusiast Mike Allen somehow gets very talented music acts to come play at the Magnolia Roots Music Lounge, downstairs from Sugar Magnolia Café. One I loved was a band called Honey Magpie — an indie folk group featuring guitar, cello, keyboards, and, my favorite, the fiddle. The music events will no doubt resume as soon as the shelter-in-place order is lifted.

Every year, the Wake Forest Chamber of Commerce holds its Meet in the Street festival, featuring booth after booth of artists and craftspeople, hailing from all parts North Carolina and beyond. The fest includes band stages and dance schools and other ephemera. While there's plenty to see and buy, there's plenty of that here already, too, as I've seen over the years. Artists, craftspeople, musicians, dancers, theater — we even have our own movie company and annual film fest. It's all here, and I love it.

— David Leone is a writer, photographer and raconteur who has worked in Wake Forest since 2007 and lived there since 2012.

## WSJ CONTACT INFORMATION

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## WSJ LETTER TO THE EDITOR GUIDELINES

Letters to the editor must be typed or in email form when submitted. Name, address and phone number must be included for verification. Letters must not exceed 250 words.



Emily Turnage, left, and Melissa Lloyd are two retired, school teachers in Wake Forest who think the Coronavirus has put an undue strain on families trying to get their children educated. The closing of the school system until at least May 15 has really put a burden on single parents, they said.

WSJ PHOTOS | KATHY HARRELSON

## Retired teachers admire parents who now have to homeschool

BY KATHY HARRELSON  
For the WSJ

When two retired, public school teachers take a socially-distanced trek these days to get a cherry snowball, talk can't help but focus on the Coronavirus and the mandated school closings in Wake County until at least May 15.

Emily Turnage and Melissa Lloyd sat on a sidewalk wall in the Downtown Historic District on Sunday afternoon, saying they are definitely "following on the sidelines" the way the county is dealing with online teaching and wondering if single moms with school children are getting the support they need.

"It's tough right now on a mother with a couple of kids in school and who has to still work," Turnage said. "I really step back and admire them."

"This (virus) has definitely kept us home," Turnage added, taking a spoonful of ice in under her face mask. Both doubt students will return to school this school calendar year.

"I think it has affected somebody, everybody, in one way or another ... and my heart goes out to the mothers who have to manage education of their children at home," Lloyd said.

Both former teachers said online teaching will prove difficult and much less effective than classroom teaching. They also noted that not all students have access to computers or Internet services, and that can put pressure on students and parents.

Still, they were both grateful for the efforts being made to reach out to the children by the school system.

"It is an uncertain time, but we will get through this," Turnage said.

Wake County Schools has planned to distribute 28,000 laptops and 10,000 Internet access hotspots to students to prepare for online teaching.

The district — which has 163 schools with about 160,000 students — is having spring break this week, and online classes have been put off until after April 12, when the students would have been coming back to the classroom following Easter. There are 40 year-round schools in Wake County, and some sessions in schools that have tracked back in last week are under way with online instruction. Most of the year-round schools operate on four tracks.

The online teaching sessions are one-hour long, Wake County Schools has announced. Thirty minutes are for direct instruction.

That is not much time to learn, one Wake County student said this week.

"We have started some online classes, but it is really hard to learn anything," said Rolesville High School student Jayla Hood. "The work they give is like one, simple assignment."

She said the students in a class are online at once and it



Retired teacher Emily Turnage takes off her Coronavirus mask to get a good bite of a cherry snowball.

is difficult to understand what is going on.

"It's hard to work that way," she said.

Heritage High student Kenneth Kirby agreed.

"The virus thing has not been so hard with isolation and social distancing, but it has been hard school wise ... not knowing what will happen with grades and stuff," he said. "With online, it's hard to understand."

The school district has decided to give seniors pass/fail grades this year, but how students in grades K through 11 will be assessed is still being worked out. When the students return plays a big part in that. There will be no end-of-grade or end-of-course testing this year, the United States Department of Education has approved from a state request, pending final General Assembly approval.

A recent district-wide survey on student access to laptops and internet connections found that out of about 160,000 students, 28,000 of them need some type of learning device and 10,000 need hotspots to access wi-fi. Schools have been closed since March 16.

## All year round schools begin traditional calendar on April 13 due to COVID-19

Contributed to WSJ from the Wake County Public School System

Beginning April 13, all year-round schools will follow a traditional school calendar for as long as schools remain closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, Fox Road, Barwell, and Walnut Creek's calendars will also change.

Why are we changing calendars? We are making this change in an effort to keep as many students as possible engaged in learning while schools are closed and the travel outside the home is limited based on the governor's "Stay at Home" directive.

### How long will this last?

This change will remain in effect through at least May 15. Should schools be closed the remainder of the year, the school year for Track

1 of year-round calendars will end June 4. All other affected schools would end June 11.

Should schools reopen in May, necessary adjustments will be made to calendars at that time. The adjustments will account for the fact that all multi-track year-round students cannot attend their schools simultaneously.

The adjustments will also ensure staff and students are engaged in teaching and learning for essentially the same amount of time as traditional calendar students.

### What does this mean for me right now?

The immediate effects of this decision on all calendars are as follows:

Tracks 1, 2 and 3 will continue to use supplemental resources and extension activities during the week of April 6. All three tracks will then follow the traditional calendar schedule

for remote learning beginning the week of April 13.

Track 4 will have an abbreviated trackout and will begin remote learning on April 13.

Fox Road will adopt the Traditional Calendar starting April 13.

Barwell and Walnut Creek will adopt the Track 4 Calendar starting April 13.

Modified calendar and early college high schools are not affected by this change. Remote learning will begin for these calendars on April 6.

Traditional Schools: No change. Spring break remains the week of April 6. (Note: Spring Break must remain on the calendar based on guidance from state education officials.) Remote learning will begin for students on April 13.

These calendar changes are based on our current circumstances. We will keep you informed of any additional changes as they evolve. You can view the revised calendar here: <https://bit.ly/39ALBSw>

## Wake County Public School System discusses challenges of remote learning

Contributed to WSJ from the Wake County Public School System

It is no longer a question of whether or not our world has changed. Indeed it has, and we are working to adjust how we serve our families in providing teaching and learning, and to support opportunities to the degree these unprecedented circumstances allow. We thank you for your continued patience as we work through these ongoing challenges.

Your child's teacher may already have reached out to you or your child to establish contact and to check on their well-being. Some students may already have accessed resources through the WCPSS Remote Learning Resources website. Phase Two of Remote Learning begins on April 6 or 13, depending on your child's school calendar. Schools will be sharing daily and weekly schedules with their students and families.

Please review the following points of pertinent information regarding expectations and actions for the foreseeable future:

### Moving Forward with Remote Learning

One of our core beliefs is our ongoing commitment to preparing all students for life after they graduate, whether going to college or joining the workforce. While the current circumstances make this more challenging than ever, we remain fully committed to this belief. Continuous remote learning aims to bridge the gap in learning between school closure and the day we can reopen for our students.

Our principals and teachers are setting schedules for continuous remote learning within parameters established across the district. You should be receiving information from your child's school regarding scheduling and expectations. Schedules have been developed to provide maximum flexibility in order to meet the needs of individual students, families and teachers.

If your student receives services through an IEP or 504 plan, your child's special education teachers and related service providers will also contact you. In light of current circumstances, they are also working to create continuous learning opportunities with the intent of allowing students with disabilities to learn in a manner consistent with the adjusted learning schedules and formats for all students. With the shift to continuous remote learning and adjusted school experiences for all, it is reasonable to expect that learning activities for students with IEPs, like all other students, will look very different. You should expect that your student's teachers will contact and discuss with you specific learning activities for your child. It is not expected in these circumstances that special education or the implementation of 504 plans and related services will be the same as they were before March 16, 2020.

It is our intent to provide continuous remote learning in a variety of ways, including pre-recorded lessons, "real-time" or "live" sessions with teachers and students, and/or printed materials when appropriate. All continuous learning will be provided in lessons that students may access in a manner that is not dependent on using a device at a specific time. We recognize that there are significant challenges in access to technology. We have assessed needs around accessibility and are engaged in a process for the distribution of devices.

### Expectations and Guidelines for Students and Families in Remote Learning

The state Board of Education has provided general guidance that states, "It is paramount to remember the unprecedented condition students are learning in and to focus on engagement more than evaluation." Additionally, the state board guidance makes clear that learning should be "accessible by all students for which the learning is intended" and that districts "will focus on supporting student progress and communicating feedback to students and families rather than on assigning grades."

The following guidelines and expectations have been created to ensure that Remote Learning provides continued learning and support opportunities for students and/or families while maintaining maximum flexibility for teachers, students and families. It is important to keep in mind that as circumstances evolve, so will these initial guidelines and expectations.

Expectations and Guidelines for Students and Families in Remote Learning

Remote Learning Feedback Practices:

- Grades K-5
- Grades 6-8
- Grades 9-11
- Grades 12-13

### UNC-TV Partnership

UNC-TV and the N.C. Department of Public Instruction have established a partnership that will support remote learning with content that will be accessible to students—especially those with limited or no internet access—at no charge.

Each weekday, two blocks of programming on UNC-TV's North Carolina Channel will serve:

- Fourth- through eighth-grade students, from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- 9th- through 12th-grade students, from 1 to 6 p.m. (actual times may vary, please check the weekly schedule online here).

■ For PreK through third grade, UNC-TV's 24/7 "PBS KIDS" channel -- Rootle -- will continue providing programming appropriate for that age group.

These educational program blocks are available on the North Carolina Channel, available statewide for free over-the-air, through cable providers and



# Dinner for six at six feet in the Sadie Powell Parking Lot

By **JAY LAMM**  
editor@wsj30.com

Two families who have regularly eaten together at La Margaritas have lots in common — Saturday night it was the Sadie Powell Parking Lot.

Never missing a chance to eat at their favorite Mexican restaurant, the Brownings and Burns didn't let the Coronavirus dine-in restrictions stop them from eating out together this week.

"We've been eating here for years. We didn't see a reason

not to come tonight. It just took some adapting," said Sean Burns, who brought his family from Knightdale to meet with the Burns, Wake Forest residents.

Folding chairs and a table, made a makeshift dining room and when the wind blew just right, you could smell the food from La Mexico's kitchen, and sometimes when the breeze shifted, it was mixed with the smell of pizza coming from the Domino's just down the street.

The weather was nice, and the families stayed for a while and could be heard down the block talking and laughing.

Kendra Brownings' birthday was the following day, so the

meal was partly a celebration.

"We are being responsible and we are taking precautions, so as long as we have to, we can enjoy ourselves with good food, good friends and a good parking space," added Burns.

Above from left, the Browning family, Jacob, Sean and Kendra, from Knightdale, and 6 feet to the right is the Burns family, David, Stephanie and Emma, from Wake Forest.

WSJ PHOTO | JAY LAMM



## Having an ice time

Wake Forest's Pelicans SnoBalls is a big attraction these days. Practicing social distancing, customers stand back 6 feet to get their orders and then scatter through the Downtown Historic District to sit and enjoy the shaved ice treats. Left,

Ann Tobler and her son have a fun moment with their dog, Boomer, before getting a snowball at Pelicans.

Right, Kenneth Kirby, a Heritage High School student, and Jayla Hood, a Wake Forest-Rolesville

High School student, wait their turn for service from Lilly Pruett, at the window. Sunday hours are from 1 to 9 p.m. Pelicans SnoBalls is also open Monday through Saturday noon to 9 p.m.

WSJ PHOTOS | KATHY HARRELSON



## New leash on life

The weekend weather — once again — climbing into the 80s was too beautiful to stay home. Wake Forest was alive with cyclists, yard workers, joggers and walkers, including Marty and Shelia Gooch. The couple is walking their two "babies," Skylar and Bailey downtown, by The Cotton Company.

WSJ PHOTO | KATHY HARRELSON

## Participate in Town of Wake Forest's Chalk your Walk Week April 13-17

Contributed to WSJ from the Town of Wake Forest

In an ongoing effort to promote community involvement, art and creativity, while also emphasizing the importance of staying home during the current COVID-19 pandemic, the Town of Wake Forest is inviting residents to participate in "Chalk Your Walk Week."

During the week of April 13, Wake Forest families are invited to use chalk to draw pictures and write positive and uplifting messages on their driveways and sidewalks.

Each day that you participate, please share with us photos of your pictures and messages through the online form on our website at <https://bit.ly/ChalkYourWalkWF>. Throughout the week, we'll post on the Town of Wake Forest Facebook page the pictures we've received and upload them to our online photo gallery. We also invite you to post your pictures on social media and use the hashtag #StayStrongWF.

At the end of the week, we'll announce on Face-



book three winners who will receive a special prize. For more information, visit <https://bit.ly/ChalkYourWalkWF>.

Finally, please remember that we're all in this together, so we all have an important role to play in preventing the spread of COVID-19 in our community. Please do your part by practicing these health and safety guidelines:

extremely limited circumstances)

- Cover your mouth and nose when you cough and sneeze

- Wash your hands frequently with soap and warm water

- Avoid touching your face

- Keep distance between yourself and others

- Clean and disinfect surfaces that get touched often

- Stay home (except for



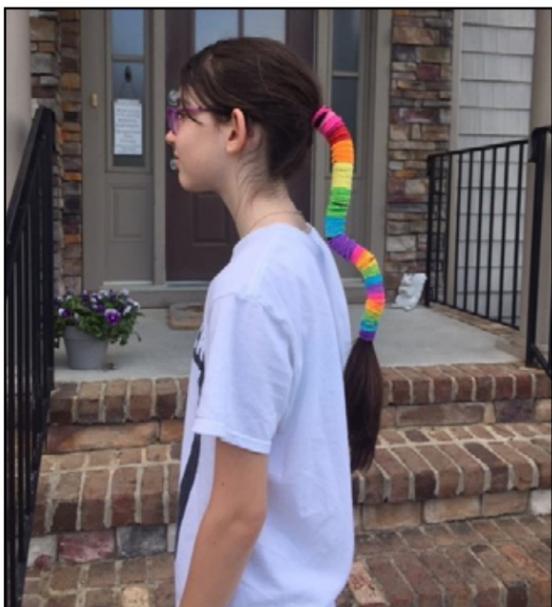
## Wake Forest shows off its spirit

The Town of Wake Forest and the Wake Forest Parks, Recreation & Cultural Resources Department invited all Wake Forest families during the week of April 6, to participate in their first-ever "#StayStrongWF Spirit Week."

The fun-filled week was designed for all to show off their imagination and creativity during North

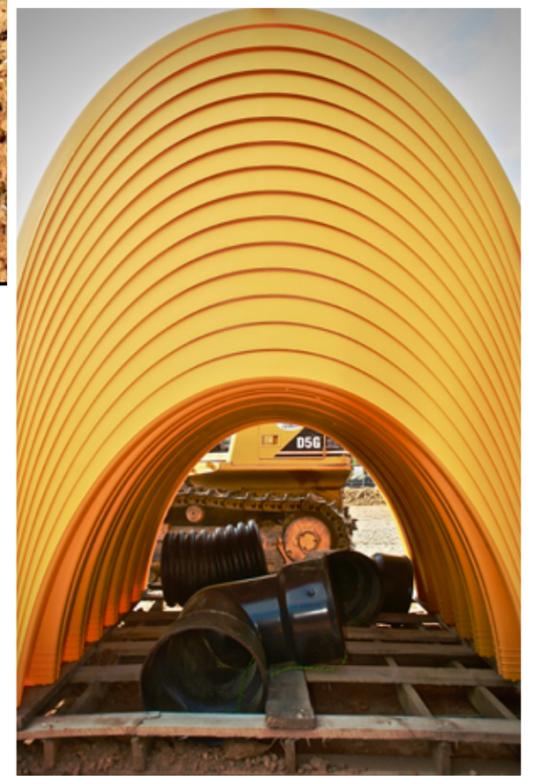
Carolina's Stay at Home Order.

Spirit Week themes were Monday-Super Hero Day, Tuesday-Crazy Hair Day, Wednesday-Build A Fort Day, Thursday-School Spirit Day and Friday-Spring Fever Day. Participants upload photos on the Town of Wake Forest website. Here are a few of the entries. (Editor's note: Spring Fever Day entries and others will be shown in next week's edition of *The White Street Journal* due to publication deadline).





Construction has begun on the Fifth Third Bank in Wake Forest. A site supervisor said due to the Coronavirus outbreak, he had no timeline for the building to be finished. WSJ PHOTOS | KATHY HARRELSO



## Fifth Third Bank begins construction

By **JAY LAMM**  
*editor@wsj30.com*

An Ohio-based financial institution plans to level the playing field with a new branch currently under construction off South Main Street.

Fifth Third Bank has three locations in Raleigh and 52 in North Carolina.

With much of the groundwork already done, a worker on site said this week that he didn't know when the build-

ing would be finished.

"There was a date, but this COVID-19 problem has thrown us off schedule," he said.

The new bank will be at 100 Capcom Ave., fronting South Main Street.

A second branch has been scheduled for Wake Forest also, construction has not started. That branch is to be built in the Wake Forest Crossings Shopping Center.

Fifth Third Bank opened in 1858 and has more than 1,500 branches in the United States.



### Pizza Hut to move

County officials say the Pizza Hut in the Market of Wake Forest shopping center is planning to relocate to Wake Forest Crossing in the old CiCi's Pizza location. CiCi's closed in February. No date is known for Pizza Hut's move.

WSJ PHOTO | JAY LAMM



### Big Lots going in old Food Lion space

Signs are on the windows announcing retailer Big Lots is coming to the old Food Lion space in the Market of Wake Forest shopping center. An electrical crew was working inside the building Monday. Workers said they didn't know when the store was scheduled to open. Calls to Big Lots corporate office were not returned.

WSJ PHOTOS | JAY LAMM



### Sweeties relocates

Sweeties Candy Shop has moved from 143 Wait Ave. to 352 S. White St. in downtown Wake Forest.

**COVID-19 UPDATE** | **WE ARE OPEN & OPERATING DURING REGULAR BUSINESS HOURS FOR FOOD DISTRIBUTION, VOLUNTEERS AND FOOD DISTRIBUTION**

**TRI-AREA MINISTRY: 149 E. HOLDING AVE. WAKE FOREST • 919-515-1111**

**We're open for food pickup on Mondays and Wednesdays and the third Saturday of each month from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m**

**YOU VITAL**

# CDC recommends wearing mask to grocery, drug stores

## FROM WSJ STAFF REPORTS

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has recommended anyone going out in public to wear cloth face coverings, preferred over medical masks since there is such a high demand for those as the Coronavirus continues to infect hundreds in the United States daily. This is a shift in federal guidance reflecting new concerns that the Coronavirus is being spread by infected people who have no symptoms.

Cloth face coverings should:

- fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face;
- be secured with ties or ear loops;
- include multiple layers of fabric;
- allow for breathing without restriction;
- be able to be laundered and machine dried without damage or change to shape.

The CDC recommends wearing cloth

face coverings in public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain (e.g., grocery stores and pharmacies), especially in areas of significant community-based transmission. CDC also advises the use of simple cloth face coverings to slow the spread of the virus and help people who may have the virus and do not know it.

Cloth face coverings fashioned from household items or made at home from common materials at low cost can be used as an additional, voluntary public health measure.

Cloth face coverings should not be placed on young children under age 2, anyone who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance, according to the CDC.

The cloth face coverings recommended are not surgical masks or N-95 respirators. Those are critical supplies that must continue to be reserved for healthcare workers and other medical first responders, as recommended by current CDC guidance.



Wake Forest resident Robert Johnson takes the CDC's recent recommendation to wear a mask in public to heart. Johnson, above, wears his mask while traveling through town on Sunday. WSJ PHOTO | KATHY HARRELSON

## Obituaries

Tributes for April 1-8, 2020

### Thomas Cristos, 61

Tom Cristos, known by loved ones as Tommy, 61, of Wake Forest, NC went home to be with his Lord on Wednesday, April 1, 2020. He was born in Arlington, VA the son of a police officer, the late Nicholas Michael and hospital nurse, Hilda Zapata Cristos. He was also preceded in death by his uncle John Michael Cristos and grandparents Michael Nicholas and Katherine Kokkinakis Cristos and Eugene and Dolores Torres Zapata.



THOMAS CRISTO

He grew up in the Westlawn neighborhood of Falls Church, VA and had many fond memories of his childhood and school friends there. He graduated with a B.S. degree in Medical Technology and M.S. degree in Organic Chemistry from Old Dominion University in Norfolk, VA and a Ph.D. in Organic Chemistry from the University of Delaware in Newark. He worked for 30 years in the field of drug research and discovery in the pharmaceutical industry for Wyeth-Ayerst, DuPont Merck, Eli Lilly and Icagen. Tom's work resulted in 15 U.S. patents and numerous publications and presentations. He was a member of the American Chemical Society, and reviewer and editor for a number of scientific publications including the Journal of Organic Chemistry. After retirement, Tom became a Certified Senior Advisor and owned an in-home adult care franchise where he loved the friends he made in the clients he served. In most recent years, his company, New Life Furniture Design and Repair allowed him to utilize his creative side.

Tom was known for his kind and gentle spirit and was a man with many diverse interests, hobbies and talents. He packed a lot into his time on earth (and the house and garage) as he was active as a youth in sports, played on many adult recreational softball teams, was a certified SCUBA diver, hunter, boater, golfer, fisherman, motorcycle and dirt bike rider, artist, writer, photographer, Cub Scout leader, youth baseball coach and youth Praise band leader, carpenter, home repair man, Chemistry tutor, and dog lover. Tom enjoyed perfecting his recipes for pulled pork barbecue and beef jerky, growing vegetables, attending his kids and grand girls' school and sports events, setting up the train set at Christmas and playing the Greek egg cracking game at Easter, camping, travel, military history, and rock and roll music. He played the guitar and was a drummer in the high school marching band and church Praise band. He grew up in the Greek Orthodox Church but became a Presbyterian after marriage and served as an Elder at Oxford Presbyterian Church in PA and an Elder and Deacon at Wake Forest Presbyterian Church (WFPC). He volunteered with mission projects, Habitat for Humanity, portrayed a Wise Man in WFPC's Walk through Bethlehem for many years, and was active in Sunday school and Bible study with his good friends Tim Tinker and Will Dahmen.

He was especially thankful to Dr. Jorge Obando, Dr. Matthew Kappus and the transplant and oncology teams at Duke University Hospital in Durham and Raleigh, NC for enabling him to have 3 more God given years with his family and friends. He passed at home in the presence of his family after a brief illness.

Tommy is survived by his high school sweetheart and best friend, Sandy Shuman Cristos, whom he was married to for 36 years; his children whom he loved deeply, daughter Alexandra Nicole Wilmoth ("Allie", her dad called her "Baby") and husband Dustin; granddaughters, Naomi Grace and Lillian Mae; and son Steffen Thomas Cristos ("Buddy") all of Wake Forest; his brother Michael Cristos (whom he loved to laugh with about funny times from their youth) and wife Shawna of Chesterfield, VA; sister Cathy Rudd (who went from the brunt of his teasing to his telephone pal) and husband Randy of Hamilton, VA; aunt Anastasia Christos Vogel (Phillip) of Hudson, FL; cousin Anthony Borra, Jr. of St. Augustine, FL; father-in-law Donald Shuman of Fort Belvoir, VA; sisters-in-law Deanne Shuman, Marla Boulter (Robert) and Monica Boone (Lewis) as well as all his extended family of beloved nieces, nephews and their children of Virginia.

"Because he loves me," says the LORD, "I will rescue him; I will protect him, for he acknowledges my name. He will call upon me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble, I will deliver him and honor him. With long life will I satisfy him and show him my salvation." Psalm 91:14-16

A Celebration of Life service is planned for a later date at Wake Forest Presbyterian Church. Memorial contributions can be made in Tom's name to the WFPC Christian Life Center's fund at 12605 Capital Blvd., Wake Forest, NC 27587.

A service of Bright Funeral Home, 405 S. Main St. Wake Forest, NC 27587.

### William Thomas Martin, 44

Martin, William Thomas (Bill), 44, passed away peacefully on April 5, 2020 after an 18-year battle with Parkinson's disease. He is now at home with his Heavenly Father. A Godly man, he was also a beloved husband, father, and grandfather. Bill was born in Anderson, SC on March 15th, 1936 to the late Jim Ben Martin and the late Onie Dillard Martin, one of 5 children. Bill married his bride of 63 years, Sandra Appy Crittendon, of Calhoun Falls, SC, on February 3rd, 1957. Together they raised their five daughters in an atmosphere of love and nurture, teaching them always to honor and serve the Lord Jesus Christ.



WILLIAM T. MARTIN

Bill began a distinguished career in government service when he joined the USMC in 1953 and rose to the rank of Sergeant. He then served in the Federal Aviation Administration for 38 years, retiring with the rank of GM-15.

In addition to his parents, he is preceded in death by his four siblings, James Martin, Richard Martin, Marion (Mirney) Martin, and Ellen Martin Chrisley. He was also predeceased by a beloved son-in-law, Dr. D. Kevin Bell.

Bill is survived by his wife Sandra and by his five daughters and their spouses: Mindy (Mark) Thompson of Franklinton, NC; Melanie Bell of Wake Forest, NC; Merri (Jim) Schermerhorn of Wake Forest, NC; Mave (Matt) Walter of Tampa, FL, and Michelle Lee of Cary, NC. He is also survived by 16 much-loved grandchildren and numerous extended family members.

Bill and Sandra were dedicated members of Bay Leaf Baptist Church for many years. Due to our current situation with COVID-19, a private graveside family-only funeral will be held at Bay Leaf Baptist Church.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made in his honor to Bay Leaf Baptist Church Missions Fund c/o Bay Leaf Baptist Church, 12200 Bayleaf Church Road, Raleigh, NC 27614 or online at <http://www.bayleaf.org/give> and then select "Give in honor of". Memorial donations can also be made to Tampa Muslim Outreach 218 Bearss Ave. #346, Tampa, FL 33613 or online at <https://tampamuslimoutreach.com/>.

Expressions of sympathy may be viewed or submitted online at [www.brightfunerals.com](http://www.brightfunerals.com) or sent to Sandra Martin, c/o Cadence at Wake Forest 3218 Heritage Trade Dr, Wake Forest, NC 27587.

## Obituary submissions

**Once we have lived a full life, comfort is needed to those left behind after death. The WSJ respects this. Local people should be remembered in a record for generations to come. The WSJ accepts obituaries, at no cost, that describe who your beloved really was. Did he have a best friend to mention? A faithful pet? Did she have the best apple pie ever? In the notice, be free to tell his/her story like is should be. Keep the length to about 750 words. Photos of the deceased with family are welcomed. We will accept one portrait photo and one photo of your choice. Please identify those in the photos as best as possible. Send obituary submissions to [editor@wsj30.com](mailto:editor@wsj30.com).**

### LAMM | CONT'D FROM PAGE 1

tached to. The man in the car survived. My old roommate left behind three small kids and a wife, his high school sweetheart.

I've seen how death can affect people. Some move on and some carry it with them for the rest of their lives.

The house fire that happened Tuesday night, that took the lives of Ella Virginia Smith and her son, Lawrence Williams, would be something that I couldn't see a family member or friend forgetting or getting over anytime soon. But

### Margie Rse Medlin Hudson, 83

Margie Ree Medlin Hudson, 83, of Franklinton passed away on Sunday April 5, 2020 at Franklin Oaks Health & Rehab Center in Louisburg.

She was born in Franklin County the daughter of the late Viola Jackson Medlin and Sterling Medlin. She was preceded in death by a sister; Mary Pounds, brothers; Janus Medlin, Fleming Medlin, Ralph Medlin and David Medlin, and a son-in-law; Ron Phillips.

A private funeral service will be held at the Bright Funeral Home Chapel with Rev. Al Thomas officiating. Burial will be in the Mary's Chapel Baptist Church Cemetery.

Ms. Hudson is survived by her daughters; Joyce Phillips, Tammie Piper and her husband Irvin, Kimberly Murray and her husband Jamie all of Franklinton, a son; Dale Pleasants of Morganton, and a sister; Faye Wilson of Franklinton, 2 grandsons, 4 granddaughters, 4 great granddaughters and 4 great grandsons.

A service of Bright Funeral Home & Cremation Center, Wake Forest, NC.



MARGIE HUDSON

### Winifred A. Mead, 94

A memorial service will be held at a later time in Tennessee.



WINIFRED A. MEAD

### Beatrice M. Noland, 82,

Beatrice M. Noland, 82, passed away on Tuesday April 7, 2020 at her home. She was born in Franklin County the daughter of the late Hettie Jones Denton and Buster Denton.

She was preceded in death by her husband; Bob Noland a son Randall Noland and a sister; Emmie Rose Straughn.

A private funeral service will be held in the Chapel of Bright Funeral Home. Burial will follow in the Rolesville Baptist Church Cemetery.

Bea is survived by her sisters; Dee Mitchell, Frances Bass and Helen Edwards, brothers; Richard Denton and J.R. Denton, several nieces and nephews.



BEATRICE M. NOLAND

after talking with some family members and listening to the impact the two had on their large family's lives, the grieving will eventually come to an end and the life lessons taught by Smith and Williams will bring comfort and wisdom as each family member carries on.

When my time comes to face the loss of a family member, I hope I can do it with the strength the members of the Smith and Williams families had standing on Walnut Avenue Tuesday night after a day of tragically losing two patriarchs of their large family and extended family of friends.



**Marie Kelly goes into the Wake Forest Walmart on Sunday, sporting a mask for protection against spreading the Coronavirus while shopping for necessary items.**  
**WSJ PHOTOS | KATHY HARRELSON**



**Walmart in Wake Forest is closed at one entrance, with the grocery entrance open but blocked off by shopping carts and police tape to keep a limit on how many customers are in the store at one time.**  
**WSJ PHOTOS | KATHY HARRELSON**

**RETAIL | CONT'D FROM PAGE 1**

items, she said. Many others coming and going wore no protection at all — despite the recommendation from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention last week for people going out in public to wear face coverings. As one man approached the line with his son — neither wearing masks — he said, “You have got to be kidding me,” looking at the divided entranceway. They both returned to the man’s truck and drove away. Families of up to five, with young chil-

dren and babies not covered, were coming out of the store with carts full of household goods. One family had a TV in a cart. Some had groceries. Among those going into the store from around 5 p.m. to 6 p.m., fewer than half were wearing protective masks or gloves. Walmart, along with Harris Teeter, Costco and Target, have put limits into effect in the last week to 10 days, but Cooper on Thursday issued a restrictive executive order that will blanket “essential businesses” across the state to help slow the spread of the virus.

During a briefing Tuesday, April 7, Cooper applauded businesses that have limited the number of customers in their stores at one time, but he said then and Thursday it is not enough. He said projections this week reveal social distancing is working, falling short of saying the statewide stay-at-home order would be lifted when it expires on April 29. “We’re asking people that, at least through April where our order is in place, to obey those orders and put us in the best possible place we can be to get ready to make decisions about what we’re going to do in May,”

he said. On Thursday he said the executive order also mandates that stores must mark 6 feet of distance where people might gather, such as in checkout lines or outside stores waiting to enter, and to perform “frequent environmental cleaning and routine disinfecting.” Noncompliance could bring a Class 2 misdemeanor citation from local law enforcement Cooper said. “This should make shopping safer for customers and retail employees and keep stores from becoming flashpoints for virus transmission,” Cooper said.



**Ella Smith with her husband, James. Smith’s husband passed away about four years ago.**  
**PHOTO | CONTRIBUTED FROM FAMILY**



**Two people were killed Tuesday in an early-morning house fire. Here, the front of the house is gutted, roped off by police tape on Tuesday night. Around 3:30 a.m. Wednesday, the house fire reignited.**  
**WSJ PHOTO | KATHY HARRELSON**

**ELLA | CONT'D FROM PAGE 1**

both wrapping the corner lot. Muffled voices, car doors opening and closing, and reminiscent laughter swirled in the air, sounding even a block away. As headlights bounced shadows throughout the hollows of the front of the house — mercilessly blackened and charred, with frame posts broken off at the tops like twigs jutting into the night sky — tears of disbelief filled Renee Person’s eyes. They moistened her Coronavirus surgical mask that was barely hanging on. “All of us,” she said, “grew up in this house. I don’t think anyone around here has lived in a house for that long. All of us loved her. She was my stronghold. I don’t know what I will do without her.” Person, known in the neighborhood as “Fat Baby,” said the main memory about her grandmother will be her Christian faith and her endless commitment to prayer, something she instilled in everyone she knew. Smith started the day with thanks and prayer and ended it with asking for forgiveness in prayer, the family members said. With an iPad tucked under her arm or in her hand most all the time, Smith would read the Bible from hours and hours of shop-one who came through her

doors, engaging them in worship and touting the importance of reaching out to God, her great grandson, Charles Black, said. “She would pray for everybody, and she would pray about all things,” he said. “The memories I will have are of her going to church and reading the Bible. She prayed for me, taught me how to pray every day and for everything. I even pray before a test. (He is a student at Wake Forest High School.) Not a lot of kids will do that, but that’s how I was brought up. You didn’t pray only in hard times. You prayed all the time.” Williams had been staying with Smith for a few weeks, Person said. The entire family would take turns staying with her and caring for her, and Williams had decided only recently to move in permanently. Most of the large family — which extends to 70-plus, including great, great grandchildren — live in Wake Forest and the Wake Forest area. “She was our matriarch,” Person said. One of her favorite trips was going to Roses in Zebulon, so much so that she would spend many Saturdays there all day. There was a standing joke that no one wanted to get persuaded by Smith to go to Roses because it was destined to be hours and hours of shop-

Still, everyone would jump at the chance to have dinner with her at her favorite restaurant, Briggs, in Wake Forest.

**The Fire**

The home caught fire around 3:20 a.m. on Tuesday. In an odd twist, it reignited Wednesday morning, almost 24 hours later, destroying any hopes of recovering keepsakes and taking out the back end of the structure. A police officer was watching the home at the time to prevent looting. Fire Chief E. Barrett said this week the fire is under investigation by the Wake Forest Police Department and his department. The morning of the first fire, Rumsey, said his mother awakened him by phone and told him to go to the house because it was on fire. He first thought it was a small fire, as he approached from the back side. He soon realized the front of the house and porch, where the fire has been determined initially to have started, were engulfed with flames. “I threw a chair through the back window. There was so much smoke and heat that I could not get in,” he said. “I ... yelled out for them to wake up and get out, but it was too late. I knew from what I saw that they were not coming out of there.” Smith and Williams were taken out, each unconscious,



**Further damage was done to the structure after the house fire reignited.**  
**WSJ PHOTO | KATHY HARRELSON**

by the Wake Forest Fire Department. It took more than 15 minutes to put out the fire, and firefighters tried to revive the pair. “They did a really good job,” Rumsey said of the life-saving efforts. “... More than I would have expected them to do. They did not give up.” Smith could not be revived, Rumsey said. His uncle was revived but passed away later in the day at Wake Med in the trauma center, he said. Williams is remembered as a kind man who was eager to help his mother. “We grew up together,

er,” said Wayne Parker of Wake Forest, recalling how “Grandma Ella” had often “straightened” him out when he got out of line in life. Parker had served in the Army at Fort Bragg with one of Williams’ brothers. “He (Williams) was over-all a good guy — a true family man,” Parker said. Smith’s 87th birthday would have been Friday, April 10. “I was joking with her the other day, asking her if she was going to be 88 this year. She laughed and set me straight quick,” Person said. Typically, the family would put on a big birthday

celebration, but this year, with the Coronavirus’ restrictions, they had planned something different. “We were going to do something she wanted and loved ... a big breakfast,” Black said. “She loved to cook a big breakfast ... the works, grits, bacon, sausage, eggs, gravy, biscuits, country ham,” he smiled, recalling. “It was what she asked for, and we were going to do it for her.” The meal would have been topped by his great grandmother’s blessing, he said. “... And that’s something that will take me through my entire life,” he said.