



The Franklin Press

Established 1886

Volume 128, Number 49 Wednesday, June 20, 2012 www.thefranklinpress.com Franklin, North Carolina 28734 75¢



Press photo/Linda Mathias

Teamwork pays

Team work paid off – literally – for the 9-10 Franklin All-Star Girls Softball Team. The girls held a car wash Saturday to earn money for uniforms and equipment in hopes of going to district and state playoffs.

New director Adkins to lead CareNet

By Colin McCandless
pressreporter@thefranklinpress.com



Shaina Adkins

Nonprofit crisis relief agency Macon County CareNet has hired new executive director Shaina Adkins to lead the organization.

Adkins takes over for Vanessa Bailey, who left the position at the end of January.

Operations manager Sandra Queen had been serving as CareNet's interim director from February through June 1.

Adkins assumed the executive director role June 4.

Prior to accepting the CareNet position, Adkins served as a community manager for the American Cancer Society (ACS) for six eastern North Carolina counties (based in Greenville) where she promoted services and programs for cancer patients and their families.

"It was a many hats to wear kind of position and it transitioned so much that I was always in a different role," she explained.

Adkins, 25, has bachelor and master's degrees in communications from East Carolina University. Her B.A. involved an emphasis in public relations, while her M.A. degree entailed a health emphasis.

See Adkins on page 9A

Siler Road extension on schedule

By Colin McCandless
pressreporter@thefranklinpress.com

The Siler Road Extension project is still on schedule and is expected to be completed in the fall.

According to Mitchell Bishop, the DOT resident engineer overseeing the Siler Road Extension project, the contractor still anticipates getting the road open by the initial estimated target date of Nov. 15.

"Between now and when school starts there's going to be a lot of activity," said Bishop Monday.

The project involves construction of a new 0.9-mile two-lane route, including a span bridge over the Little Tennessee River, from Siler Road (State Road 1660) to Wiley Brown Road (S.R. 1662) south of U.S. 441 in Franklin. The road will provide a secondary access point to Southwestern Community College (Macon campus) and the Macon County Library.

It will feature a new intersection and traffic pattern at the Dowdle Mountain Road exit off US 441 as a result of a roundabout being

built. Additionally, the project includes construction of a dual left turn lane on U.S. 64/441 at the intersection of Dowdle Mountain Road to help improve traffic flow and alleviate congestion.

Updating the project's current status, Bishop said that two thirds of the span bridge deck has been poured and they anticipate the final concrete pour on the bridge to be done next Monday. A paving crew is expected to come next week and start paving down towards the bridge and do a concrete pour and paving for the roundabout apron. The plan is still to try and get the work on the intersections completed by the time school starts and have the traffic in its future configuration by the opening of Walmart. "The contractor's moving forward with that," Bishop said. Currently, the projected grand opening of the Walmart is towards the end of October, according to Bill Wertz with Walmart media relations.

Bishop and Nathan Tanner, DOT Siler Road Extension assistant manager, explained that the work motorists have seen along U.S.

See Extension on page 9A



A roundabout being built as part of the new Siler Road extension project that will provide a secondary access point for Southwestern Community College and the Macon County Library. The roundabout will mean a new traffic pattern at the Dowdle Mountain Road/US 441 intersection.

Ford settles into leadership role at Coweeta Hydrological Lab

By Colin McCandless
pressreporter@thefranklinpress.com

When Dr. Chelcy Ford began her role as Coweeta Hydrologic Lab's research project leader in March, she was already well versed in its reputation as an internationally acclaimed place to study forest hydrology.

Ford was initially hired at Coweeta in 2004, but her academic research background made her keenly aware of its esteemed position in the scientific community long before she came to work with them.

Her undergraduate research at Georgia Tech University focused on water and water quality. Both her master's and Ph.D. centered on water as a resource for forests.

After a brief stint in Corvallis, Ore., which included spending some time volunteering with the EPA, Ford moved

back East and attended the University of Georgia from 2000-2004, earning her Ph.D. in forestry. She conducted a lot of her research in the Whitehall Experimental Forest in Athens. Another aspect of her research involved studying long leaf pine in Southeast Georgia and the sources of water that longleaf pine uses. Ford and her husband lived on a tract of land called Ichauway that was once owned by Coca-Cola Company president Robert Woodruff, who managed it for decades as a quail hunting plantation. Ichauway has some of the best preserved and oldest longleaf pine forests in the Southeast.

"Long leaf pine used to cover most of the Southeast, but now it's down to about 2 percent of its original area," she said.

When Woodruff died, the Woodruff Foundation developed an outdoor laboratory called the Joseph W. Jones Eco-

logical Research Center. "The Jones Center and Coweeta have a long history together," Ford said.

She notes that Coweeta alumna Lindsay Boring is currently the center's director.

In 2004, former Coweeta project leader Jim Vose called Ford and offered to hire her to do her post doc research at Coweeta. The decision was a no brainer for someone whose research focus had always been forest hydrology.

"When anyone mentions water as a resource for forests, Coweeta comes up," says Ford of the 5,400-acre experimental forest. "Coweeta is the Holy Grail of forest hydrology. It was a great opportunity."

Following her post doc work she stayed with the lab and worked as a full time scientist as an ecophysicologist.

See Coweeta on page 10A



Coweeta Hydrologic Lab project leader Dr. Chelcy Ford (center, pointing at the poster board) shown during a tour at Coweeta for the Interagency Conference on Research in Watersheds (ICRW).

Subscribe Today!

Name _____
Address _____
City _____
Zip _____ Phone _____

Rates: \$24 - 1 year full-time in Macon County; \$40, out-of-state; \$52, seasonal.
Mail to: The Franklin Press, P.O. Box 350, Franklin, NC 28744. Call (828) 524-2010 for additional subscription information.

© 2012 The Franklin Press/Community Newspapers Inc.

Index

Classified	3B
Deaths	3A
Legals	4B
Letters	4A
Opinion	4A
Business	6A
Sports	1B

OK. There's a scenic overlook on the Franklin side of Coweeta Mountain. But you can't see anything because the trees are too tall. Can't they be cut down or thinned?

The aldermen and the ABC board should fund the new liquor store out of their own

Rants & Raves (Call 369-0568 after 5

We need a countywide noise ordinance. You can't even sit down and have a meal in peace without your neighbors blaring loud music. Commissioners need to seriously look at this. Even if it addresses loud radios it would be something.

See Rants on page 2A

Join Us for a Great Buffet Lunch Before The Peter Pan Show
Sunday, June 24 • 12:00 Noon until 3:00 PM

Located inside The Factory • 1024 Georgia Rd • Franklin, NC • 828.349.5555 • BoilerRoomSteakHouse.com

Sponsored by The Factory
SMOKY MOUNTAIN CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS
June 21 - 24 • Tickets: \$15 Adults, \$10 Students
Presented by The Overlook Theatre Company
GreatMountainMusic.com

PETER PAN

Coweeta: Research center provides valuable information to scientific community

continued from 1A

Since taking over as project leader her role has expanded.

"You're not only doing your own science, but you're leading the science of your entire team," she explained.

Five scientists, a hydrologist and a chemist work out of Coweeta, and University of Georgia employees also do research there through the collaborative Long-Term Ecological Research (LTER) program, which is funded through a grant from the National Science Foundation. The LTER is a national network of 26 field research sites where more than 1,800 scientists work cooperatively across disciplines on long-term environmental research. Coweeta was one of the first LTER sites, and through the partnership they work with people all over the country and the world.

As Coweeta project leader, Ford also manages three other small research labs across the Southeast, including the Santee Experimental Forest and a Savannah River site (both in South Carolina) and a Forest Service lab on the Virginia Tech campus that specializes in cold water fishes research.

Altering our environment
Coweeta features the longest continuous hydrologic record in the world. "We've been recording stream flow from 16 different watersheds every five minutes since 1934," she noted.

They have five different climate stations across Coweeta basin through which they monitor things like air temperature and precipitation.

Ford explained the value of such long term data collection and research.

"Now humans are really starting to alter their environment. We've always altered our environment, but now it's altering at a very quick pace," she said. "So with global climate change, and the uncertainty, how is water quality and quantity going to be affected as our climate warms and as our precipitation regime changes?"

What they have found is that the temperature rise means more extreme weather—more droughts and more really high rainfall events. "And we already see that in our data," Ford said.

Temperatures started increasing significantly (about a half a degree Celsius per decade) since the late 70s, early 80s, and what they have learned further from examining the long term precipitation record is that our "dry years are getting drier and our wet years are getting wetter."

"The mean's not changing, but the extreme events, we're seeing more and more," she said. "So if I want to talk about what I hope to bring to Coweeta leadership wise? I want to leverage our long-term data to look at some of these questions surrounding climate change and the effects on water quality and quantity."

At Coweeta they have conducted myriad different forest watershed experiments that represent diverse management techniques (selectively logged forests, forests where they have taken out the understory, etc.)

A scientific paper from Coweeta published this year examines different management prescriptions for forests and if some of those could be used to offset the effects of climate change.

"And the answer is 'yes you can.' You can't change



Dr. Chelcy Ford

it by much, but you can certainly affect it," she said.

One of the earlier experiments conducted in the Coweeta forest watershed in the 1950s involved two different basins where in one basin all of the deciduous trees were cut and removed and Eastern white pine was planted in its place.

They know from that study if they had not treated the forest with that prescription you would see many more effects of really high rainfall years, including high stream flows. "If you have Eastern white pine planted, you don't see as high of a stream flow," Ford said. The

trees intercept a high amount of water, making them a good management prescription if one is worried about more water. There are also techniques that can be applied to mitigate the effects of drought, she added.

The charge of Forest Service research is to look at the full cycle of science. We're doing very theoretical and basic research, but the goal is to take that basic and theoretical research and translate it into something usable and useful for all of our stakeholders," Ford said. These stakeholders include the National Forest system managers, universities, scientists and the public.

Referencing climate change, Ford noted that they know increases in temperature are going to happen. "I think more important for this region, and our mission in particular is the affects on water," Ford said. "So we have a few different experiments cranking up right now looking at the effects of drought."

Academic impact

Coweeta has also studied impacts of invasive species

on forest ecosystems, including the hemlock woolly adelgid and the Southern pine beetle.

She remarked that while some people have a pretty good idea of what Coweeta does, she adds that many "don't understand how famous and important this place is to the academic and scientific community. They just don't know the impact it's had on forest hydrology."

Ford added that education and outreach are also big parts of their program. They host workshops in their conference center that draw visitors from around the globe and they hold Coweeta "Brown Bag Seminars" where they bring in visiting scientists or the lab's own scientists to share background on recent scientific research.

Coweeta averages about 20 tour groups a year at the facility, which includes international scientists, school groups, universities, extension agents and state and private foresters among others.

To illustrate a point about the significance and value of long term research in the study of disturbances in ex-

perimental forest watersheds, Ford draws a series of graphs.

She shows what conclusions would have been drawn if they ended a particular experimental project at 10, 20 or even 50-year intervals. If stopped earlier, some of the various fluctuations and upward and downward trends later observed in these experiments would have gone unrecognized.

"If we didn't have this long term record, we wouldn't know half of the things that are obviously going on in this watershed," Ford said. "We would have had completely different answers every time."

"It helps you put into perspective what you are measuring right now," Ford adds. "It also helps you decipher whether what you are seeing is a local pattern or a regional pattern."

This is why researchers from all over the world come to Coweeta, because they maintain this vast storage house of long term data.

"It's absolutely essential," she said. "It's completely valuable and very, very rare to have a long-term record."

DINING DIRECTORY

YOUR GUIDE TO THE AREA'S BEST RESTAURANTS!

Peppermint Patti's

ICE CREAM & SWEETS

*Voted 'Best Ice Cream in Macon County!'

OPEN FRI, SAT, SUN TILL 8:30 PM

OVER 16,000 HANDMADE WAFFLE CONES SERVED

M-Th. 12:30-8:00 • F-Sun. 12:30-8:30

www.IceCreamFranklinNC.com

712 HIGHLANDS RD. FRANKLIN | 828-526-9966

Corbin's Country Buffet

24 Iotla St. Franklin, NC

828-369-5964

Regular Hours: M-Fri 11AM - 2PM

We Will Be Open Saturday Evenings for Picking on the Square: 5PM - 7PM

Find us on facebook.

Kelly & Dayna Corbin • ccb2012@frontier.com

GO LOCALsm

BANK OF AMERICA

HUNGRY BEAR

WILLY'S

CAFE IRL

NORMANDIE

THAI PARADISE

SUBWAY - GEORGIA ROAD

BENSLEY COTTAGE

CITY RESTAURANT

SUNSET

FAT BLEDES

GAZEBO

WE SUPPORT THE GO LOCAL INITIATIVE

GO LOCALsm

MACON BANK

800.438.2265

Bristol • Cadwell • Columbus • Franklin (2) • Hendersonville (2) • Highlands • Murphy • Saluda • Sylva

THE PEOPLE YOU TURN TO. THE BANK YOU TRUST. SINCE 1922

WWW.MACONBANK.COM