

Watauga Democrat

SUNDAY, MAY 17, 2020

Founded 1888 • An NC Press Association newspaper of General Excellence • Politically independent

HIT THE BRAKES:

BS&G ride canceled for 2020

10

20 PAGES | VOL. 131 NO. 91 | ONE DOLLAR

It's your SUNDAY

Inside today



News
Blowing Rock Council to consider separate action on COVID-19 restrictions
Page 4



News
Home sales slow during month of stay-at-home rules
Page 3



Community
Teacher, Rookie Teacher of the Year announced
Page 5



Life
Families parade around Deerfield Ridge Assisted Living to connect with loved ones
Page 8

ASU: 16 workers test positive

BY MOSS BRENNAN

BOONE — Appalachian State announced on May 14 that 16 sub-contracted workers for a campus construction project have tested positive for COVID-19. The workers are not Watauga County residents.

The university was informed of the cases by AppHealthCare, it said in an email to students.

AppHealthCare identified a small

SEE **POSITIVE** ON PAGE 2



PHOTO BY KAYLA LASURE
Crews continue work on the exterior of Sanford Hall in February.

Watauga Democrat is Here for You & Your Business!

- Are you about to reopen?
- Have your services or hours changed?

Run a **FREE 2 col. x 5 inch ad** in the month of May (a \$300 value)

We're here to help you let your customers know you're open for business

...AT NO CHARGE!

Email mark.mitchell@mountaintimes.com or call (828) 264-6397. Ad must pertain to services offered, hours, operational changes. Offer expires May 31, 2020

WHS plans 'drive-thru' graduation



Katherine Johnson receives her cap and gown on May 14 alongside her pooch.

PHOTO BY KAYLA LASURE

Students to receive diploma on outdoor stage

STAFF REPORT
editor@wataugademocrat.com

BOONE — In accordance with state-mandated restrictions on large gatherings, Watauga High School plans to host an outdoor "drive-through" graduation ceremony on Saturday, May 30, at the school.

The ceremony will include many of the aspects of a traditional ceremony while taking precautions to protect the health and safety of the students. Weather permitting,

the ceremony will be held outdoors on the WHS campus on an elevated stage.

Graduates and their families will drive onto campus and be routed around the building to the outdoor stage. At this time, the school system is allowing multiple vehicles in a graduation caravan-type style and ask that seniors be in the front vehicle. Seniors will be asked to exit their vehicles and walk across the stage in their caps and gowns to receive their diploma. When the senior is on stage, families will have

an opportunity to take photos and celebrate their student's achievement. The ceremony will include speeches by student leaders, Principal Chris Blanton and Superintendent Scott Elliott.

Blanton said that while state restrictions have forced significant changes on the school's commencement ceremony, WHS staff was doing everything possible to give students a chance to experience the graduation ceremony they deserve.

SEE **GRADUATION** ON PAGE 2



County, Boone to consider local COVID-19 restrictions

BY ANNA OAKES
anna.oakes@wataugademocrat.com

BOONE — Eyes and ears are focused on Tuesday, May 19, when the Watauga County Board of Commissioners and Boone Town Council will each deliberate over how to move forward with local COVID-19 restrictions.

The commissioners will revisit the plan they adopted at their May 5 meeting to maintain local emergency restrictions through the first two weeks of Phase 2 of the governor's reopening plan — meaning if Phase 2 begins May 22, local restrictions such as the 14-day quarantine order and ban on short-term rentals would not be eased until June 5. At that time, the county plans to discontinue the 14-day self-quarantine restriction and resume lodging and short-term rentals, with facilities having more than a six-person occupancy limited to 50 percent occupancy.

But according to the materials for the May 19 commission meeting, "after the board adopted the above option, the governor

SEE **RESTRICTIONS** ON PAGE 2



INSIDE			
Opinion	6	Sports	10
Life	8	Comics	15
		Faith	12
		Classifieds/Public Notices	16

Get the latest news on the web:
wataugademocrat.com



INSERTS: CVS, Dollar Tree, Smart Source, Big Lots, Walgreens