



# SPECIAL DAYS & GUESTS 2021

## THURSDAY | AUGUST 12

### OPENING DAY!

**Senior Citizens Day:** Senior citizens (55 and older) admitted free. Cleveland County Council on Aging will place large containers at the main gate to collect nonperishable food and hygiene items for the pantry at the Neal Senior Center.



**6:30 PM: Parade of Champions**

## FRIDAY | AUGUST 13

### Salute to Academic Achievement Day

JROTC Unit of Blackman High School of Murfreesboro, Tenn., under the instruction of retired Col. Jeffrey Gaylord, will post the colors for all games on Friday and Saturday.

## SATURDAY | AUGUST 14

### USAA Military Appreciation Day

**3:30 PM:** Ceremony to honor Mitch Harris, Mt. Holly native, U.S. Naval Academy graduate, Navy veteran, former Legion baseball and MLB player, and Lt. Col. Brad H., a Shelby native, former Legion player, who is currently active Army with U.S. Special Operations Command.



## SUNDAY | AUGUST 15



**Atrium Health**

### Atrium Health Salute to Healthy Living Day

**10 AM:** Worship service led by Pleasant City Church

**3:15 PM:** Presentation to J.J. Guinozzo, celebrating 50 years as the scoring czar for the ALWS.

**3:40 PM:** Autograph session in The McIntosh Law Firm Hospitality Tent with Mitch Harris; Buddy Green, who recommended Harris to the U.S. Naval Academy; Kermit Smith, Appalachian State University head baseball coach and Harris' Legion coach; and J.J. Guinozzo.

## MONDAY | AUGUST 16

### Youth Athletic Day

**5:45 PM:** Recognition on the field of two North Carolina ALWS champions: Shelby Post 82 (1945) and Charlotte Post 9 (1965). Members of both teams have been invited to attend.

## TUESDAY | AUGUST 17

### Championship Tuesday!

Seven-time NASCAR champion and current NTT driver Jimmie Johnson will throw out the first pitch. Miss Gastonia 2020 Julia DeSerio will sing the national anthem. Skydive Carolina parachutists will deliver the game ball. Fireworks after the game!

# SPECIAL GUESTS

*The Honor of Your Company is Requested...*

As part of the **10th anniversary** of the ALWS in Shelby-Cleveland County, the local Executive Committee is offering free admission to all 15 games to U.S. military veterans and active military personnel and their spouses. Here is a brief introduction to the special guests helping to celebrate this landmark year.



**Mitch Harris**

Mitch Harris made his way from American Legion baseball play in Belmont, NC, to the U.S. Naval Academy team to deployment and then to the St. Louis Cardinals. See a full story about his journey on pages 35-37.



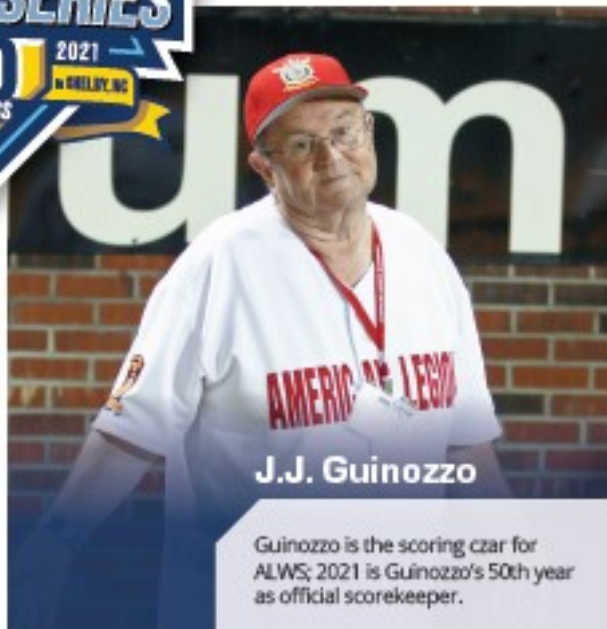
**Buddy Green**

Green was defensive coordinator for the Navy football team when he saw Mitch Harris playing high school baseball and recommended him to the U.S. Naval Academy.



**Kermit Smith**

Smith was Mitch Harris' ALB coach. Smith has been head baseball coach at Appalachian State University for five seasons. In 2021, App State posted the program's first winning record and best Sun Belt finish since joining the league in 2015.



**J.J. Guinozzo**

Guinozzo is the scoring czar for ALWS; 2021 is Guinozzo's 50th year as official scorekeeper.



**American Legion  
National Commander  
Bill Oxford**

Bill Oxford has the unique distinction of holding the office of National Commander for consecutive terms. The coronavirus which disrupted lives the whole world over led The American Legion to forego a national convention in 2020; therefore, Oxford remained in office for 2021.  
*(See article on page 15)*



**Jimmie Johnson**

Johnson competed full-time in the NASCAR Cup Series 2002-2020, winning the championship seven times. He transitioned to the NTT IndyCar Series on a part-time basis in 2021. Johnson will throw out the first pitch for the ALWS Championship game on Tuesday.

**Retired Colonel  
Jeffrey Gaylord**

U.S. Army veteran Gaylord is instructor for the Clarksville High School JROTC in Clarksville, Tenn. The unit's Color Guard will present the colors for the Friday and Saturday games.

**Skydive Carolina  
Featuring Gene Stuart, Judy Girard and  
Shelby native Steve Vaughn**

Skydive Carolina will deliver the game ball via parachute before the championship game at 6:30 PM. Tuesday

**Julia DeSerio**

DeSerio, Miss Gastonia 2020, will sing the national anthem before the championship game on Tuesday. A native of Shelby and a graduate of Gardner-Webb University, she is the chorus and piano teacher at Crest Middle School and worship leader at Zoar Baptist Church.



**American  
Legion  
Post 9  
of Charlotte, NC**

Surviving members of the 1965 team that won the ALWS will receive an official presentation at home plate Monday, Aug. 16, before the 7 PM game.