

# Obituaries

## Mrs. Kathy Jones Odom

Mrs. Kathy Jones Odom, 63, passed away Saturday, December 5, 2020, at FirstHealth Moore Regional Hospital in Pinehurst.

There will be a memorial service at 3:00 p.m. on Sunday, March 28, 2021, at Roberdel Baptist Church, located at 1118 Richmond Road, in Rockingham with Rev. Jack Lee officiating.

Kathy was born March 4, 1957, in Richmond County, NC, and was a daughter of Violet Hudson Jones and the late Charles Edward Jones. She was a 1975 graduate of Richmond Senior High School. While in high school she was involved in the cosmetology program and, following graduation, she became a licensed cosmetologist.

She was a hair stylist for over 40 years and was the owner of Artistic Hair Designs. She also owned and operated a pet grooming business in her home in Wadesboro. She formed a special friendship with every one of her dear customers.

Kathy enjoyed many types of arts and crafts, painting, floral design, and wreaths. Among her favorite past times was fishing by herself. She also enjoyed attending auctions and stocking her booth at The Marketplace in Albemarle.

Those left to cherish her memory are her husband Willie P. "Buck" Odom; her son Preston Scott Odom and Lana Quach of Charlotte and Lana's daughter Daisy; her mother Violet Jones of Rockingham; her sisters and brother-in-law, Donna Jones

Davis and Garry and Carolyn Jones Ford, all of Rockingham; her nieces and nephew, April Ford, Charles Ford (Stephanie), Kristin Gainey (Chuck), Leslie Simmons (Kenny), all of Rockingham and their families. Special blessings in her life were her co-workers and friends, Shandi Webb, Shelley Smith and Angela Gurley.

The greatest joy in her life was being a loving wife and a mother to Preston. In the words of her son, "Doing for others was her passion. She would often go out of her way doing things for those she loved and those who loved her."

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

## Affordable Care Act Turns 12 This Week

This is the 12-year anniversary of the Affordable Care Act (ACA), the landmark legislation that makes it easier for Americans to access affordable health coverage.

The milestone comes during a unique time in the ACA's history. On February 15, 2021, the federal government launched a first-of-its-kind special enrollment period in response to the mounting job losses—and subsequent loss of employer-sponsored health insurance—caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

During this special enrollment period, which ends May 15, 2021, North Carolinians can take advantage of new measures designed to make getting covered more affordable than ever before.

### Thanks to provisions in the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021:

- More people than ever before will qualify for help paying for health coverage, even those who weren't eligible in the past.
- Most people currently enrolled in coverage obtained on [HealthCare.gov](http://HealthCare.gov), the Health Insurance Marketplace established by the ACA, may qualify for more tax credits.
- Health Insurance premiums will go down after these new savings.

Health insurance is more affordable than many people think. ACA premium costs are capped at 8.5% of a consumer's income. In addition, many existing Marketplace consumers will see a reduction in their monthly premiums. Individuals not eligible for subsidies in the past may now be eligible, but they need to update their information.

North Carolinians who have questions about the new provisions, need help enrolling for the first time, or just want to make sure they are enrolled in the plan that best meets their needs can contact the NC Navigator Consortium for help.

"We encourage everyone to meet with a Navigator to update their accounts and check out the new plans and prices available," said Mark Van Arnem, director of the NC Navigator Consortium. However, appointments go quickly, so I encourage everyone to act now and schedule a free appointment with one of our navigators."

The health insurance landscape can be confusing, but safe, virtual appointments are available. Navigators can help you find a plan that is right for you, your family, and your budget. Make sure you have the peace of mind that comes with health coverage during a pandemic by visiting the NC Navigator Consortium's website at [ncnavigator.net](http://ncnavigator.net) or by calling the Consortium's toll-free helpline at 1-855-733-3711.

## Bill Introduced to Enact Cost-of-Living Adjustment for Retired State Employees and Teachers

The N.C. Retired Governmental Employees Association has released this information: On Monday, March 15, 40 members of the N.C. House of Representatives, representing both parties, introduced House Bill 269 in the General Assembly. HB 269 is a bill to enact a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) for retired state employees and teachers, so that their pension values will not be eroded by inflation. Retirees have received very little in the way of COLAs since the 2008 financial crisis and recession, and the purchasing power of most pensions has since declined by about 20 percent.

The bill, which has support from key legislators in both parties, would fund a two percent COLA for retirees.

For a number of the years, retired state governmental employees and their advocacy groups have called upon the N.C. General Assembly to enact a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) to keep the value of their pensions at par with inflation.

On Monday, March 15, such a bill was introduced into the N.C. House of Representatives with 40 sponsors, including members of both parties. While COLA bills are introduced into the legislature basically every year, rarely do they arrive with bipartisan sponsorship from one-third of the chamber.

Richard Rogers, executive director of the North Carolina Retired Governmental Employees' Association (NCRGEA) said that the state's positive economic projections as well as legislators desire to best serve their districts make the potential for House Bill 269 much closer to becoming a reality for the state's roughly 230,000 retired teachers and state government retirees.

"We've had numerous conversations with legislators to share the need for inflation abating adjustments for our retirees," Rogers said. "When the pandemic hit, no one knew how dire our budget circumstances would become. That said, with the state showing one of the strongest recoveries in the country, getting our retirees inflation relief, especially as we expect inflation to increase, is imperative."

House Bill 269 would appropriate \$96 million in each of the next two years from the General Fund to provide a two percent COLA for teacher and state retirees or their beneficiaries whose retirement commenced on or before July 1, 2020. The COLA would go into effect on July 1 of this year.

Rep. Pat Hurley (R-Randolph), the House Joint Caucus Liaison, introduced the bill, joined by Jeff Zenger (R-Forsyth), Diane Wheatley (R-Cumberland) and Phil Shepard (R-Onslow) as primary sponsors. Legislative members say that Hurley, a retired Randolph County deputy clerk of court, worked tirelessly to recruit a large, bipartisan slate of sponsors.

Hurley said the "time is now" to provide a cost of living adjustment. "This week we're telling our state retirees that they are not forgotten," Hurley said. "We know they need relief and we're working hard to deliver just that. We've raised salaries several times for our employees, now it's time to take care of our retirees."

NCRGEA is the largest association of state and local retirees in the United States with roughly 65,000 members in all 100 NC counties. Prior to the 2008 financial crisis, the General Assembly had provided COLAs through retirement system investment gains on a regular basis, but this has not been a practice due to the lack of steady financial gains in the retirement system. As a result, the value of the average pension, relative to inflation, has declined by roughly 20 percent during that time.

Rogers says he is optimistic about the legislation, and hopes it may couple with other efforts to provide government retiree tax credits and relief for government retirees who served in other branches of government.

## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Don't keep your refrigerator too cold. The Department of Energy recommends a temperature setting of 35 to 38 degrees for the fresh food compartment and zero degrees for the freezer. Make sure the refrigerator doors are sealed airtight to maximize efficiency.



## TOWN OF MORVEN TOWN COUNCIL

# Special Meeting

Thursday, March 25 6 p.m.

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