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App Health Care holds pop-up COVID-19 vaccine clinic in West Jefferson

BY ANDREW COLE
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On Friday, May 14, App Health Care in partnership with the Ashe County Chamber of Commerce held its first pop-up vaccine clinic in downtown West Jefferson. The event gave local residents who had not yet had the opportunity a chance to receive the COVID-19 vaccine, while also opening access to individuals with limited technological and

transportation needs.

"The event on Friday, in partnership with the Ashe Chamber, was the first time we have hosted a pop-up clinic. We have hired a team of vaccinators, and they will be able to go out into the community to administer vaccines. They will also continue providing the vaccine to homebound individuals who request the vaccine at their home," said Melissa Bracey,

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PHOTO BY ANDREW COLE

A sign located on Jefferson Avenue directs people towards the pop-up COVID-19 vaccine clinic held on May 14.

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On the road again



PHOTO BY ANDREW COLE

A classic Chevrolet cruises down Jefferson Avenue in downtown West Jefferson.

Cruise-in rolls into West Jefferson on May 15

BY ANDREW COLE
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WEST JEFFERSON — Spectators lined the streets along Jefferson Avenue as a steady stream of vintage cars rolled into downtown during a cruise-in which took place on Saturday, May 15.

The cruise-in was hosted by the Blue Ridge Midnight Runners, a local car group made up of individuals who enjoy cruising the countryside in their hot-rods, classic and muscle cars.

Visitors were encouraged to bring their families, grab some refreshments from local businesses and enjoy the festivities as dozens of classic cars spanning a variety of time periods and styles made their way into town.

According to the Blue Ridge Midnight Runner's Facebook group the next West Jefferson cruise-in is being planned for June 19. The riders will meet at the Ashe County Courthouse from 2-3:30 p.m. before cruising from there into West Jefferson.

For more information about this event visit the Midnight Runner's social media page www.facebook.com/groups/304621767216869.



PHOTO BY ANDREW COLE

Pete Marcus takes a look under the hood of a 1973 Plymouth Cougar at the Cruise-in on May 15.

SEE CRUISE-IN PHOTOS ON PAGE 3A

Cooper aligns executive order with CDC, allows vaccinated people to unmask in indoor spaces

BY MOSS BRENNAN

RALEIGH — Gov. Roy Cooper announced May 14 that all mandatory capacity and gathering limits, social distancing requirements and most mandatory mask requirements will be lifted effective immediately.

Cooper said most indoor or outdoor settings in the state will no longer require people to wear a mask or be socially distant.

"Because of our strong safety protocols, vaccines and the hard work of North Carolinians, we have been able to slow the spread of this virus and reduce deaths when other states saw surges in their cases," Cooper said. "It's good that our metrics are stable or declining."

Previous limits included indoor mass gathering limits at 100 and outdoor mass gathering limit at 200.

According to new Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines, fully vaccinated people no longer need to wear a mask or physically distance in any setting, except where required by federal, state, local, tribal or territorial laws, rules and regulations, including local business and workplace guidance.

Cooper said CDC guidance affirms that getting vaccinated is the way through the COVID-19 pandemic.

"We need to reach all of them to turn the corner on this pandemic once and for all, Cooper said. "North Carolinians have shown that we have resolve and the compassion to do what's needed even



Roy Cooper

when times get hard. If we keep doing that, we'll get through this."

More informa-

tion on the CDC guidelines can be found at www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/fully-vaccinated-guidance.html.

"I have a message for people who have not been vaccinated, and especially those who will choose not to wear a mask: get vaccinated now," Cooper said. "If you don't listen to me, ask your doctor and do what your doctor tells you."

North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Mandy Cohen said masks are strongly recommended for everyone regardless of vaccination status in large crowded indoor events like sporting events and live performances.

"Now, businesses may choose to continue to require that their customers wear masks," Cohen said. "For example, we're hearing that places like Starbucks and Home Depot will keep their policies mandating shoppers and employees wear masks."

Cooper also said that local governments and businesses can still require masks, but he said most local governments have been aligned with the state for most of this pandemic.

Cohen said that the

SEE COOPER ON PAGE 2A

Spouses, family with Ashe Backs the Badge discuss anxieties with commissioners

BY CHANDA RICHARDSON
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JEFFERSON — The Ashe County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Monday, May 17 to hold presentations with monthly proclamations, advocacy and updates.

Commissioners in attendance were Chair Todd McNeill, Vice Chair William Sands, Jonathan Jordan, Chuck Olive and Jerry Powers.

The meeting took place in the commissioner courtroom on the third floor of the Ashe County Courthouse and the board saw a

large turnout as presentations ensued.

Generations Ashe Senior Center Director Glenda Luther and Senior Tarheel Legislative Representative Charles and Louise Caudill presented the Older Americans Month Proclamation and Advocacy to the board, asking for approval and a signature.

The board approved and signed the proclamation. Charles Caudill then spoke to the board, hoping that the older generation in Ashe can have more transportation means in which they need to get to

their doctors and special appointments.

"Many older people have no way to get to the doctor for treatment of all kinds," said Caudill. "It doesn't seem like a big thing to you and I, but our senior population in Ashe County is going. If there's any way possible, we need things in place to take care of things 10 years down the road."

The board reflected on their comments and gave their appreciation for their presence.

County Manager Adam Stumb then presented the

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SCREENSHOT BY CHANDA RICHARDSON

Amanda Howell, wife of Sheriff B. Phil Howell, presented her story to the board of commissioners on May 17.



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