

66TH ANNUAL ROBBINS

FARMERS DAY

CELEBRATION



THE PILOT

Sunday, August 1, 2021

AUGUST 5 - 7, 2021

66th Annual ROBBINS FARMERS DAY PARADE

Robbins, North Carolina
August 5-7, 2021



Wagon Master Robert Hussey

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FARMERS DAY 2021

Farmers Day began life as a small celebration of Robbins' agricultural roots.

Now in its 66th year, the event has grown into a weekend-long bash that brings thousands of people to downtown Robbins each

August.

This special section is your guide to the upcoming festival, which runs from Aug. 5 to Aug. 7. On these pages, you'll also find stories about the history and culture of Robbins.

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WAGON MASTER LEADS THE WAY

For 3 Generations, Hussey Family Has Ruled the Reins

BY JAYMIE BAXLEY

The Pilot

As the first face to emerge in a merry procession of horse-drawn carriages, the wagon master sets the tone for the Farmers Day parade.

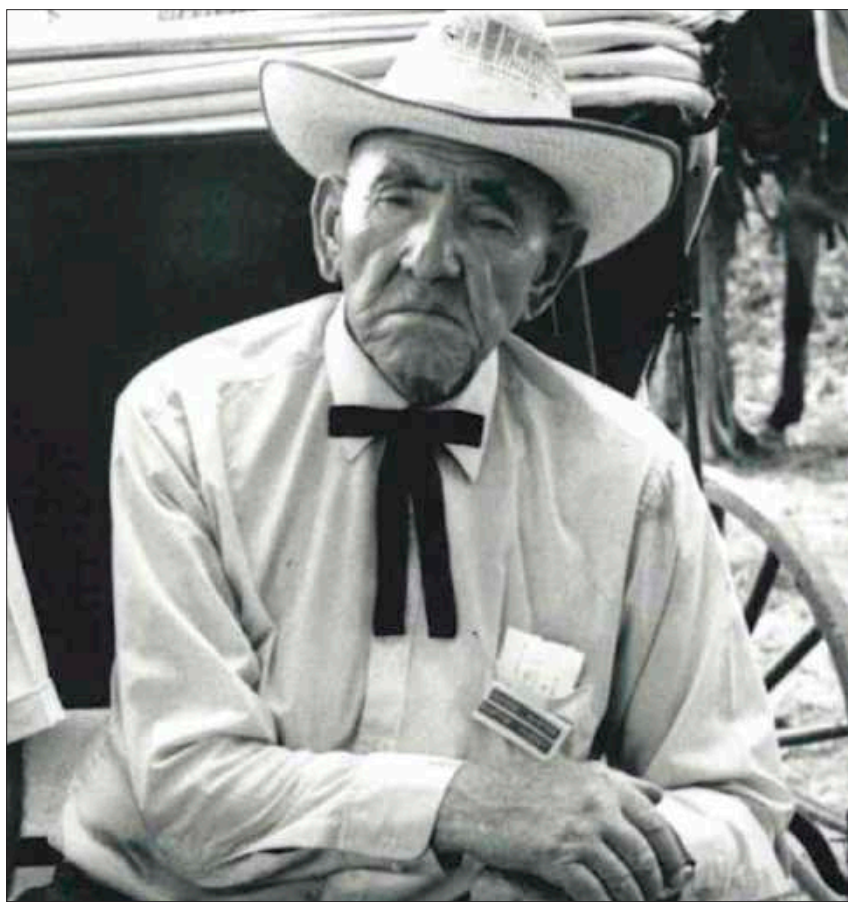
Three generations of men from the Hussey family have served as wagon master since the event launched in 1955. The tradition started with Curtis Hussey, who led the parade for 36 years.

Curtis Hussey organized the inaugural parade with help from his cousins, Branson and Graham Hussey. Being proud members of a rural farming family,

the cousins conceived the event as a way to celebrate the town's agricultural roots.

When Curtis Hussey died in 1992, his son Odell Hussey picked up the reins. Odell Hussey passed the torch to his son Robert Hussey, the current wagon master, in 2018.

The 66th annual parade will begin the same way as the first, with a member of the Hussey family steering his covered buggy through Robbins. Hundreds of riders are expected to participate in the parade, which kicks off at 11 a.m. Saturday on Middleton Street.



FILE PHOTOGRAPHS/The Pilot

Top left: Curtis Hussey was the original wagon master. Bottom left: Odell Hussey served as wagon master for 24 years. Above: Robert Hussey is the current wagon master for the Farmers Day parade.

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FARMERS DAY ACTIVITIES

There's much more to Farmers Day than live music and horse-drawn buggies. Here's a look at some of the other festivities planned for this year's event.

FARMERS DAY 5K

The festival will get off to a running start with a 5K race. Runners and walkers will meet Thursday evening at McDuffie Plumbing Supply on Branson Circle. Registration begins at 6 p.m., with the race starting at 7 p.m. The Farmers Day 5K is sponsored by Foothills Outdoors.

FIREWORKS SHOW

Bring a lawn chair to mid-town and watch pyrotechnics light up the night sky. This year's fireworks display begins at 10:15 p.m. Friday and is being sponsored by Thigpen & Jenkins.

FIREFIGHTER CHALLENGE

Teams of local firefighters will participate in a series of challenges to prove their department has the most skilled members. Registration opens at 6:30 p.m. Friday at Randolph Electric on Middleton Street. The challenge, which is being sponsored by Rhinehart Fire Services, starts at 7 p.m.

TRACTOR PARADE

Farmers will flaunt their favorite tractors during a parade that begins at 4 p.m. Saturday. The best entries will be recognized during an awards ceremony immediately after the hour-long parade. Trophies will be awarded in categories ranging from Best Antique Farm Rig to Best Small Tractor. The parade is sponsored by Thigpen & Jenkins.



TOP LEFT BY TED FITZGERALD/The Pilot; TOP RIGHT BY HANNAH SHARPE/The Pilot; BOTTOM BY DAVID SINCLAIR/The Pilot
 Top left: Carnival rides will be available throughout the festival. Top right: A competitor participates in the firefighter challenge. Bottom: Carnival rides will be available throughout the festival.

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THURSDAY

GOSPEL SHOWCASE

The festival will open with a gospel music showcase featuring the groups Good News and Pioneers. The show is sponsored by Fidelity Bank and Randolph Communications.

When: 6:30 p.m.
Where: Depot Stage

FRIDAY

DAVID LEE JONES

A native of Bethel, David Lee Jones has been making music for more than three decades. The singer-songwriter scored a breakthrough in 2018 when he was named male country artist of the year at the Carolina Music Awards.

In interviews, Jones has cited

Waylon Jennings and other outlaw country icons as influences. His performance on Friday is sponsored by Westmoore Family Restaurant.

When: 8 p.m.
Where: Depot Stage

FRIDAY

PASSIN' THRU

Friday's live entertainment kicks off with a performance by Passin' Thru. The bluegrass quartet hails from the nearby town of Star.

The performance is sponsored by Westmoore Family Restaurant.

When: 6:30 p.m.
Where: Depot Stage



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FRIDAY

HINDSIGHT

Hindsight is a bluegrass group from Guilford County. Its members include Scott Hancock, Stan Brown, "Fiddlin'" Al McCanless, Jim Boren and Julie Brown.

The band's name alludes to how its five members, all longtime friends, decided to form a group only after

performing for years with other musicians. Hindsight's performance on Friday is sponsored by Randolph Electric Membership Corporation.

When: 8 p.m.

Where: Fidelity Bank Stage



FRIDAY

JOE FRYE

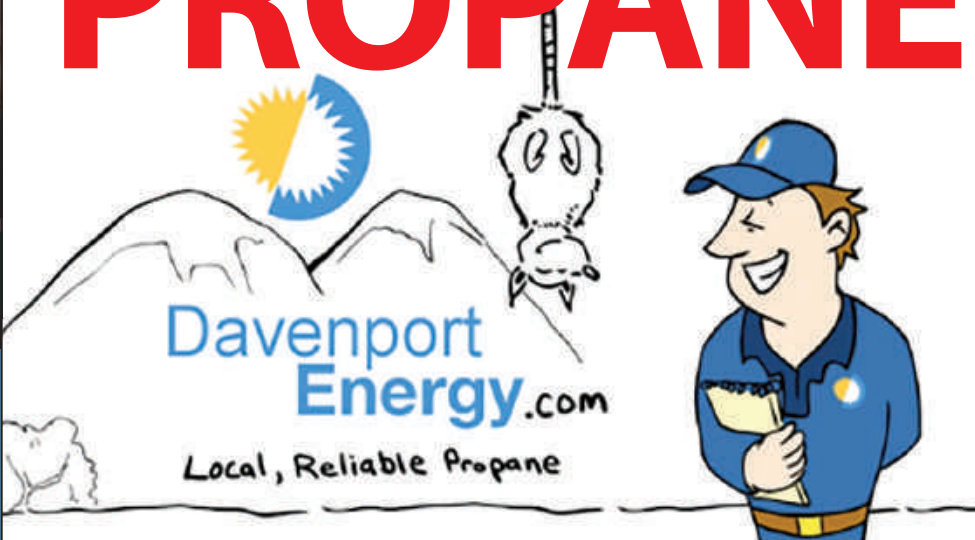
Joe Frye is a Robbins-based songwriter whose work blurs the line between country and blues. He regularly performs with a backing band, The Low Down Dirty Heathens.

The show is sponsored by Cooper Ford and Down South.

When: 7 p.m.

Where: Mid-Town Stage

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SATURDAY

MCKENZIE BROTHERS BAND

Brothers Robbie and Steve McKenzie began performing as duo after an impromptu jam session on a porch in 2000. They later added Donny Buchholz and Dan Jordan to the fold and became The McKenzie Brothers Band, one of the most prolific and well-known rock outfits in Moore County.

According to the group's website, The McKenzie Brothers Band plays "somewhere in the neighborhood of 80 to 100 shows per year and people still line up to see them whenever they play." The band was voted the area's best live act in 2016, 2017 and 2019 as part of The Pilot's annual Best of the Pines contest. Saturday's performance is

sponsored by Pinehurst Radiology and FirstHealth of the Carolinas.

When: Noon

Where: Fidelity Bank Stage

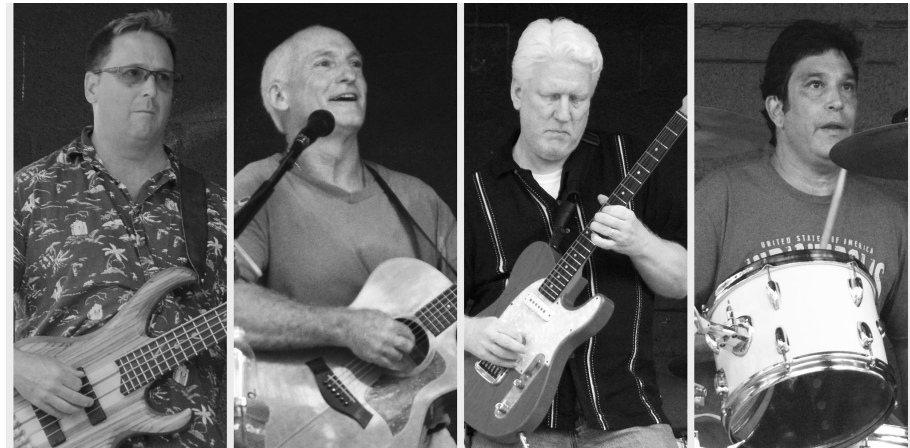
SATURDAY

GOSPEL SHOWCASE

The Webb Family, Covenant and Trinity quartet will all perform Saturday as part of the festival's second gospel music showcase. The show is sponsored by Pines Funerals and First Bank.

When: 6:30 p.m.

Where: Fidelity Bank Stage



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SATURDAY

COREY LUETJEN AND THE TRAVELING BLUES BAND

Hailing from Asheboro, Corey Luetjen and the Traveling Blues Band play more than 250 shows a years in the Carolinas, Tennessee and Virginia.

The award-winning group has been recognized by the Piedmont Preservation Blues Society and the Triangle Blues Society. In 2020, the band was a semi-finalist in the

International Blues Challenge, an annual competition in Memphis.

The performances are sponsored by Robbins Professional Center.

When: Noon and 2 p.m.

Where: Depot Stage



SATURDAY

HIP POCKET

Founded in 2008, Hip Pocket is a self-described “party band” from Greensboro. The group plays more than 100 shows each year and has been recognized by the Carolina Beach Music Association.

In an interview with The Gaston Gazette, Little John Thompson, lead vocalist for Hip Pocket, said the band plays “the kind of music that gets

people up and dancing.”

“When you see that Hip Pocket truck coming, you know you’ll have a good time,” he said.

The performance is sponsored by Situs and Consolidated Air and Propane.

When: 8 p.m.

Where: Depot Stage



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66th Annual ROBBINS FARMERS DAY PARADE

2021 SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

THURSDAY, AUGUST 5th

6:30pm- 9:00pm - FESTIVAL BEGINS

FARMERS DAY 5K RUN/WALK

Registration: 6:00pm Race starts 7:00pm
Runners will start in town on Branson Circle
at McDuffie Plumbing Supply.

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GOSPEL ON THE DEPOT STAGE

6:30pm - 9:00pm Good News, High Point, NC
Pioneers, Asheboro, NC

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AND



FRIDAY, AUGUST 6th

6:00pm - Midnight

ON THE DEPOT STAGE

6:00pm - 7:45pm Passin' Thru, Star, NC *Bluegrass*

8:00pm - 11:00pm David Lee Jones, Bethel, NC

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ON MIDDLETON STREET



Middleton Street in front
of Randolph Electric

Fire Fighter Challenge

6:30pm..... Registration

7:00pm.....Event Begins

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Carnival Rides & Midway Friday 6pm-Midnight

ON THE FIDELITY BANK STAGE

8:00pm - 11:00pm..... Hindsight, Guilford County *Bluegrass*

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MID-TOWN

7:00pm - 11pm Joe Frye & The Low Down
Dirty Heathens, Robbins, NC

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FIREWORKS

10:15pm

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SATURDAY, AUGUST 7th

9:00am - Midnight

Bring your lawn chairs and stay all day!

Carnival Rides & Midway Saturday 9am-Midnight

ON MIDDLETON STREET



66th Annual ROBBINS FARMERS DAY PARADE

PARADE BEGINS AT 11:00am

- FARMERS DAY PARADE TROPHIES -

Trophies will be given for the 21 categories listed below:

- Best Dressed Girl, Boy, Woman, Man
- Best Pony
- Best Country Horse Rider - F
- Best Team of Little Horses
- Best Work Horse
- Best Mule
- Best Foal
- Best Pony Rig
- Best Buggy
- Best Team of Little Mules
- Best Team of Horses
- Best Country Horse Rider - M
- Best Parade Horse
- Best Rig
- Oddest Rig
- Best Team of Mules
- Best Saddle Horse
- Best Donkey

PARADE OF TRACTORS - 4:00pm

AWARDS AT 5:00pm - TRACTOR PARADE TROPHIES

First & second place trophy for each tractor category: International, John Deere, Ford, Allis Chalmers & Others. Best of Show, Best Antique Farm Rig and Small Tractor.



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ON THE FIDELITY BANK STAGE

Noon - 4:00pm..... McKenzie Brothers Band, Pinehurst, NC

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6:30pm-10:30pm.....Webb Family, Greensboro, NC

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Covenant, Asheboro, NC

Trinity Quartet, Archdale, NC

ON THE DEPOT STAGE

Noon - 12:30pm..... Corey Luetjen and the Traveling Blues Band

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Asheboro, NC

12:30pm - 2:00pm.....Welcome

Prayer & National Anthem

Recognition.....Robert Hussey, Wagon Master

Presentation.....Parade Trophies

2:00pm - 4:00pmCorey Luetjen and the Traveling Blues Band

Asheboro, NC

5:00pm - 6:00pm.....Tractor Parade Trophy Presentation

8:00pm - Midnight.....Hip Pocket, Greensboro, NC

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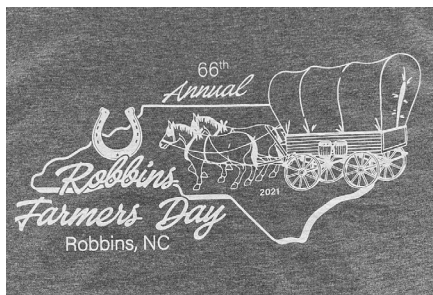
& **Situs**

SHIRTS ON SALE BEFORE FESTIVAL

STAFF REPORT

Those wanting to add to their collection of Farmer's Day memorabilia can purchase a t-shirt commemorating the 66th annual event ahead of time.

The Robbins Fire and Rescue Department is selling Farmers Day t-shirts leading up to the event. They can be purchased before 6 p.m. directly from the department, which is located at 301 Branson Circle in Robbins. Shirts are available after 6 p.m. at the trailer on the railroad tracks near North Middleton Street.



CONTRIBUTED

This year's T-shirt design.

The shirts are \$12 for sizes small through extra large, and \$14 for XXL and up. All proceeds go to Robbins Fire and Rescue.

EVENT DEDICATED TO LATE RESIDENTS

STAFF REPORT

This year's festival is dedicated to two Farmers Day supporters who have died in recent months.



LAMBERT

Vance Lambert, 61, ran a local construction company and was a longtime member of the Robbins Fire and Rescue Department. He died on Sept. 23.

"Vance was a hard worker and a great volunteer for many years," the festival's organizers wrote.

"He spent many hours helping with Farmers Day."



BRADY

Laura Ann Brady, 81, was the former mayor of Robbins and the owner of a local accounting business. She died on Jan. 22.

"Laura Ann will be remembered as a friend to Farmers Day," the organizers wrote. "She was a good friend to many folks in Robbins."

BEST IN SHOW

Parade trophies will be awarded in the following categories:

Best Dressed Girl, Boy, Woman and Man • Best Pony • Best Pony Rig • Best Team of Little Horses • Best Work Horse • Best Mule • Best Foal • Best Buggy • Best Team of Little Mules • Best Team of Horses • Best Country Horse Rider (Male and Female) • Best Parade Horse • Best Rig • Oddest Rig • Best Team of Mules • Best Saddle Horse • Best Donkey



TED FITZGERALD/The Pilot

Parade trophies on display in 2019.

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SIZING UP THE CELEBRATION

Members of the Robbins Fire and Rescue Department do most of the heavy lifting for the Farmers Day festival, with firefighters working long hours to organize one of the region's biggest events. How big is it? Just take a look at the numbers:

30,000 Average annual attendance for the three-day festival. That's 30 times the size of the town's population.

60 Volunteers involved with the event, many of them members of the Robbins Fire Department.

12 Musical groups and performers booked for this year's festival. The lineup features bluegrass, gospel and classic rock acts from across North Carolina.

400 Entries in a typical Farmers Day parade. Participants will be vying for trophies this year in 21 categories ranging from Best Donkey to Oddest Rig.

69 Businesses sponsoring the event. Coca-Cola is the top-billed sponsor.

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SCENES FROM THE 2019 FARMERS DAY FESTIVAL

PHOTOS BY TED FITZGERALD/The Pilot



2020 FARMERS DAY PARADE



TED FITZGERALD/The Pilot

While organizers were forced to cancel most of last year's Farmers Day festivities because of the coronavirus pandemic, the Hussey family decided to carry on with the parade. Farmers Day began life as a small procession of horse-drawn carriages organized by the late Curtis Hussey and his cousins in 1955. The family tradition has continued uninterrupted since then.

SCENES FROM THE 2019 FARMERS DAY FESTIVAL

PHOTOS BY TED FITZGERALD/The Pilot



2020 FARMERS DAY PARADE



TED FITZGERALD/The Pilot

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5 FASCINATING FACTS ABOUT ROBBINS

Robbins is a little town with a lot of history. Here are some things you may not have known about the community.



Town Was Home to a Major Gunmaker

The erstwhile Kennedy Gun Factory employed 90 men during the company's heyday in the early 19th century. Used in the War of 1812, Kennedy rifles sold for \$25 each — about \$480 in 2021 dollars.

An Astronaut Grew Up in Robbins

Before he became the only Moore County native to leave the stratosphere, Charles Brady Jr. was a local Eagle Scout and an ace student at North Moore High. Brady worked with astronauts from Canada, France, Italy and Spain to conduct more than 40 science experiments aboard the Columbia space shuttle in 1996.



North Moore Produced an NFL Player

Cam Thomas, a former defensive tackle for the North Moore Mustangs, went pro after graduating from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He later played for the San Diego Chargers



and the Pittsburgh Steelers. Last year, Thomas signed with the Northern Arizona Wranglers, a new franchise of the Indoor Football League.

VP Pick Was Raised in Robbins

Years after he graduated from North Moore, former U.S. Sen. John Edwards received the Democratic nomination for Vice President in 2004. He made an unsuccessful bid for the presidency in 2008.



Town May be Site of Ancient Settlement

Archeologists found a 300-foot-long rock wall and several mysterious stone formations near Robbins in 1995, leading some researchers to speculate that the area was once home to a pre-Columbian settlement for American Indians. Following the discovery, The Pilot reported that the "first white settlers arrived here in 1740 and wrote that the strange stone piles were already on the land."

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MEET ROBBINS' NEW TOWN MANAGER

BY JONATHAN BYM

The Pilot

The first experience that Clint Mack had in working with governments occurred nearly halfway around the world.

Mack was in the U.S. Army deployed to Iraq, Afghanistan and Kuwait working to restore governments on one of his six tours to the Middle East. After 21 years in the Army, Mack recently took over as the town manager for Robbins, where he looks to continue to oversee the growth and development of the town.

The experience from his prior job is what sparked his interest for his new one.



JONATHAN BYM/The Pilot

Clint Mack sits at his desk in Robbins Town Hall. Mack was sworn in as the town's manager earlier this month and brings with him more than 20 years experience in the U.S. Army.

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“I was a 26-year-old infantry platoon sergeant, and they were like, ‘Hey, rebuild a legitimate government in this 80 kilometer square box,” Mack said. “It just interested me from the start.”

Mack was sworn in on July 6 in Town Hall after being introduced at the town board of commissioners’ June meeting. This past spring, he earned his bachelor degree in public administration from Villanova University.

While his stint in the Army opened his eyes to what he wanted to do for a second career, that same time was when he fell in love with the town he now lives and works in. Making the move to Fort Bragg early in his career to serve in the 82nd Airborne Division as an Airborne Infantryman, Mack met his future wife, Summer, who grew up in Robbins.

Robbins immediately became a welcoming place for Mack after attending Robbins First Baptist

Church.

“I’ve never met a group of people that was so accepting,” Mack said. “You left like you’ve been at church your whole life, and that was the first time I visited. It’s been like that ever since.”

In the time from retiring from the Army and taking the town manager position, Mack served as the scholarship coordinator at North Moore High School, and also was an assistant basketball and football coach at the school. As manager, Mack said he hopes to be an example to veterans he has seen struggle in their return to the civilian world.

“I just want people to know I’m in it for the long haul,” Mack said. “After being a paratrooper, it’s my dream job. To think about it, how many people actually get to do both jobs they dreamed of doing.”

A longer version of this article can be found at ThePilot.com



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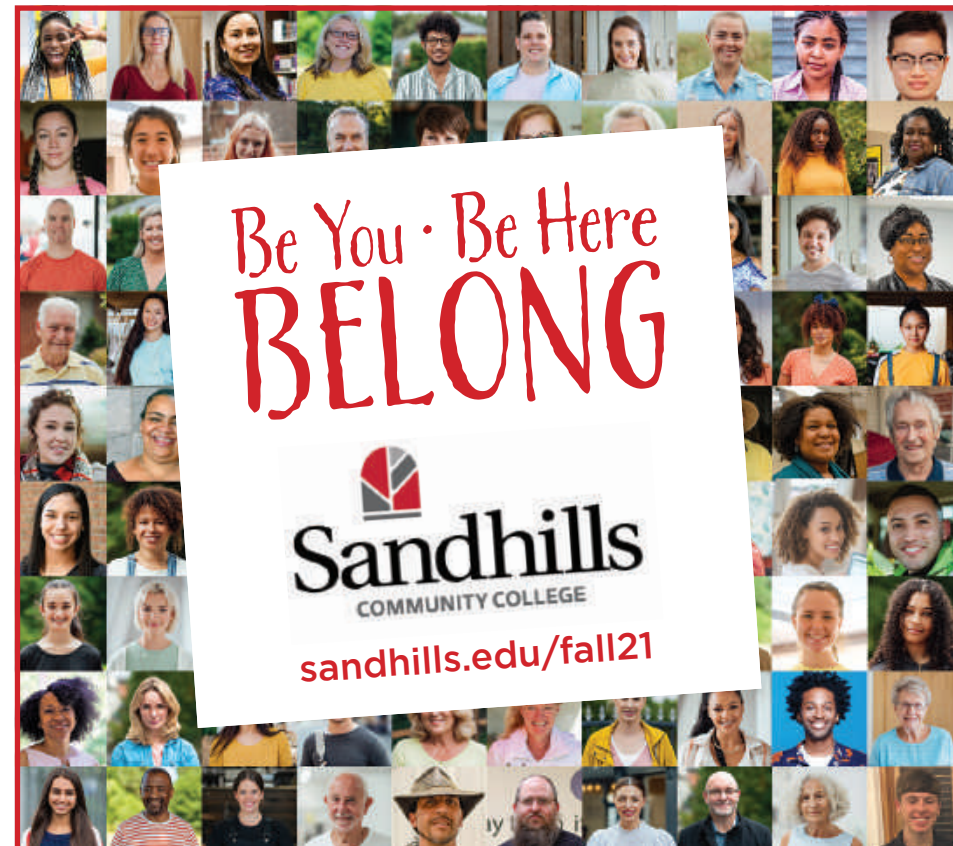
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Fall Semester Begins August 16

BEAR CREEK A NATURE LOVER'S PARADISE

BY JONATHAN BYM

The Pilot

After more than a decade of clearing the way for trails in Robbins along Bear Creek, Dr. William McDuffie still has moments where he is amazed at what has been forged into the hilly landscape that runs along some of his family's land.

Starting with just a half-mile loop around 2008, the Bear Creek Trail System has grown to 12 miles of multi-use trails that span from N.C. 705 to Spies Road on the western side of Robbins, with a spur that connects into downtown. Fishing and boating accesses have been built along Bear Creek in the area, and an 18-hole disc golf course rounds out this nature lover's paradise in the northern part of Moore County.

"I'll stand somewhere and look and go, 'Oh my gosh. I would've had no idea that we would have this,'"

McDuffie said. "Just this one little area that I'm seeing here seems like more work than we would've ever wanted to do."

McDuffie and his wife, Lynne, who both are veterinarians at Carthage Animal Hospital, created the Foothills Outdoors nonprofit in 2007 with partners Cynthia Reeves and Mark Garner, and the organization has raised funds over the years to create an outdoor experience in Robbins that caters to nearly any type of outdoorsperson. The trails are open to hikers and mountain bikers, paddling is allowed along the river by canoe or kayak, and more plans are in the works to provide different amenities for visitors.

A longer version of this article can be found on ThePilot.com.



PHOTOS BY JONATHAN BYM/
The Pilot

Drs. William and Lynne McDuffie have spent the last 12 years working on growing the Bear Creek Trail System to the 12 miles of multi-use pathways that it is today. They are seated on a bench in the middle of Robbins where the trailhead that connects to the rest of the trail system downtown is located. Below, an 18-hole disc golf course is located on part of the Bear Creek Trail System, and is one of a few disc golf courses in Moore County.



RESOURCE CENTER CELEBRATES 25 YEARS

BY JONATHAN BYM

The Pilot

If ever a miracle happened in Robbins it would begin at the long brick building on Horner Street with a colorful sign announcing Northern Moore Family Resource Center, celebrating 25 years of service. For its first nine years, the center offered youth soccer, a drug abuse resistance program and transportation for residents without cars. Needs were reassessed when Clare Ruggles became executive director in 2006.

Her investigation shifted focus to education, strengthening families and improving economic conditions. A building was leased from Robbins for \$1 a year and renovated as classrooms, offices, also a greenspace and stage available to the community. Ruggles started with a

summer learning program for pre-K to eighth graders which blossomed into HOPE Academy Preschool for 50 children in a full-day session. Other programs followed: a summer camp, lunch included, that emphasizes reading; a home ownership initiative resulting in purchases by nine families; a Santa's Workshop providing warm clothes, toys and books.

During pandemic closures, staff distributed activity packets to encourage continued learning.

To celebrate 25 years of improving the lives of children and families NMFRC will host a fund-raising gala on Aug. 20 at the Fair Barn in Pinehurst, with music, videos, food by Elliott's on Linden, auctions and more. Ticket information: (910) 948-4324



PHOTOS BY JONATHAN BYM/The Pilot

Hope Academy Preschool was created by the Northern Moore Family Resource Center.

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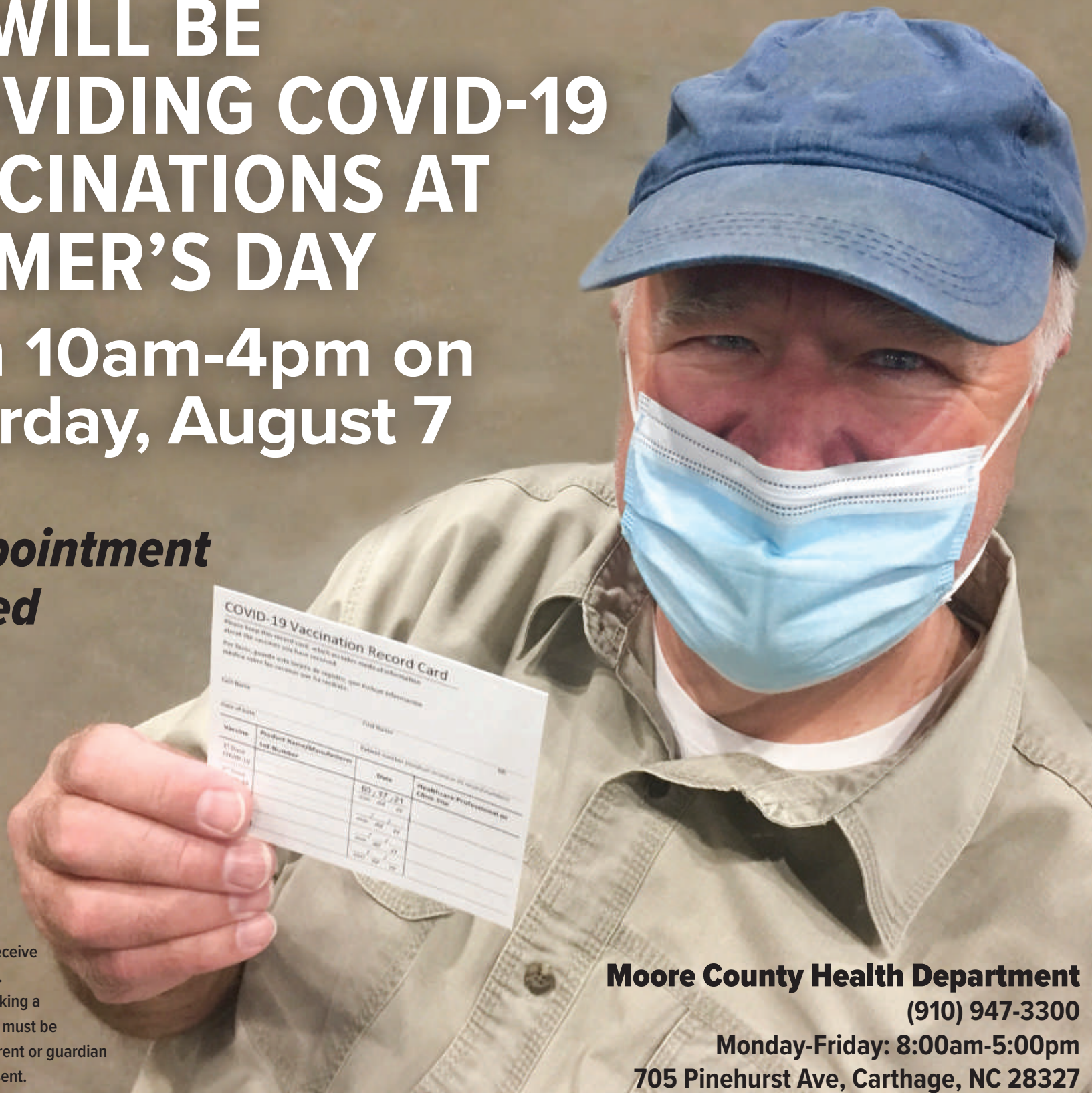
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Hope Academy Preschool was created by the Northern Moore Family Resource Center.

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COVID-19 VACCINES ARE FREE TO EVERYONE, REGARDLESS OF WHETHER YOU HAVE HEALTH INSURANCE.

PHOTOGRAPHIC MEMORY

Vintage images of past Farmers Day celebrations from The Pilot's archive.



FILE PHOTOGRAPH/The Pilot

Riders in the first-ever Farmers Day Parade in 1955.



JOHNSIE TIPTON/The Pilot

Parade participants show off their trophies in 1995.



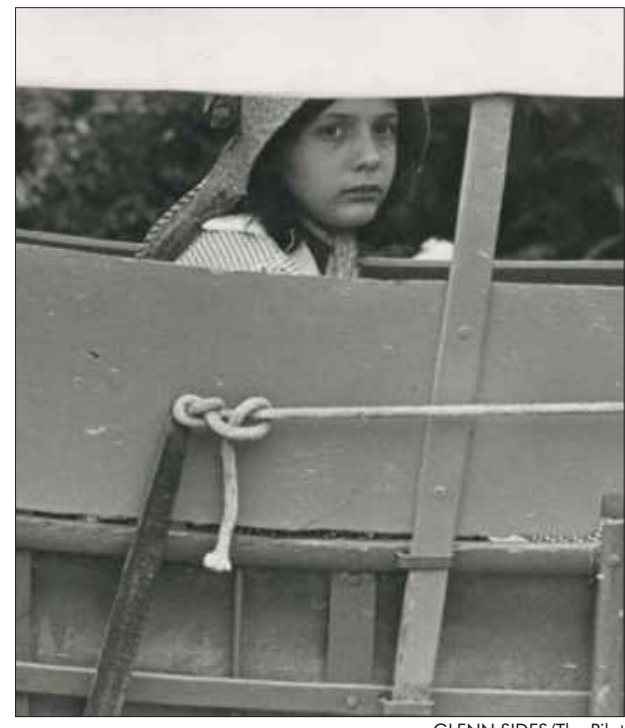
JOHNSIE TIPTON/The Pilot

Smokey Bear looms over the festival grounds in 1995.



FILE PHOTOGRAPH/The Pilot

Riders in the first-ever Farmers Day Parade in 1955.



GLENN SIDES/The Pilot

A child rides through Robbins in a covered wagon in 1972.

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