

Mr. William LeGrand Bennett, Jr.

Mr. William LeGrand Bennett, Jr., 75, passed away unexpectedly in his home on April 21, 2020. Born on March 13, 1945 in Wadesboro, he was the son of William LeGrand and Leila Self Bennett.

LeGrand graduated from Wadesboro High School and Wingate Junior College. He attended the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where he was a member of Chi Phi Fraternity, and received a Bachelor of Arts Degree from North Carolina Wesleyan College in Rocky Mount. He was also a graduate of the School of Banking of the South at LSU in Baton Rouge, LA.

After over a forty year career in Banking, LeGrand retired from First Bank of Mayodan, and relocated in Aberdeen. As an avid golfer, he enjoyed playing countless rounds on a number of golf courses in the Pinehurst/Southern Pines area. During his golfing days, both prior to and after his retirement, he shot a number of holes in one. He always looked forward to playing in the "Cold Beer Open" at Myrtle Beach with a group of his "golfing buddies" from Charlotte and surrounding areas. As a true, blue-blooded Carolina Tar Heel, LeGrand was a fanatical fan of UNC-CH Football and Basketball.

LeGrand was a member of First Baptist Church, Aberdeen. Earlier in his life, he was a member of the Jaycees, Rotary International, and the North Carolina Bankers Association.

LeGrand is survived by his sisters, Leila Self B. Doughton of Hickory and Isabel B. Johnston of Charlotte; his nieces and nephews, Dr. Leila D. and the Reverend Dr. John A. Hinkle, Jr. of Murfreesboro, TN, the Reverend Dr. E. Jones and Mary Lee Doughton of Fate, TX, and Mark B. and Caroline G. Johnston of Charlotte; his great nieces and nephews, John A. "Tripp" Hinkle, III of Auburn, AL, Bennett J. Doughton and Mary Claire Doughton of Fate, TX and Avery C. Johnston of Charlotte; and his special friend, Wanda Benson of Raleigh.

Due to the current Pandemic, Celebrations of LeGrand's life are tentatively planned for mid-July. A memorial service will be held at First Baptist Church, Aberdeen, and a graveside service and Inurnment will be held at Hollybrook Cemetery in Lincolnton.

Memorials may be made to First Baptist Church, 700 North Sandhills Boulevard, Aberdeen, NC 28315 or to a charity of the donor's choice.

LeGrand's family greatly appreciates the assistance of Boles Funeral Home in Southern Pines, Bass-Smith Funeral Home in Hickory, and Leavitt Funeral Home in Wadesboro.

Be Bat-Friendly During Bat Pup-Rearing Season

Bat pup season starts in early May and the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission reminds homeowners to forgo any bat eviction or exclusion in their homes until the end of July.

Bats are ecologically and economically valuable, providing free pest control as they nearly devour their own body weight in insects every night. Their insect removal services are increasing into full force as pup-rearing season begins. May through July marks the time frame when female bats are raising their young - called pups. Young bats, like other mammals, depend on their mother for survival during the first few weeks of life. If a homeowner installs an eviction device or covers up the hole that bats have used to get into the house, female bats will not be able to get to their young after a night of feeding, and the young bats will starve to death. When this happens, the females may be more likely to find their way into the homeowner's living space as they search for a way back to their pups. If any bats are sealed inside, including flightless pups, they will search for a way out and either die inside the house, or find their way into the homeowner's living space.

Newborn pups of many bat species only take three to four weeks to learn to fly, but some require a slightly longer developmental period. Additionally, because different species of bats give birth at different times during the summer, there is a three-month range (May - July) when evictions should be avoided. During this time, preventing the colony from gaining access to the living space is important to minimize the chance that any bats come in contact with people.

If a bat does get into the living space, it is important to determine if any people were directly exposed to it at any point.

"Bites or scratches from a bat are an obvious exposure," said Dr. Erica Berl, a veterinarian with the N.C. Division of Public Health. "However, since bat bites can be small, a bat found in a room with a deeply sleeping or impaired person, a young unattended child, or a person who cannot communicate, is also considered an exposure."

Bats that may have come in contact with a person should be captured safely and tested for rabies, to see if preventative treatment is necessary.

Once the pup-rearing season has ended in late July, homeowners who have bats in their house should contact a professional to help them locate all bat entry points and install eviction devices that allow the bats to leave while preventing them from reentering the home. Licensed Wildlife Damage Control Agents (www.ncwildlife.org/Trapping/Wildlife-Damage-Control-Agent) can provide direct assistance if needed.

Bats return to the same roosts each spring, so it is important not only to maintain your home after excluding bats, but also to help displaced bats find alternate roosting spaces when they return. Homeowners can erect bat boxes near their homes. Place bat boxes on a pole or a building, not a tree, and at least 12 to 20 feet high in a place with at least seven hours of direct sunlight in the summer. For tips on building, buying or installing bat boxes see batcon.org/resources/getting-involved/bat-houses.

For questions regarding bats and other human-wildlife interactions, call the Commission's Wildlife Helpline toll-free at 866-318-2401. The call center is currently open Monday through Friday (excluding holidays) from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Read more tips about bats and how to coexist with them on the Commission's bat information page www.ncwildlife.org/Learning/Species/Mammals/Bat.



Record Visitation Seen at Public Lands During COVID-19 Pandemic

Visitation at many state forests in North Carolina is two and three times greater than what is typical for this time of year, which is stretching the resources of the sites and making it harder for people to practice proper social distancing. Visitors are asked to strictly follow social distancing guidelines to help keep public lands safe, available and open to the public during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Public lands, including state forests and parks, and national forests are experiencing record-high attendance, making social distancing difficult to achieve," said Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler. "While public lands are a great natural resource, we are urging visitors to observe the CDC and public health's recommendations of 6 feet of spacing between each other, frequent and thorough handwashing and staying home if you do not feel well."

Many public lands have temporarily closed, restricting public access until further notice due to heavy visitation. N.C. Forest Service officials note that some visitors are following social distancing guidelines while others are not. Many state parks, state forests and national forests are experiencing large congregations of visitors in parking areas.

For anyone planning to visit public lands during the COVID-19 pandemic, here are some helpful social distancing guidelines to help you recreate responsibly:

- Stay close to home. Enjoy outdoor recreation in your neighborhood. Faraway places are wonderful but traveling long distances can increase your potential to spread illness.
- Pay close attention to guidance in your community before heading outside. Acknowledge any guidelines, restrictions or closures mandated by your local or state government.
- Expect closures. Use the restroom before leaving home.
- Avoid times and places of high use. Visit early in the day or in the middle of the week.
- Keep hiking groups to three people or less.
- Wash your hands and follow CDC guidelines carefully.
- Be a good steward for nature and the people around you.

To download Social Distancing Guidelines for North Carolina State Forests and for updated information about public access to state forests during the COVID-19 pandemic, visit ncforestservice.gov/COVID19.htm. For status of North Carolina State Parks, visit the state parks website, www.ncparks.gov. For a complete list of closures across the National Forests in North Carolina, please visit www.fs.usda.gov.

Food Safety and Bulk Meat Sales

Due to changes in the supply chain, some meat and poultry manufacturers are selling large amounts of product directly to consumers. Raw products should always be handled carefully to prevent foodborne illness, and certain considerations for bulk purchases should be made to ensure the food is handled as carefully as possible.

Food Safety Specialists from NC State Extension has compiled some guidelines on how to handle raw meats. This article is on safely handling bulk poultry purchases. Since raw poultry is associated with bacteria that can cause food borne illness, make sure you wash hands thoroughly before and after handling. Cleaning and sanitizing surfaces after contact with raw foods is very important. Use separate utensils and cutting boards for raw and ready-to-eat or cooked foods. For food safety, all poultry products should be cooked to an internal temperature of 165F.

When transporting raw poultry, bring a secondary container or place cases of meat in an area of your vehicle that can be easily cleaned and sanitized in case of leaks. Alternatively, lay down a towel or blanket that can be washed. Bring a cooler and ice packs if traveling a long distance to purchase to keep poultry products at or below 41F. Make sure you wash your hands or use sanitizer after handling the boxes.

Harmful bacteria grow fast between 41F and 135F. Minimizing the time in this range reduces growth of these harmful bacteria. Raw poultry can be stored in the refrigerator at 41F or below, and will maintain quality for about 7 days. Cooked poultry stored at 41F or below should be consumed within seven days for safety.

Frozen food can be safely stored indefinitely, but quality will eventually decline. For best quality, use frozen poultry within the following time frames - Pieces: 9 months, Whole: 12 months, Cooked: 4-6 months.

By following these safety tips, bulk poultry purchases will be properly handled, transported and maintained for you and your family to enjoy. By Roshunda Terry, County Extension Director

Resources for People with Disabilities

The North Carolina Council on Developmental Disabilities (NCCDD) has provided a central place to share valuable information about COVID-19 to help people with intellectual and other developmental disabilities (I/DD) and their families stay safe and healthy. Please visit the COVID-19 resource page on the NCCDD website (nccdd.org) and feel free to share with your community.

Please note that information about COVID-19 is constantly changing as updates occur, and it is important to get accurate information from reliable sources. For the most up-to-date and reliable COVID-19 information for North Carolina, please refer to the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Resources (DHHS) COVID-19 website: www.ncdhhs.gov.



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