

# Obituaries

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and Respect*

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On Monday, April 13, 2026, Mr. John David Flake, 79, passed away peacefully at his home.

There will be a graveside service at 11:00 a.m. on Saturday, June 13, 2026, at Anson Memorial Park.

John was born October 15, 1946, in Richmond County, NC and was a son of the late Maynard Flake and the late Margaret Ratliff Flake. He was a graduate of Anson High School and earned an associate degree from Wingate Junior College. He also attended East Carolina University.

He worked for a number of years with IBM and retired as a security officer at Brown Creek Correctional Institute in Polkton.

John enjoyed farming, managing the timber on his family's land, riding motorcycles, and often touring the Eastern United States on motorcycles.

Those who are left to cherish his memory are his sister and brother-in-law, Joyce and Jack Thies of Sneads Ferry; his nieces and their families, Jodi Black (who passed away on May 2, 2026) and husband Clint and their daughters, Trinity Juliette Black and Bethany Elaine Black, all of Conover, Jennifer Lee Thies (Alan Smith) of Arvonnia, VA and Jinger Guerrette (Josh) and their children, Zoe Veronique Guerrette and Ivy Matilda Guerrette, all of Chapel Hill.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to Friends of the Anson County Animal Shelter, c/o Stephanie Phifer, P.O. Box 117, Marshville, NC 28103.

The arrangements are in care of Leavitt Funeral Home and online condolences may be made at [www.leavittfh.com](http://www.leavittfh.com).

## James Fetzer Mills

James Fetzer Mills, 64, passed away peacefully at his home in Los Angeles, California, on April 12, 2026.

A graveside service will be held at 11 a.m. on Friday, June 12, 2026, at Eastview Cemetery in Wadesboro.

Born on May 25, 1961, in Wadesboro, James carried his Southern roots with him throughout his life, never losing the warm accent and gentle charm that made him instantly recognizable to friends and loved ones.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Fred Moore Mills Jr. and Frances Davis Mills of Wadesboro.

He is survived by his brother Fred Moore Mills III and sister-in-law Allison Mickle Mills of Wadesboro; his nephew Eli Mills, of Charlotte, North Carolina; and many dear friends and loved ones whose lives were enriched by his kindness, humor and presence.

James graduated from Bowman High School before attending the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where he earned both bachelor's and master's degrees in Communications and Media Studies. Soon after completing his education he moved to California where he made his home for the rest of his life.

For more than a decade James was a respected Los Angeles-based journalist and reporter, best known for his deep and devoted coverage of West Hollywood. He began reporting on the community around 2010 and later became editor of WEHOville, now known as WEHOonline. Most recently he worked as a reporter for Law360. Though he cared deeply about journalism and storytelling, those closest to him will remember him most for the way he cared about people.

James had a gift for staying connected - never missing a birthday, sending thoughtful handwritten cards, checking in with friends and making others feel remembered and valued. He loved long conversations filled with laughter, politics, stories and a little bit of gossip. He especially loved West Hollywood, a community that became dear to his heart over many years.

James found joy in life's simple rituals. He baked Christmas cookies every year and wrapped them carefully as gifts for friends. He enjoyed riding his bicycle through the neighborhood in the evenings and spending time with his beloved cat Zeus. He loved stories in every form, from the headlines he covered to his private enjoyment of soap operas, which perfectly matched his appreciation for humor, emotion and the unpredictability of life.

Friends remember James as observant, loyal, witty and deeply engaged with the world around him. He had an extraordinary memory for details and an even greater capacity for friendship. He showed up for people - not only professionally, but personally - and leaves behind countless memories shared over meals, conversations, celebrations and everyday moments.

Memorial donations may be made to Eastview Cemetery, P.O. Box 274, Wadesboro, NC 28170 or to Project Angel Food.

James will be deeply missed and lovingly remembered by all who knew him.

## Mr. Thomas Brooks Usrey, Jr.

On Wednesday, June 3, 2026, Mr. Thomas Brooks Usrey, Jr., 93, passed away peacefully at Advent Health North Pinellas Hospital in Tarpon Springs, Florida.

A graveside service with military honors will be held at 11:00 a.m. on Thursday, June 11, 2026, at Gum Springs Baptist Church Cemetery in Lilesville, with Mr. Ken Caulder officiating. The family will greet friends following the service at the cemetery.

Tom was born December 16, 1932, in Lilesville, North Carolina, and was the youngest child of the late Thomas Brooks Usrey and the late Berta Henry Usrey. He graduated from Lilesville High School and was a lifelong member of Gum Springs Baptist Church. Although he spent most of his adult life away from home, he maintained his church membership and always considered Gum Springs and the local community his home.

After high school Tom enlisted in the United States Air Force, serving three years. Upon returning he enrolled at Wingate Junior College and earned a two-year degree.

His passion for aviation led him to enlist in the United States Navy where he served six years and earned Captain Wings. During his service he received the Korean Service Medal, National Defense Medal, United Nations Medal and Good Conduct Medal.

Tom furthered his education at Texas A&I University and taught calculus, physics and chemistry in Texas. During his teaching career he applied for a pilot position with Trans World Airlines (TWA) and was one of six applicants hired. He spent 25 years with TWA, living in Kansas City and retiring to Florida as a captain.

After retirement Tom worked as a substitute teacher in Palm Harbor, Florida. Friends fondly recall that whenever he joined them for dinner or drinks, they would say, "The Captain is on the bridge."

He enjoyed returning to North Carolina frequently, hosting family and friends in Florida for visits.

Tom is survived by his wife of 49 years, Toma Griffin Usrey; his children, Sonya Lucito of Tarpon Springs, Mark Usrey of Washington, D.C., and Monica Caravati of Oakland, California; four grandchildren; his nieces and nephews and their families; and his cousin Barbara Coggin, who was like a sister to him.

He was preceded in death by his parents, his son Dr. Thomas Brooks Usrey III, and his siblings, Violet Usrey Lee and Harold Clay "Sonny" Usrey.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to Gum Springs Baptist Church Cemetery Fund, c/o Sarah Harrington, 1364 Haileys Ferry Road, Lilesville, NC 28091.

Arrangements are in care of Leavitt Funeral Home, and online condolences may be made at [www.leavittfh.com](http://www.leavittfh.com).

## Bowman High School Class of 1976 50th Reunion is Sat.

Reflect, reconnect, rejoice with your classmates for the Bowman High School Class of 1976 50th Reunion on Saturday, June 13. The event will be held in the Lockhart-Taylor Center located at 514 North Washington Street in Wadesboro.

It will be an elegant black-tie affair with dinner, dancing, live music, fun, games & photos! Cost is \$75 per classmate and \$50 per guest. Make checks payable to: Bowman High School Class of 1976, PO Box 108, Wadesboro, NC 28170. Info at 704-695-4968.

50 years is certainly worth celebrating!  
Come share in the excitement and party like it's 1976!

## Town of Polkton NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

The public is hereby advised that per N.C.G.S. 159-12, the Town Clerk has submitted the proposed budget for the Town of Polkton for Fiscal Year 2026-2027 to the Town Board of Commissioners.

A public hearing on the proposed budget will be held on Monday, June 22, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. or as soon thereafter as may be heard in the Polkton Fire Department, located at 61 West Polk Street, Polkton, NC 28135.

Copies of the proposed budget are available at Polkton Town Hall for public inspection during normal business hours until the budget is adopted.

All persons interested and wishing to be heard should contact Jerricka Napier at 704-272-7463 in order that their opinion may be a matter of record.

**Jerricka B. Napier**  
Clerk to the Board  
Finance Officer

### TOWN OF MORVEN JOB NOTICE

#### PART-TIME OFFICE DEPUTY CLERK

The Town of Morven is accepting applications to fill the position of a Part-Time Office Deputy Clerk. Applicants must have high school diploma, a valid driver's license, be able to become a Notary Public, proficient in Microsoft Office, and have two years plus experience with an excellent phone manner.

Duties include, but are not limited to: general office work such as filing, customer service, taking daily water samples, record keeping associated with meter readings, and maintaining accounts in reference to water and sewer usage. The hours will be flexible and at the discretion of the Morven Town Council.

Applications must be received by the close of business on Thursday, June 18, 2026. Applications can be picked up at Morven Town Hall between the hours of 9 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Friday. For more information you may call (704) 851-9321.

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**The Town of Morven is an Equal Opportunity Employer.**

### TOWN OF MORVEN

#### Town Clerk Position Available

Salary Range: \$25,000 - \$36,000

**Applications are available at  
Morven Town Hall Monday-Friday 9am-4pm**

**Nature of Work:** Work responsibilities for the Morven Town Clerk include the preparation and maintenance of all Council records and other official municipal documents. Record various documents and vital statistics. Work involves extensive public contact in collecting various files and providing information. Work is performed in accordance with the charter, ordinances and general law, and requires initiative, judgement and ability to work effectively and independently with the public and other officials.

**Duties and Responsibilities:**

- Attends Town Council meetings, prepares agenda, order and minutes of the proceedings and maintains, indexes and preserves all permanent Council and other Town records.
- Validates official documents; oversees posting of official notices, ordinances, and advertisements; records papers with the federal, state and county governments as needed; swears in municipal officials as necessary.
- Acts as the custodian of the official Town Seal.
- Maintains a public information service, and, in response to reasonable requests, furnishes information and material concerning the Town government.
- Accounts for all public monies received by him/her in such manner as the Treasurer may prescribe.
- Performs all duties and exercises all powers incumbent upon or invested in Town Clerks by state law.
- Prepares agenda, mails notifications, advertises, and attends meetings of the Board of Appeals; prepares and distributes minutes of Board of Appeal meetings.
- Acts as, or arranges for, a clerk for all municipal boards and committee meetings.
- Sets up and maintains a records retention and destruction system for the Municipal Center.
- Updates Charter, Code and Ordinances as necessary.

**Additional Requirements of Work:** Thorough knowledge and understanding of the state statutes relating to the duties and responsibilities of Town Clerks • Thorough knowledge of modern office procedures, practices and equipment • Ability to rapidly acquire and assimilate knowledge of the provisions of the Town Charter, Town ordinances, and state regulations relating to operation of the office and the Town government, with ability to communicate same to office staff, other Town officials and the public • Knowledge of bookkeeping • Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with other Town officials, employees and the general public • Proficiency in the use of computers • Ability to organize and maintain records and prepare reports.

**Education, Experience and Training:** Associate Degree in Business or a High School Diploma with a minimum of three years of experience in record management and/or experience in municipal government; or any equivalent combination of education and experience • Considerable experience in clerical work of a responsible nature, including experience with public contact; accounting, business education, office procedures, Quickbooks and other computer programs. Should also be capable of being a certified Town Clerk.

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**TOWN OF MORVEN 301 East Main Street, Morven NC 28119**  
**EOE**

## CLASSIFIEDS

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