

Kramer Bench...from Page 1A

performed in Lanny's memory by local pilot Wayne Wokey, which served as a fitting tribute to the man who enjoyed flying so much.

"Everybody just wanted to walk over to the hangar and sit on the bench and talk about him and his idiosyncrasies and everything else," Barry said of the dedication. "I think it just allows all of his friends and family to stay connected with him at a place that was so important to him and his friends and family and Fran."

"I love the fact that, from now on, there will be a piece of him there. I will be there probably three to four times a year, and that airport is going to be a stop for my family. And we will go over and make sure that the bench looks nice and make sure it is clean."

The dedication was made all the more special for the small gathering of family by people at the airport and from the community attending to show their respects, and airport Manager Mannheim said he believes the bench will see plenty of use over time.

"We get a lot of people



Lanny Kramer was a longtime pilot who passed away in a tragic accident in 2018. He loved flying this Cessna 182P, which he kept at the Blairsville Airport. Photo/Submitted

that just enjoy coming out there and watching the planes come and go," Mannheim said. "We have a bench that was given to us by United Community Bank, and we have that kind of up under the porch. When Fran was talking about doing some kind of memorial, she landed

on a bench.

"I thought it would be a wonderful idea, that we could put it in the sun so on cooler fall and winter days you could sit out in the sun and be in a safe area and watch the planes. I think it is going to get a lot of use there."

Joining Barry Kramer that nice fall day were his wife Donna, their two kids Ian and Mackenzie, and several other friends and family. Fran Kramer was unable to attend the dedication in Blairsville because she was awaiting return from travel abroad.

Early Voting...from Page 1A

absentee by mail.

And statewide, Week 2 early voting was more than double the first week's ending total of 1.2 million votes cast.

Moreover, this year's early voting period has seen roughly 2.5 times more votes cast compared with the same time through 2016's General Election early voting period, an astonishing testament to the level of electoral enthusiasm in 2020.

Again, early in-person voting for the Nov. 3 election ends Oct. 30, and will not be available on Monday, Nov. 2. People are encouraged to vote early, as turnout is showing to be higher than ever this election, which will likely translate to longer than usual precinct lines come Election Day.

Hours for early voting are between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. through Friday afternoon in the Jury Assembly Room on the bottom floor of the Union County Courthouse, even during lunchtime.

As previously reported, the courthouse is still under a judicial order requiring guests to wear face masks, practice social distancing and submit to temperature checks before entering the building.

People uncomfortable voting in a mask may head to the polls on Election Day, as currently, facial coverings are not being required to vote at precincts, though this is subject to change. There's also the option of requesting an absentee ballot to mail or drop off at the Registrar's Office in the courthouse.

Poll workers are following COVID-19 best practices by regularly sanitizing equipment, and the Union County Government is supplying masks at the courthouse for people who don't have them, as well as hand sanitizer.

Voters cannot display campaign-related materials/clothing at polling places where promoted candidates appear on ballots. For example, voters may not enter wearing hats, T-shirts, masks, etc., promoting Donald Trump or Joe Biden for president. This includes popular MAGA gear.

The ballot features contested elections for the following federal and state offices: President of the United States; two U.S. Senate races; the 9th Congressional District seat; two Public Service

Commissioner races; District 51 State Senator; and 8th District State Representative.

Also on the ballot are uncontested elections for eight local offices, including Clerk of Superior Court, Sheriff, Tax Commissioner, Surveyor, Coroner, Sole Commissioner, District 1 Board of Education and District 3 Board of Education.

The General Election features three statewide ballot initiatives for all Georgians to decide, including two proposed state constitutional amendments and a referendum.

Amendment 1, if passed, would enable state legislators to use specifically imposed fees and taxes expressly for their intended purposes.

This amendment would ensure that specific fees, such as the \$1 old-tire disposal fee charged in the purchase of every new tire, actually go toward their express purpose instead of being allocated elsewhere, as is current practice under state law.

Amendment 2, if passed, would enable citizens to freely sue the state in an attempt to challenge "state or local laws that violate the Constitution of Georgia, the U.S. Constitution, or state law." Currently, would-be plaintiffs need government permission to do this.

Statewide Referendum A "establishes a tax exemption for certain real property owned by charities," according to the ballot, which would benefit some nonprofits like the local Habitat for Humanity.

Election Day will be Tuesday, Nov. 3, from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. That day, voters should report to their pre-assigned voting precinct, of which there are 11 in Union County: Ivy Log, Dooly, Gum Log, Blairsville, Pat Colwell, Trackrock, Coosa, Jones Creek, Owl Town, Choestoe and Suches.

Voters are not required to bring their mailed precinct cards, but they must show a valid photo ID to vote.

Registered voters who will be at least 18 years of age by Election Day are eligible to vote during early voting, though Oct. 5 was the registration deadline for voters looking to participate in the Nov. 3 election.

Absentee ballots are being automatically mailed to voters who informed the Registrar's Office they were elderly or disabled on a previous application, though

all others need to apply to get their mail-in absentee ballot for the General Election.

People may request mail-in absentee ballots by visiting <https://ballotrequest.sos.ga.gov>, calling the local Registrar's Office at 706-439-6016, or swinging by the office at 65 Courthouse Street.

After requesting an absentee ballot, voters can easily track the progress of their ballot – before and after voting – by signing up at <https://georgia.ballottrax.net/voter/>.

People wanting to fill out their absentee ballots/applications and drop them off in person to the Registrar's Office or exterior drop box at the courthouse can do so up to 7 p.m. on Nov. 3, which is the current deadline for acceptance of all absentee-by-mail ballots.

The deadline to request an absentee ballot is Oct. 30. Voters should be aware it could take days for requested ballots to arrive in the mail and potentially several more for completed ballots to be returned for counting when mailed, so it's best to request one well in advance.

An absentee ballot/application must be submitted by the requesting voter, except for a disabled person, who may have a relative by blood or marriage return his or her absentee ballot/application.

Those who receive an absentee ballot by mail but decide to vote in person will need to have their absentee ballot canceled at time of voting, so be sure to bring it to the polls.

Election officials have said double voting is not a concern, as the system will alert poll workers if a voter has, for example, already cast an absentee-by-mail ballot but forgets and shows up at their regular voting precinct on Election Day.

Voters can access the My Voter Page at mvp.sos.ga.gov ahead of the election for information on voter registration status, mail-in application and ballot status, poll location, registration information on file with the county office, sample ballots and more.

Furthermore, voters need only fill out one ballot application, and the best way to check absentee ballot status is by using BallotTrax, checking the My Voter Page or calling the Registrar's Office.

Halloween...from Page 1A

where they will be directed to different stations."

First Baptist is looking forward to following through on its Oct. 31 tradition of hosting a family event for everyone who would participate.

"We do a Fall Festival every year, and typically it is in conjunction with the city," Wright said. "We are right downtown, and we normally have thousands of people for our little area. It is a big deal to us, and we need to give some people some options."

"I know there are other churches doing things during the week next week, but I don't know about Halloween. We want to give families an opportunity to be together and know that churches in this area still care for them."

"This is basically for our families in Blairsville. People are hungry, and they want to be out and doing something, so we are going to take whatever guidelines we can to be as safe as we can."

Also for Halloween, Nottely Marina will also be hosting a three-day event that will run from Thursday, Oct. 29, through Saturday, Oct. 31.

Marina Manager Moriah Doucette said she and her family wanted to keep Halloween alive and give the kids a traditional trick or treat setting.

"We are doing it across three days to help mitigate traffic and the amount of people that show up at one time," Doucette said. "We will have people here for folks that are visiting so that people can ask questions and know where to go. I'll have areas clearly marked for everybody."

"It is a walk-in only event, and we will have people park in the parking lot. They will walk through and trick or treat at different spots. Hole in the Wall will have a trunk or treat set up with this, and along the path as they go around the driveway and parking lot it will be blocked off to cars and be walking friendly."

In addition to trick or treating, Nottely Marina will have other things to keep families entertained as they make their way around the candy stations.

"I've got 2,500 glow bracelets for all the kids," Doucette said. "I will be surprised if we get more than that. Every child must remain

with an adult at all times. More people were interested in this than I thought, and I have gotten a lot of interest in it."

"We will be playing a movie while they trick or treat. The whole family will be dressed up, and the whole property is pretty much decorated. I felt like the kids needed something this year. They have been couped up, and they can't see their friends."

"This was something we could do and still be socially distant. We have been able to do it all summer without boats and the lake, so I was confident that we could give the kids a trick or treat night and still give everybody something to do."

The Marina asks that people use their best judgment in attending to the event, as they want to keep the congestion down as much as possible to make it safe.

Oct. 29-30, the event will run from 5:30 p.m. to 8 p.m., and on Saturday, Oct. 31, it will run from 5:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. For more information, check out the Facebook event page at "HALLOWEEN @ THE MARINA 2020."