



Discovery of synchronous fireflies near Madison County sparks development question Page 7

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Police ID suspect killed in CVS armed standoff

Sam DeGrave
Asheville Citizen Times
USA TODAY NETWORK

FLETCHER — Police have released the name of the man whom officers fatally shot inside a CVS store July 18. Wesley Shelton, 33, died on scene after four officers shot him after a brief standoff in a storage room in the back of the drugstore, Fletcher Police Chief Erik

Summey said July 19.

Shelton, of Marshall, “would not comply with officers directives and pointed the handgun at them,” Summey wrote in a press release.

The officers involved have been placed on administrative leave pending the outcome of two investigations into the officer-involved shooting — one led by the Fletcher Police Department and the other by the State Bureau of Investi-

gation — Summey said.

“My thoughts and prayers are with our officers and their families, the suspect’s family as well as the CVS employees and customers who were present during this incident,” Summey wrote. “No other information will be released until a later date.”

No other injuries were reported dur-

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A man is dead after police say he engaged in an armed confrontation with them inside CVS off of Hendersonville Road. ANGELA WILHELM/CITIZEN TIMES



Jeff Brown of Shady Side Presbyterian in Pittsburgh puts the finishing touches on a roof truss. PHOTOS BY PAUL EGGERS/THE NEWS-RECORD & SENTINEL

Planned expansion along I-26 gets funding

Paul Eggers
The News-Record & Sentinel
USA TODAY NETWORK

A long-planned road infrastructure project beside Interstate-26 in Mars Hill has received the additional funding needed to get started. The frontage road project, called the Crossroads Parkway, aims to connect exits 9 and 11 on the east side of I-26.

The project has been in limbo since 2016, when the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) - a federal and state partnership providing economic support for 13 states in the across Appalachia - secured just over \$1.7 million in funding for the road extension. When bids for the connector put the cost at more than \$3 million, the project stalled, according to Madison County Manager Forrest Gilliam.

Madison County’s involvement in Governor Roy Cooper’s “Hometown Strong” initiative helped pave the way for additional financing from the North Carolina Department of Transportation and ARC. Bobby Lewis, DOT’s chief operating officer, pledged at a meeting inside the Madison County Public Library to secure the dollars needed. That promise came good following a meeting of the state board of transportation in late June.

“It’s a really good outcome for the future of Mars Hill and the whole county,” Gilliam told commissioners at their July 10 meeting.

Mars Hill Town Manager Darhyl Boone echoed Gilliam’s optimism for the project. “It will open up an access road for commercial development,” Boone said in a phone interview. “That connector is vital for that to happen.”

The frontage road will also help reduce truck traffic through downtown Mars Hill, Boone said. “With that connector, it provides a bypass for trucks going to Advanced Superabrasives.”

Located on North Main Street in Mars Hill, Advanced Superabrasives has plans to invest more than \$26 million in a new facility. Jonathan Szucs, the manufacturer’s general manager, said the completion of the project would be a win for the company and the community.

“We’re very interested in seeing this happen,” he said in 2016, after the initial funding was announced. “We see

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Housing coalition makes a difference

Summer volunteer effort highlights affordable housing challenges

Paul Eggers
The News-Record & Sentinel
USA TODAY NETWORK

Shelia Whittington knew she had some serious repairs on her hands when she returned home in February, from a 48-hour hospital stay for a heart condition.

“When I got home, the rain had demolished my bedroom,” the Madison County native said while sitting inside her living room on a recent summer morning. As she watched over two grandchildren and a grandniece inside the trailer she owns on rented land between Marshall and Mars Hill, Whittington described the nightmare scenario that unfolded months prior. “There was mold, black mold. My walls were black. My ceilings were black. It was horrible to come in, and there all that was. I had breathing difficulties anyway, and with all that mold, it just made it worse.”

Family helped Whittington clean and move her bed and belongings into the living room, where she would stay for about a month until the trailer’s roof could be painted to help stop leaks.

“It was only a temporary fix,” she said of the winter repair.

A more permanent solution came in July, with help from the Community Housing Coalition of Madison County (CHC). The Marshall-based nonprofit enlisted local volunteers and church work crews from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and Baltimore, Maryland, to install a new roof atop her home. The improvement project is one of more than 50 home repair



Shelia Whittington talks with Jake Owen of the Community Housing Coalition of Madison County as volunteer crews complete repairs to Whittington's home.

efforts CHC has planned throughout the county this summer to fulfill its mission keeping Madison residents in safe, affordable housing.

“The social and financial benefits of people being able to age in place cannot be overstated,” Chris Watson, CHC’s client and grants coordinator explained in an email.

Backed by funding from the North Carolina Housing Finance Agency, as well as donations from the church groups serving on the project, CHC made more than \$6,000 in re-

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