

Autumn falls into color at Grandfather Mountain

LINVILLE, NC (September 26, 2019) -- As the Blue Ridge Mountains begin to burst with fall color, Grandfather Mountain invites leaf-lookers to see the brilliant change from one of the best leaf-looking destinations in the South. Grandfather Mountain is home to myriad species of plants and hardwood trees that range from pumpkin-colored beech trees to blood-red sourwoods and rusty red oaks.

For a surefire glimpse of the autumnal brilliance, leaf-lookers can partake in Grandfather's Fall Color Ramble, a series of guided walks through the mountain's most colorful locations. These easygoing rambles, led by members of the park's naturalist staff, give guests an opportunity to learn more about color change and explore the species of plants and trees native to Grandfather Mountain.



Participants will become more familiar with tree identification and will be able to ask questions about the annual color-changing phenomenon.

"Our goal is to inspire inquiry," said Amy Renfranz, director of education and natural resources for the Grandfather Mountain Stewardship Foundation, the nonprofit organization that owns and operates the Linville, N.C., nature park. "During the ramble, we want our guests to explore more and learn more, so they can fully appreciate the beauty they're seeing." *Continued on page 2...*

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mark.jackson@caldwelljournal.com

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**Our Deadline Is On Friday At 5pm
For Next Week's Paper**

Caldwell Journal

Caldwell Journal Weather

Thursday (26th): Clouds giving way to some sun.

High 89 Low 57

Precipitation: 2%

Friday (27th): A p.m. shower or t-storm.

High 85 Low 64

Precipitation: 55%

Saturday (28th): A t-storm in spots.

High 86 Low 64

Precipitation: 40%

Sunday (29th): A t-storm in spots.

High 90 Low 66

Precipitation: 40%

Monday (30th): A p.m. shower or t-storm.

High 84 Low 65

Precipitation: 55%

Tuesday (1st): Partly sunny; humid.

High 89 Low 61

Precipitation: 25%

Wednesday (2nd): Sunshine; very warm
& humid.

High 88 Low 62

Precipitation: 25%

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Continued from page 1...

The walks will be offered daily, Oct. 1 to 11, at 1 p.m. and are included with admission. Since the starting location will vary day to day, those planning to participate should inquire at the park's entrance gate upon arrival.

The Fall Color Ramble culminates with a celebration of fall color on Saturday, Oct. 12, featuring nature programs for all ages, including leaf-printing for children and guided hikes for guests of all ages and abilities.

"If you're interested in learning about the natural phenomenon of fall colors and the changing of leaves, you're in luck," Renfranz said.



Hikes will be offered throughout the day, starting at the Nature Museum. The park will also host special guests from the scientific community, including Dr. Howie Neufeld, professor of biology at Appalachian State University and North Carolina's esteemed "Fall Color Guy."

"The ramble will help bring to light why fall color is such a spectacular time of year," Renfranz said.

Those unable to attend the ramble needn't worry, though. All throughout October and possibly beyond, the mountain will offer an ample display of fall color — even after the local leaves have peaked.

"You're essentially able to see the entire season unfold before your eyes," said Frank Ruggiero, director of marketing and communications for the Grandfather Mountain Stewardship Foundation. "Autumn always look spectacular from a mile high."

In addition to the programs offered inside the park in October, fresh fall color photos are posted throughout the month on the mountain's website and social media, including Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

The not-for-profit Grandfather Mountain Stewardship Foundation strives to inspire conservation of the natural world by helping guests explore, understand and value the wonders of Grandfather Mountain. For more information, call 800-468-7325, or visit www.grandfather.com to plan a trip.

Page one photo by Skip Sickler | Grandfather Mountain
Stewardship Foundation

Page two photo by Jim Morton | Grandfather Mountain
Stewardship Foundation

Residents Encouraged to Watch Out for Scam Calls

LENOIR, NC (September 23, 2019) -- The Caldwell County Sheriff's Office has received an increase in reports from residents who are receiving scam calls. Some calls appear to come from phone numbers assigned to Caldwell County government offices. With others, callers claim to be with the IRS, Social Security Administration, or Publishers Clearing House.

Remember, never send money or give out personal information in response to an unexpected request — whether it comes as a text, a phone call, or an email. The IRS and the Social Security Administration will not ask for Social Security numbers and neither organization will ask for any kind of payment over the phone.

Residents are also encouraged to make a report of scammer claiming to be with the IRS online with the Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration at www.tigta.gov or by calling 800-366-4484.

Lenoir man sentenced to prison for 2016 stabbings

LENOIR, NC (September 25, 2019) -- A Lenoir man was issued a prison sentence of 18 to 22 years for the 2016 stabbings of his 2-year-old son and the child's mother.

William Henry Pitts, 46, of Lenoir, was given the active term of incarceration by the Honorable James W. Morgan, Superior Court Judge from Cleveland County, during Caldwell County Superior Court on Monday, September 23, 2019.

Pitts entered guilty pleas to charges of attempted first-degree murder and assault with a deadly weapon with intent to kill inflicting serious injury.

He will serve his prison sentence in the custody of the North Carolina Division of Adult Corrections.

The assaults occurred on March 2, 2016, stemming from a domestic dispute when the defendant stabbed an adult female victim and the toddler.

Pitts and the mother of the child had been arguing throughout the day when he physically assaulted her.

The mother and child both recovered from their injuries. Unfortunately, the mother later died in an unrelated car crash.

Chris Everhart led the investigation for the Caldwell County Sheriff's Office with assistance from Shelly Hartley. Nancy Lee prosecuted the case for the District Attorney's Office.

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Caldwell County Health Department After Hours Clinic

LENOIR, NC (September 23, 2019) -- The Caldwell County Health Department will now offer extended after hours to the public to help better meet the needs of our community. This will be offered every Tuesday starting on October 22nd, 2019 with the exception of December 24th and December 31st. The time frame for the extended hours will be from 5:00pm-7:00pm and will be by appointment only. Services that will be offered during these new hours will include: adult health physicals, family planning, STD visits, and sick or preventative care appointments for adults and children over the age of two.

When arriving for your appointment please be sure to bring a photo ID, insurance card and proof of income (which can be one of the following: W2 form, most recent pay stub, or a bank statement.) The health department will bill all forms of insurance including: Medicare, Medicaid and Commercial Insurance guarantors. Clients presenting with third party health insurance coverage where copayments are required shall be subject to collection of the required copayment at the time of service.

To schedule an appointment and take advantage of this opportunity please contact the Health Department at 828-426-8400.



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CCC&TI Announces Reception and Reading for Latest Edition of Branches

HUDSON, NC (September 19, 2019) -- Caldwell Community College and Technical Institute has announced that the 23rd Edition of Branches, the college's literary and arts magazine will be released in October. The publication features prose, poetry and artwork from both CCC&TI students and members of the community.

More than 130 literature and art entries were received from students and writers and artists in the community. The final publication includes 16 written selections and 38 fine art images.

Award winners will be named in the poetry, prose and artwork categories at upcoming reading and reception events planned to celebrate the release of the publication. On Tuesday, Oct. 1, at 5:30 p.m. a reception will be held in the Learning Resource Center (Library) on the Caldwell Campus of CCC&TI. On Thursday, Oct. 3, a reception will be held in Room 106 of the Watauga Occupational Training Facility on the CCC&TI Watauga Campus at 5:30 p.m. Artwork from the magazine will be on display and several authors of published pieces will be on hand for readings at both events. The readings and presentation of awards will begin at 6 p.m. at both events.

The CCC&TI Foundation helped fund the project. Providing direction for the project was the Branches Editorial Team, which includes Jessica Chapman, Heather Barnett, DeAnna Chester, Brad Prestwood and Linda Watts as Literary Editors; Laura Aultman, Alison Beard and Tom Thielemann as the Visual Arts Editors; and Ron Wilson as Production Editor.

Copies of the magazine will be available at each of the receptions and on CCC&TI's Caldwell and Watauga Campuses.



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Stein: The Survivor Act Will Put Rapists Behind Bars

RALEIGH, NC (September 19, 2019) -- Attorney General Josh Stein, joined by bill sponsors Reps. Carson Smith and Billy Richardson today announced that Gov. Roy Cooper signed into law the Standing Up for Rape Victims Act, or Survivor Act, which provides \$6 million to test sexual assault kits and requires local law enforcement agencies to submit sexual assault kits for testing within 45 days of the kit's collection. Doing so will deliver justice to more victims and prevent backlogs from occurring in the future.

Legislation signed by Gov. Roy Cooper and sponsored by Sens. Warren Daniel, Danny Britt, and Floyd McKissick and Reps. Jamie Boles, Mary Belk, Billy Richardson, and Carson Smith addresses sexual assault kit backlog...

"Each sexual assault kit represents a tragic event in a person's life," said Attorney General Josh Stein. "The survivors of these horrific crimes deserve the strongest possible response from North Carolina. The Survivor Act is just that – meaningful and comprehensive legislation that will both eliminate the backlog we currently have and prevent any backlogs from developing again in the future. Already, we are testing these older kits and getting results. There is no doubt that implementing the Survivor Act will put rapists behind bars."

The legislation also requires law enforcement agencies to establish review teams to survey their entire untested SAECK inventory to determine a priority submission order for testing. The review team will determine the order based upon a series of factors such as investigative value and CODIS potential. Once determined, the agency will notify the State Crime Lab of its prioritization. The Crime Lab will then work with each local law enforcement agency to eliminate its untested inventory in priority order.

Many agencies have already begun this process. Since Jan. 2018, we have tested 904 sexual assault kits. Of those, 182 have resulted in a hit – which is about 20 percent.

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Caldwell JAM to Start in 4 Locations on October 7, 2019

LENOIR, NC (September 20, 2019) -- Caldwell Junior Appalachian Musicians (JAM), a program of the Caldwell Arts Council, offers school students ages 8 to 17 the opportunity to learn traditional Appalachian style old time music by singing and playing by ear. Children can choose old-time Guitar, Fiddle, Mandolin or Banjo. As part of learning to play, students will have various opportunities to play live in our community and will have the goal of performing at Christmas and end of year concerts.

JAM lessons run for 30 weeks and will not be held on holidays, early release days or when school is dismissed early or cancelled due to weather. The program will begin October 7, 2019 at four locations and will operate as a weekly after school program during the school year. Classes will start immediately after school lets out from 2:30pm-3:30pm at Granite Falls Elementary, Happy Valley Elementary and Collettsville Elementary. Classes taught at the HUB Station will run from 4:00 pm-5:00pm on Wednesdays.

Students are encouraged to register early, as class sizes are limited to a minimum 3 students and a maximum of 10. Prepayment is required. We have found that children love practicing with parents, so those who are interested can enroll at \$10 per class. Adults must bring their own instrument.

To register, visit the Caldwell Arts Council website at www.caldwellarts.com/174-caldwell-jam/, and be sure to select your instrument and school/class location. To ensure that JAM is offered to a broad range of students, tuition is based upon student's lunch status in the Caldwell County school system. Class costs are as follows: Full Lunch is \$10/class or \$300 for the year and is payable at \$150/half year; Reduced Lunch is \$5/class or \$150 for the year, payable at \$75/half year; and Free Lunch is \$3/class or \$90/year, payable at \$45/half year. In addition, rental instruments are available from the Arts Council for \$15 for the entire school year.

The Caldwell Arts Council presents the arts in all its forms to Caldwell County residents and visitors. Its gallery and administrative office is located at 601 College Avenue in Lenoir and is open free to the public Tuesday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. on Saturdays. More information about the programs and services provided by the Arts Council, can be found online at www.caldwellarts.com or by calling 828-754-2486.





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U3198c, 3/19

Tim Hawkins: School Board Member and Friend Passes Away

LENOIR, NC (September 19, 2019) -- The school district mourns the loss of Tim Hawkins, school board member, friend to many, and advocate for the Caldwell County Schools. After battling illness, Hawkins passed away this morning with his wife Shannon by his side.

Hawkins served on the Board of Education for 17 years, beginning his first term in 2002 and serving as Vice Chairman in 2010.

"He was committed to the work and in his last days, he continued to attend Board work sessions and meetings," said Superintendent Donald Phipps. "But to him, the role of Dad was just as important as serving on the Caldwell County Board of Education."

"He attended all his children's school events, and he was very proud of all their accomplishments," said Duane Knight, school board member. "He did a good job in juggling his duties as a husband, father, businessman, and school board member. As a CPA (Certified Public Accountant), anytime we had a financial question we turned to him."

During his tenure, Hawkins served successfully on the Finance Committee and in all capacities of a school board member. "He was my go-to person when I first came on the Board," said Teresa Branch, Vice-Chairman of the Board of Education. "Tim was a kind, caring, and gentle soul - the perfect example of a southern gentleman. He always remained cool, calm, and thoughtful, and he always made decisions with the mindset of what's best for students."

School board member Joe Sims added, "He was a great leader in our school system and a huge advocate for our schools. He always wanted to do what was best for students, staff, and schools. As a colleague and a friend, he will be deeply missed. I'm honored to have been his colleague and friend over the past six years."

"Tim was a wonderful person who raised a beautiful family," said Ann Edwards, school board member. "One of my last memories of Tim was him sitting beside me at a Board meeting and proudly showing me a video on his phone of his daughter singing while his wife played the piano. As a great father, he cared deeply about our school students and demonstrated this caring in his decision-making. I will miss Tim and was proud to work beside him as a Board member."

"When it came time for the school board meeting to be adjourned, we always looked at Tim, and he always made the final motion to adjourn," said Duane Knight.

He adjourned his last meeting on Monday, September 9, 2019.

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Flagship Healthcare Properties Completes Development of Ambulatory Surgery Center in Caldwell County

CHARLOTTE, NC (September 19, 2019) -- Flagship Healthcare Properties (Flagship) is pleased to announce the completion and delivery of a 20,995-square-foot ambulatory surgery center (ASC) at RiverCrest Medical Park in Granite Falls, N.C. Development of the property, located at 180 Riverbend Drive immediately adjacent to the existing RiverCrest medical office building, began in July 2018.

The ASC was built exclusively for Prime Surgical Suites, an affiliate of Caldwell UNC Healthcare. Prime Surgical Suites is devoted to orthopedic procedures, including joint, spinal, foot, ankle and sports-related surgeries. Capable of eventually accommodating four operating rooms, the ASC will initially feature three operating rooms and one procedure room.

"It has been a pleasure working with representatives from Prime Surgical Suites and Caldwell UNC Healthcare to bring this project to life. We want to thank our contractor, Keach Construction, and architect, Clark Paterson Lee, along with all of our valued team members who made the vision possible," said Thorn Baccich, vice president of development at Flagship Healthcare Properties. "We are proud to have played an important role in delivering a state-of-the-art healthcare facility that will benefit residents of Caldwell County. We look forward to the next opportunity to help our health system and provider clients improve care within the populations they serve."

A ribbon-cutting ceremony was held on Sept. 4 to celebrate the opening of the facility. Prime Surgical Center physicians and staff and Caldwell UNC Healthcare executives were in attendance, as well as Flagship's CEO Charles Campbell and Property Manager Kristen Reese. An open house event following the ribbon-cutting ceremony included a live demonstration of the NAVIO Surgical System for robotic-assisted total knee replacement.

"We are excited to be the first orthopedic ambulatory surgery center in the region and to be able to provide needed services to our community to live healthy lifestyles," said Teresa Burwell, MHR, BSN, RN, NE-BC, director of Prime Surgical Suites. "Flagship has been an excellent development partner through every step of the process."

The building is owned by Flagship Healthcare Trust, Inc. (Flagship REIT), Flagship's private real estate investment trust that owns clinical healthcare assets in the United States. Flagship will also provide property and asset management services for the facility.

The construction lender for the project was Atlantic Union Bank.

For more information about other services Flagship offers, visit <https://flagshiphp.com/>.



Upcoming Caldwell Senior Center Events

LENOIR, NC (September 20, 2019) -- Here are the upcoming Caldwell Senior Center events for the month of October...

Friday, October 4

VAYA Health's Geriatric and Adult Mental Health Specialty Team will be at the Caldwell Senior Center to present two FREE programs. At 10:00am they will talk about "Depression: From Surviving to Thriving" followed by "Anti-Depressant Medications" at 11:00am. Community individuals, agency staff serving the aged, caregivers and anyone interested in learning about these topics are encouraged to attend. Please call 758-2883 to register. The Senior Center is a United Way participating agency.

Tuesday, October 8

David Hudson with Hudson Estate & Financial Consulting will be at the Senior Center to give a FREE program about planning your estate for a lifetime and beyond at 3:30 PM on Oct. 8th. Many people don't understand the consequences of not having a will, don't know the cost of legal documents, don't know a good attorney or don't understand legal language. Come learn how to formulate a great estate plan. Please register at (828) 758-2883. The Caldwell Senior Center is a United Way participating agency.

Friday, October 11

The Senior Center will host a FREE Medicare 101 "The Basics" class at 10:00am on Oct. 11th. The class will give you a better understanding of the Medicare basics, what it covers, and what you may need. This class will benefit anyone new to Medicare. Space is limited. Please call 758-2883 to register. The Caldwell Senior Center is a United Way participating agency.

Friday, October 11

If you would like to learn how to properly operate a fire extinguisher, join CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) at the Senior Center for this FREE program at 1:00 PM on Oct. 11th. Call 758-2883 to register. The Caldwell Senior Center is a United Way participating agency.

Friday, October 11

Do you like to create handmade items? The Senior Crafters are holding a special afternoon craft class on October 11th from 2:00-4:00 at the Caldwell Senior Center. Anyone is invited to take part of this FREE creative time. Please register at (828) 758-2883. The Caldwell Senior Center is a United Way participating agency.

Friday, Oct. 11

Caldwell County Health Department will be giving flu shots at the Senior Center at 3:00pm on Oct. 11th. You will need to register and come a few minutes early to complete the consent form. Don't forget to bring your Medicare card. Please register by calling (828) 758-2883. The Caldwell Senior Center is a United Way participating agency.

Monday, October 14

Have you wondered how to watch what you eat and figure out what you are actually eating? The Caldwell Co. Health Dept. will offer this FREE nutrition program at the Senior Center from 3:00-4:00pm to teach how to read food labels, about nutrition in TV dinners, lunch meat and other processed foods and give you low fat & low sugar options. They will also be discussing food preparation and clean up! Call 758-2883 to register. The Caldwell Senior Center is a United Way participating agency.

Upcoming Caldwell Senior Center Events

Thursday, October 17

Caldwell Partnership for Life's Journey is starting a new Caregiver Support Group to build a support system with people who understand. It is a time to share information and coping strategies, talk about feelings and concerns and learn about community resources. It is held on the 3rd Thursday of each month from 6:00-7:30pm at the Caldwell Senior Center. Dinner will be provided by Hickory Falls Health and Rehabilitation. Please register by calling (828) 758-2883. The Caldwell Senior Center is a United Way participating agency.

Friday, October 18

Are you or a loved one living with COPD? If so, please join Brandi Newell, FNP-C, for this FREE program from 10:00-11:00am on Oct. 18th to learn about things you can do to manage symptoms, reduce exacerbations and breathe easier. Please register by calling (828) 758-2883. The Caldwell Senior Center is a United Way participating agency.

Friday, October 18

The Better Breather's Club® will meet on October 18th at 11:00am at the Caldwell Senior Center. This is a local support group that offers patient-centered, and community-based educational opportunities to persons with chronic lung diseases especially COPD, but also asthma, idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis [IPF], lung cancer and other chronic lung diseases. Family, friends and support persons are welcome. Volunteers facilitate the groups and work with a Lung Association staff member to provide the service. Please register at (828) 758-2883. The Caldwell Senior Center is a United Way of Caldwell County Agency.

Friday, October 18

Are you looking for a part time job? Georgianna Bland will present a FREE program at 1:00pm on working for the 2020 US Census. There are all kinds of jobs, great pay, flexible hours, weekly pay and paid training. If interested, please register by calling 758-2883. The Caldwell Senior Center is a United Way participating agency.

Monday, October 21

Are you a homeowner and want more information on reverse mortgages? Sarah Stamey, Aging Specialist/Reverse Mortgage Counselor, with the Western Piedmont Area Council on Aging will present a FREE program from 3:00-4:30pm at the Senior Center. You will learn about what a reverse mortgage is, eligibility, how much can be borrowed and what payment options are available to you. Please register at (828) 758-2883. The Caldwell Senior Center is a United Way participating agency.

Friday, October 25

The Caldwell Co. Dept. of Social Services (DSS) receives and evaluates reports of abuse, neglect and exploitation of older adults as required by law. Do you know when and how to make a report? Join Beverly Ruppard with the Adult Services Team at DSS for this FREE program at the Senior Center at 10:00am on Oct. 25th as she discusses the basics of Adult Protective Services (APS). She will explain the criteria of being a disabled adult, allegations and if the person is in need of protection. Please register at 758-2883. (The Caldwell Senior Center is a United Way participating agency.)

Mountain Grove Church is hosting Sandi Patty and Sheilia Walsh for a Women's Conference on November 3 from 7:00-10:00pm. Tickets are available at www.SandiAndSheila.com.

Hunting From a Tree Stand This Season? Wildlife Commission Encourages Safe Practices

RALEIGH, NC (September 18, 2019) -- Since the 2017 hunting season, seven hunters in North Carolina have lost their lives in a tree stand incident. As deer season begins, the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission reminds hunters to follow safety guidelines when hunting from a tree stand.

"Tree stand accidents continue to be the leading cause of injury to hunter's year in and year out," said Chet Clark, the Commission's recruitment, retention and reactivation (R3) manager. "The majority of these accidents can be traced back to a lack of precaution, such as failing to use a fall-arrest system or not following the manufacturer's recommended safety procedures."

The Commission's hunter safety education campaign, Home From the Hunt, and the Tree Stand Safety Awareness Foundation offer these tree stand safety recommendations:

Prepping Your Tree Stand

- Before use, check the stand's belts, chains, bolts and attachment cords for damage and wear. Replace them, if necessary.
- Ensure you do not exceed the stand manufacturer's maximum height or weight limits.
- Purchase a full-body safety harness as part of a fall-arrest system.

Tree Stand Set Up

- Let someone know where you are setting up your stand ahead of time.
- Select a healthy, straight tree for your tree stand.
- Have another person assist with setting up the stand.

Using Your Tree Stand

- Always wear and utilize your harness and its tree tether to stay connected to the tree from the time you leave the ground to the time you return to the ground.
- Maintain three points of contact, as most falls occur when climbing up or down.
- When climbing or descending, use a line-man's belt and/or lifeline.
- Raise and lower equipment using a haul line – Never carry anything as you climb.
- Bring an emergency signal device, such as a cell phone or a whistle.

Hunters can review a free tree stand safety course online. For more information on tree stand safety, visit the Tree Stand Safety Awareness Foundation webpage. For information on the Hunter Education Program, hunting seasons and Hunting Heritage Apprentice Permits, visit ncwildlife.org or call 919-707-0031. (Photo Credit: Missy McGaw)



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(Granite Drug Center)

202 Harper Avenue NW • Lenoir, NC 28645
(828) 726-9023
(Crossroad Shopping Center)

