



# The Bulletin

COURTESY OF:  
**FLORENCE EXCHANGE CLUB**  
**THE LONGEST SERVING CIVIC CLUB IN THE SHOALS**

## 2017 - 2018 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Brian Maples, President**  
**Bert Bretherick,**  
*Im. Past President*  
**Doug Evans, Pres. Elect**  
**Fran Nunnally, Secretary**  
**Howard Tinsley,**  
*Treasurer*  
**Board Members**  
One Year  
**Olin Mefford, III**  
**B. W. Gibbons**  
**Parrish Riedel**  
Two Years  
**James Barnett**  
**Jenny Mitchell**  
**Joe Patterson**

Covering a wide range of topics, Mayor Steve Holt spoke to the Florence Exchange Club last Tuesday. “What I’m really pleased about is the quality and professionalism that the city employees show in the service to this community,” he said.

The City of Florence employs approximately 700 full-time employees and approximately 100 part-time employees engaged in various areas of public service including public safety, managerial, technical, clerical, skilled and general labor.

“Jobs are our priority,” Mayor Holt remarked. “At present the unemployment is at 4.6%, significant lower in the last nine months. We are well balanced in retail, commerce and agriculture.”

The closing of the Sears Store (which was 1/5th of the Mall) has hurt the sales tax. “However there are reports of having three smaller outlets looking to settle there.” Also the closing of the Best Buy was a result of internet sales, plus they couldn’t get a two-year lease agreement. A bright spot in the area is the opening of the new Academy Sports.

“We had a successful Handy Celebration week,” he said. Also there might be a prospect in maintaining the Handy family home as a retired professor and family interested.

We have an excellent climate, with four gentle and distinct seasons; terrific recreation opportunities, and the beautiful Tennessee River at our southern boundary; a thriving retail and manufacturing economy; a reverent sense of history and culture; superior schools; and the friendliest people in the world. This is a great place to live, work, and play!” the Mayor said.

“The City began curbside recycling service in 1988. We are proud to have one of the oldest recycling programs in Alabama. Our mission is to divert materials from the landfill, conserve natural resources, and contribute to the growing markets of reclaimed materials. But I am very disappointed in some areas where our residences seemed to toss out trash without any regard,” said.

“Our Fire Department personnel are another great feature for us,” the mayor commented. “We have attained a Class 3 rating now. But we will need to upgrade our equipment and buildings. There are five stations located strategically in the city, but they have not been renovated for the past 20 years.”

He mentioned that the Animal Shelter plans are in the “hopper”, with the need to have several engineering firms to firm up their proposals. “Also we’re looking at improving the Senior Center area to provide labor, equipment, materials and incidentals necessary to upgrade eleven (11) parking lot lights to LED lamps.



Thanks to Jimmy Hall as he introduced the newest Mayor of Florence, Mr. Steve Holt.

## UPCOMING PROGRAMS:

Board Meeting	Aug 14
B. W. Gibbons	Aug 15
Pete Henry	Aug 22
Andrea Holt	Aug 29

Do you have an idea for a speaker?  
 Call Fran



There is work being done in the Wilson Park area. “ The Florence Beautification Board has worked with the City to effect an upgrade of the landscaping in Wilson Park; including the removal of the old wooden benches to be replaced by metal ones.



Benches "In Honor Of" or "In Memory Of" or "Donated By" may be purchased from the City for placement in Wilson Park. The tax deductible cost is \$875.00 and includes the bench, an engraved plaque, and installation. The benches are six feet long with an armrest in the center. They are constructed of powder coated metal, green in color, and have a curved back. “One couple said that Wilson Park was where they had their first kiss,” he commented.

“It looks like the new hospital on Veterans Drive is still on schedule to open in December 2018. It is a 250-bed \$250 million dollar investment to our area. As far as the action on the old hospital building, it has had zero interest, thus it might as well be demolished,” he concluded.

Mayor Holt was elected as Mayor of the City of Florence, Alabama, in October of 2016, in his first bid for office. This new political role followed 22 years of serving as president of the Shoals Chamber of Commerce. Prior to his position with the Shoals Chamber, Mayor Holt was the Chief Executive Officer of Chambers of Commerce in Asheville, North Carolina; Kingsport, Tennessee; and Morristown, Tennessee.

Mayor Holt is a native of Morristown, Tennessee, and holds a B.S. Degree in Political Science and Public Administration from the University of Tennessee. He is a Certified Chamber Executive (CCE), and a Certified Economic Developer (CEcD)

COMMITTEE WORK...



Norm Ross says the benches are ready to be installed in the elementary schools.

August 14 will be the first of several all week long. It will be at **Forest Hills school**, at 1 PM.

Two will be installed on Tuesday, August 15: **Waterloo** at 8:30 AM and **Shoals Christian Academy** at 2:00 PM.

Two more will be delivered on Wednesday, August 16: **Harlan** early at 7:30 AM and at **Wilson** around 2:00 PM.

On Thursday, August 17, one will be **Rogers** at 2 PM.

To finish out the week, one will be installed at **Weeden** at 7:30 AM on Friday.

On Monday August 21 one will be presented to **Underwood** at 9:00 AM

Dr. Wells reported person in the news recently:

A front page article in the **Times Daily** about Norm Ross and the Buddy Bench. (Also he was on Channel 46 TV Monday night).

Celebrating this month:



- Bill Sutherland 8/10
- Laura Williams 8/12
- Jennifer Cornelius 8/26
- Howard Tinsley 8/31

**(Editor Note: the following was prepared by Andrea Holt)**

**What is a Buddy Bench?**

Consider what it must feel like to be a child who has no one to play or talk with at school recess. Or Perhaps a child that is new to the area. Maybe as a child even you had trouble making new friends.

The Florence Exchange Club’s Buddy Bench Program is a unique way to provide inclusion opportunities for children who may be shy, reserved, or new to the school neighborhood. And the beauty of the Buddy Bench is that children can use this tool to make new friends without having to publicly rationalize those struggles.

More than just putting a Buddy Bench in a child’s area, the usefulness of this sitting area is that children who are having trouble making friends or finding a friend to talk to have a place where they know new friendships can be

formed. Children having trouble finding a friend can simply have a seat on the Buddy Bench. Children who aren’t shy or are willing to be a ‘friend’ to others are instructed to be watchful for someone sitting alone. Once there is a lone child on the bench, children who have committed to being a friend will find ways to invite play.

The Buddy Bench is designed to allow children who struggle with getting to know their peers and children who are open and willing to share a friendship to be able to inconspicuously sit together and begin to develop a friendship that will continue to develop.

## Buddy Bench Sign Up

<u>Monday - August 14th</u>	<u>Forrest Hills School</u>	<u>1 pm</u>
Vance Brian Buddy Jennifer Carolyn		
<u>Tuesday - August 15th</u>	<u>Waterloo School</u>	<u>8:30 am</u>
Vance Ralph Dr. Joe Flippen		
<u>Tuesday - August 15th</u>	<u>Shoals Christian</u>	<u>2 pm</u>
Carolyn Buddy Joel		
<u>Wednesday - August 16th</u>	<u>Harlan Elem</u>	<u>7:30 am</u>
Vance Doug Joe Patterson		
<u>Wednesday - August 16th</u>	<u>Wilson Elem</u>	<u>2 pm</u>
Vance Buddy Joe Patterson Bert Carolyn		
<u>Thursday - August 17th</u>	<u>Rogers Elem</u>	<u>2 pm</u>
Carolyn Adin Doug Vance		
<u>Friday - August 18th</u>	<u>Weeden Elem</u>	<u>7:30 am</u>
Vance Brian Fran James		
<u>Monday - August 21st</u>	<u>Underwood Elem</u>	<u>9 am</u>
Teresa Bert Buddy Vance		



FEC Member Norman Ross (center in red jacket) saw an article in the National Exchange Club Magazine about the Buddy Bench and proposed the project to the club. He then approached the superintendent of schools and a few donors for supplies. Ross spent eight months designing and, with the students of Allen Thornton Career Technical Center, constructed 21 benches.

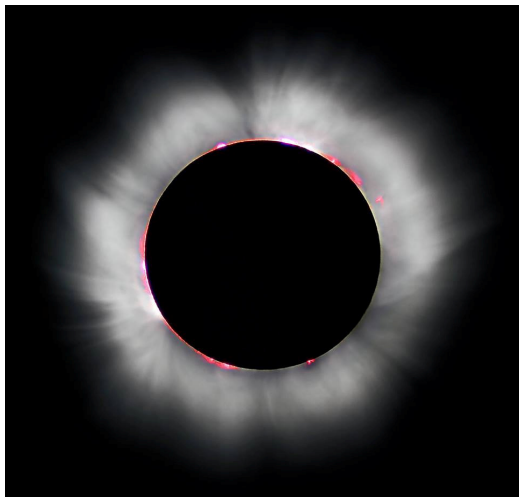
Shown are committee members Bill Sutherland, Joe Flippen, Ross, Vance Persall and James Barnett.

Ross plans to provide one bench to the Alabama District Exchange Club “hoping other clubs in Alabama will take on this project.”

On Monday August 21, the moon will cast its shadow across North America, giving people an incredible rare opportunity to witness a solar eclipse. Many will see the partial eclipse, but a narrow band approximately 70 miles wide stretching from Oregon to South Carolina will be the path of a total eclipse. This will be the first solar eclipse to cross the entire continental US in over a century.

An eclipse occurs when the light of the sun is blocked. In the case of a lunar eclipse, the Earth casts a shadow on the moon.

In a solar eclipse, the moon casts a shadow on the Earth. In order for either event to occur, the earth, moon and sun must align perfectly. During a solar eclipse, the moon casts two shadows: a lighter shadow known as the penumbra and an inner shadow called the umbra.



Viewers of the event in the penumbra will witness a partial eclipse; however, viewers lucky enough to be in the narrow path of the umbra will witness a total eclipse.

“Partial solar eclipses are not that rare,” says Dr. Billy Teets, outreach astronomer at the Vanderbilt Dyer Observatory. “In fact, there is a partial solar eclipse occurring somewhere on Earth about every five and a half to six months.

“However, being in the path of a total solar eclipse at any one location is exceptionally rare -- this occurs on an average about once every 360 to 400 years,” he said.

Solar glasses are the most common type of eye protection for viewing the sun. They block 100 percent of ultraviolet and infrared light and only transmit about one-millionth of the sun’s visible light. The glasses are available online and are very affordable. Wear eye protection throughout the partial eclipse.

**(Editor Note:** The above information was from a report written by Trent Scott to the *Tennessee Magazine*.)