



Cromwell indicted by grand jury, US attorney searches for more victims

STAFF REPORT

editor@wataugademocrat.com

STATESVILLE — The office of U.S. Attorney Andrew Murray announced on Aug. 26 that there are potentially additional victims in a child pornography case involving an athletic-training intern at Watauga High School through Appalachian State University.

The U.S. Attorney's Office stated that a federal grand jury in Charlotte returned a 21-count superseding indictment against



CROMWELL

Frank Darrell Cromwell, 23, of Boone. The indictment charged him with enticement of a minor, production of child pornography, communicating threats, cyberstalking and related offenses.

Ronnie Martinez, special agent in charge of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Homeland Security Investigations in Char-

lotte, and Boone Police Chief Dana Crawford join Murray in making this announcement, according to the U.S. Attorney's Office. The U.S. Attorney's Office stated it was the investigation work of these two departments that led to federal charges against Cromwell.

"This individual allegedly tried to gain access to children by obtaining employment in places where he could embed himself with underage boys, including a high school, a summer camp, a middle school and a behavioral health care facility," Murray said in

a statement. "Protecting our children from predators is one of our highest priorities. I urge parents to have a conversation with their children about the dangers of online communications and social media, where predators can use fake names and profiles to weave a heinous web of lies to lure young and innocent children."

Cromwell had assisted the athletic teams at WHS through an association with App

SEE **CROMWELL** ON PAGE 2

Expansion planned at WMC

ARHS discusses \$90 million plans for hospital campus

BY KAYLA LASURE

kayla.lasure@wataugademocrat.com

The Appalachian Regional Healthcare System is moving forward with a \$90 million plan that includes current facility upgrades at Watauga Medical Center and new infrastructure.

ARHS President and CEO Chuck Mantooth discussed plans for the future of ARHS during the Aug. 23 Wake Up Watauga radio event hosted by the Boone Area Chamber of Commerce.

Mantooth said the planned improvements and additions to WMC were made with the aging population in mind. According to Mantooth, a significant part of the local population is made up of members of the baby boomer generation. He said by the year 2023, one in four people will be above the age of 65 in the U.S.

For this reason, ARHS plans to invest in the areas of care for heart disease and cancer. As a person who has a family history of heart disease, Mantooth said he thought it was important for ARHS to invest heavily in this area of care.

Not only will the \$90 million cover upkeep for current facilities, but also a new bed tower adjacent to the emergency department, surgery suites and a new cardiovascular center. Mantooth said the current cardiology clinic needs about twice the space that it has, and



PHOTO BY KAYLA LASURE

Appalachian Regional Healthcare System President and CEO Chuck Mantooth gives an update on ARHS activity during the Aug. 23 Wake Up Watauga event.

the new clinic will triple the space. The center would consolidate all of the cardiovascular services such as testing, intervention efforts and rehab amenities.

"Over the next six months as we plan and design exactly what is going to be on the hospital campus, we're going to plan for phase two," Mantooth said.

The next phase is not covered by the \$90 million and has not been approved yet by the ARHS Board of Trustees, said Rob Hudspeth, the ARHS senior vice president for system advancement. Phase two

would include a continuity clinic, new space for orthopedics and sports medicine and the relocation of Appalachian Regional Internal Medicine Specialists.

According to Hudspeth, the continuity clinic would be structured in order to prioritize longterm relationships between staff and patients for continuous management of chronic disease. The continuity clinic would give more focus to primary care services, with a new primary care residency program — that is set to launch in July 2020.

The residency program would bring in doctors for a three-year program after medical school during which they would treat patients but also work with hospital faculty to make sure they're learning proper techniques, Mantooth said. Hudspeth added that residency is additional years of training on top of four years of medical school to reinforce a doctor's specialty and subspecialty education.

"A continuity clinic is a great

SEE **CAMPUS** ON PAGE 2

Boone fire, police officials investigate cause of Winkler's Creek fire

STAFF REPORT

editor@wataugademocrat.com

BOONE — Boone fire and police officials are investigating an Aug. 22 fire at a single-family residence on Winkler's Creek Road.

On Aug. 22 at 1:02 a.m., the Boone Fire Department was dispatched to a structure fire in the Winkler's Creek area of Boone, according to a statement from the department. At 1:06 a.m., BFD units arrived at 527 Winkler's Creek Road to find a single-family dwelling well involved in fire. During initial suppression efforts,

SEE **FIRE** ON PAGE 2

App State releases alcohol procedures for first home football game

STAFF REPORT

editor@wataugademocrat.com

BOONE — Appalachian State will implement alcohol sales at Kidd Brewer Stadium beginning with the Aug. 31 football season opener against East Tennessee State, the university announced Aug. 23.

After Gov. Roy Cooper signed North Carolina House Bill 389 into law on June 26 to allow public universities to sell beer and wine at athletics facilities, Appalachian State University's Board of Trustees approved a

SEE **ALCOHOL** ON PAGE 2



INSIDE			
Obituaries	4	Calendar	17
Opinion	6	Comics	16
		Sports	8
		Classifieds/Public Notices	18

Get the latest news on the web: wataugademocrat.com

