

Community Calendar

3-5
The Town of Benson's
131st Birthday

3-7
Pre-School Story Time
at Library 10am

3-12
Pajama Story Time
at Library 6:30pm

3-13
Town Board
Benson Conference
Center 7pm

3-21
Pre-School Story Time
at Library 10am

3-22
Town Board
Benson Conference
Center 7pm

3-24
Easter Eggstravaganza
at Benson Parks & Rec
2-3pm (ages 3-8)

3-30
Good Friday
All Town Facilities
Closed



The Benson Museum of Local History reverberated with a song on February 25th as an impromptu performance from choir members of the St. James Disciples Church brought the evening's Black History program to a close.

It was a joyous moment — in recognition of longtime resident, former Mayor Pro-Tem and commissioner Frederick Douglas Nelson II, Benson's 2018 Black History Month honoree.

An opening prayer set the tone for the afternoon as Reginald Holley, son of Benson Commissioner Maxine Holley and Mr. Nelson's nephew-in-law, made his way to the microphone.

He delivered a passionate address, touching not only on Mr. Nelson's deep impact in the Town of Benson, but his influential tenure as an elected official.

"I am proud to say that my uncle has been on the forefront," he said. "That indeed there is a place on these sacred walls for people of color to have a place... It's among these sacred walls where we all have contributed to the history of our town. Today we honor this pioneer and I look forward to the day that that pioneer's picture hangs at the front of the building."

Mayor Medlin followed Mr. Holley, presenting Mr. Nelson with a desk clock engraved with a commemoration of the event.

Next, Mr. Nelson shared a few thoughts.



"I am reminded of 1997 — as I have learned the Father will have His will and His way... My lips were set to say 'no' about serving (as commissioner), but it came out 'yes,'" he added with a smile.

"However, with the support of my family and those of you that would give me encouragement from time to time — more than I had the day before. I appreciate each and everyone of you."

Mayor's Message

On February 23rd and 24th, the Benson Town Board held a planning and team building retreat at the Benson Fire Department.

The purpose of the retreat was to bring together town commissioners, Mayor, and staff for an intense, focused time to discuss the successes of 2017, the priorities and needs of the Town, and strategies to best address the needs in 2018.

Benson is blessed with an energetic Town Board and staff whose passion is to serve the citizens and move the Town forward in the best way. Here are a few highlights:

- The Police Department has open positions that need to be filled.
- The Board reviewed the need for competitive salaries in certain departments.
- Public Works Director Tim Robbins made a presentation on road and paving needs, and the costs associated with those needs.
- Parks & Recreation Director Matt Smith made a presentation on the recreation plan, Field House project, and future grant applications.
- The board discussed infrastructure needs such as water, sewer, stormwater, and the NCDOT-funded project on Main Street.
- The Board discussed additional personnel needed for the projected growth of Benson.

The two days were very productive and we look forward to sharing more as we establish our goals for 2018 and beyond.

**Working for you,
Jerry Medlin**



PARKS & RECREATION

Adult basketball, volleyball and flag football registration is going on now!

Contact Benson Parks & Recreation to register (919) 894-5117.

Adult Basketball — \$525 per team.

Adult Volleyball — \$325 per team

Adult Flag Football — \$525 per team

LIBRARY



The Mary Duncan Public Library would like to invite everyone to **Pajama Story Time** this month on Monday March 12th at 6:30pm.

Come join them in your best pajamas as we read some of our favorite stories together!

Pre-School Story Time will be on March 7 and March 21 at 10am for all of our younger citizens who aren't quite ready for school!

MUSEUM



Museum Coffee Hour 1st Friday of every month (March 2 and April 6) at 10am.

The Benson Museum of Local History's **digital photo and yearbook** collection can be found on the Digital NC website.

More than 1,000 photos -

<http://www.digitalnc.org/institutions/benson-museum-of-local-history/>



MAIN STREET WORK

NCDOT began replacing stormwater pipes in late February along Main Street. This project is expected to last 45 days.

Portions of Main Street will be closed temporarily throughout this process — detours will be put in place as the work progresses. Traffic will be detoured at Lee and Main and at US301 and Main. Local traffic will still be able to access downtown Main Street using cross streets.

Traffic on US301 will be impacted with lane closures and detours for up to a week. All detours will be clearly marked for the duration of the work.

This project is in preparation for the future resurfacing of Main Street. **The Town of Benson will continue to send out updates on this project as work progresses.**

For questions, comments or concerns contact Public Works Director Tim Robbins at (919) 894-3553.



METER AUDITS

The Town of Benson will be auditing utility meters this month.

Employees will be checking water and electric meters, and/or load management switches installed at residents' homes to ensure the technology is working efficiently to continue to benefit customers.

This is a routine maintenance audit. You may see a Town of Benson employee around your home checking meters this month.

For questions, comments or concerns related to your Benson utilities please contact Erika Simoni at (919) 894-3553.

TAR HEEL TRAVELER TO VISIT BENSON MUSEUM

Scott Mason, host of WRAL's Tar Heel Traveler, will be signing copies of his new book — *Faith and Air: The Miracle List* — at the Benson Museum of Local History on **Saturday, March 10th from 2pm to 4pm.**

Stop by and speak with the Tar Heel Traveler himself and check out his new book! Benson's museum is located at 102 West Main Street.

About *Faith and Air: The Miracle List*:

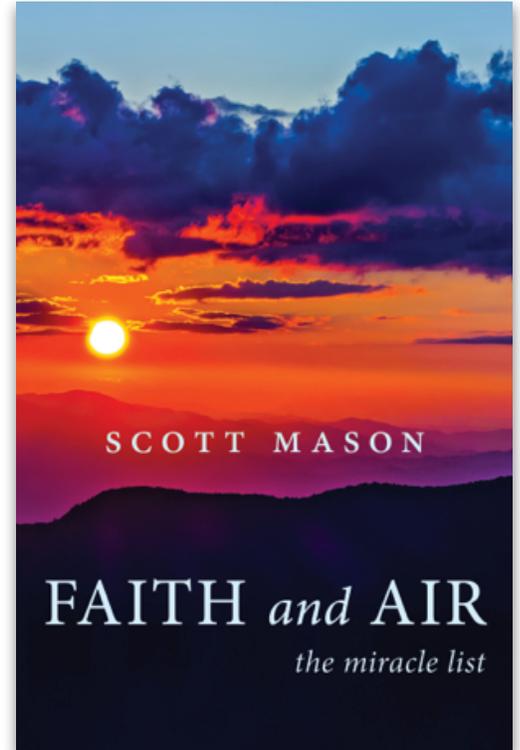
Faith and Air: The Miracle List (Light Messages Publishing) offers a curious mix of humor and faith, even as the author struggles with his own faith. The book is part memoir: A skeptical reporter stumbles upon these miracle stories and begins to make a list—but is also forced to take his own leap of faith.

About Scott Mason:

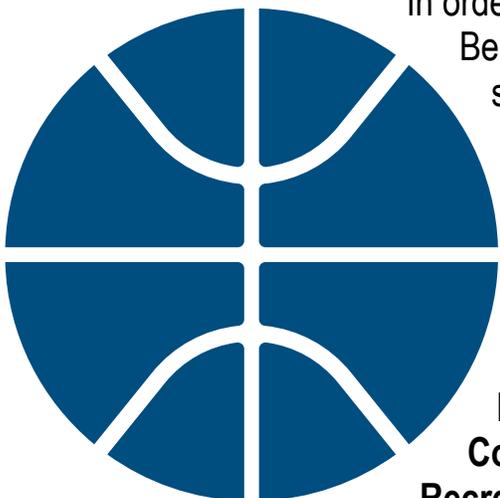
Scott Mason is a broadcast journalist with 35 years of television experience. He has won dozens of awards for documentaries, writing, and feature reporting, including three National Edward R. Murrow awards and 20 regional Emmys. The Electronic News Association of the Carolinas has twice named Scott North Carolina Television Reporter of the Year.

Today, Scott is known as the Tar Heel Traveler. His Monday-Thursday series on WRAL takes viewers along the back roads of North Carolina where he meets memorable characters, finds out-of-the-way places, and unearths fascinating historical footnotes. The series has become so popular it has led to Tar Heel Traveler half-hour specials, which Scott produces each quarter.

Visit thetarheeltraveler.com for more information.



BENSON PARKS & RECREATION SURVEY



In order to better serve the citizens of Benson and surrounding areas, Benson Parks & Recreation has developed a survey to evaluate satisfaction. This information will be used to establish the goals, objectives and priorities of Benson Parks & Recreation. **You will find the survey enclosed with this utility bill.**

You can also take the survey online at townofbenson.com.

Please complete both sides. Surveys can be submitted to Parks & Recreation, Benson Town Hall, Mary Duncan Public Library, or the utility bill dropbox at Town Hall.

Completed surveys can also be mailed to: Benson Parks & Recreation Department - P.O. Box 69 - Benson, NC 27504.

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Mayor
919-894-3511

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Mayor Pro-Tem
919-820-0909

Dean McLamb
Commissioner
919-820-4646

Dr. R. Max Raynor Jr.
Commissioner
919-894-3753

Maxine Holley
Commissioner
919-894-2832

Jim Johnson
Commissioner
919-868-6902

William Neighbors
Commissioner
919-701-2854

Matt Zapp
Town Manager
919-894-1606

Terry Hobgood
Town Clerk/Cultural Arts
919-894-3724

Braston Newton
Assistant Town Manager
919-894-3553

Kim Pickett
Finance Director
919-894-3553

Matt Smith
Parks and Recreation Director
919-894-5117

Chief Kenneth Edwards
Police Chief
919-894-2091

Chief Alan Johnson
Fire Chief
919-894-8990

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JOHNNIE BARFIELD GREEN TURNS 105!

February 24th was Johnnie Barfield Green's 105th birthday!

A celebration was held for Mrs. Green (or as her friends and family refer to her now — Mrs. 105) at Meadowview Assisted Living Center in Smithfield. The activity room was packed for a program that featured stories, laughter, and life lessons centered on one very special lady and Benson resident!

Some highlights included choir music, jazz saxophone, and remarks from a long list of speakers — a message from Dr. Montorom Williams with St. James Disciples Church, childhood stories from Jimmy Abdalla, and memories from former postman Paul Ingram and Mrs. Green's great niece Linda Warren, among many, many others. One of Mrs. Green's peers, 98-year-old Lina Mae Altman from Newton Grove, even sang a special birthday song!

Mrs. Green was recognized with a proclamation from Benson — presented by Mayor Pro-Tem Casandra Stack. Sitting at the front of the room, dressed in bright red with her signature sequined cap, Mrs. Green smiled and laughed along with all the stories and memories of her time as a business owner in Benson.

Mr. Abdalla recalled one of her shop policies from his childhood — turn in an empty soda bottle and receive one piece of candy.

"We went around picking up every bottle in Benson," he said with a chuckle. "I don't think I even knew she sold anything else but candy!"



One of Mrs. Green's peers, 98-year-old Lina Mae Altman from Newton Grove (in purple), sang her a special birthday song!

Mr. Ingram remembered when he started his job as a mail carrier in Benson.

"Everybody told me I had to go talk to Mrs. Johnnie and when I did I realized she already knew me! She knew my mother and father and my aunt, everybody!"

Dr. Williams perhaps put it best.

"When you visit with Mrs. Green, when you sit down and talk to her — she will humble you," he said, referring to her wisdom and calm demeanor having experienced so much of life for so long.