

Driver immortalized, Racing world remembers

Written by

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Governor Mike Easley joined the racing world today in honoring a man with 283 top 10 finishes in the world of NASCAR.

A stretch of 421 was dedicated in the late driver's honor.

He was a great driver, but according to Easley was a champion also in his service to other people.

That man, Benny Parsons, was born in Wilkes County.

Hailed as one of the top 50 Greatest Drivers, Parsons would be thrilled to have a five-mile stretch of 421 named in his honor, his cousin Gladys McGlamery says.

She says today would have been one of the highlights of his life.

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Wilkes County Commissioners approved the naming resolution in August, and formally approved it in September. The stretch of highway runs from the Maple Springs community to the Watauga County Line. Hollywood has its stars, and Wilkes has its highway. Another stretch has already been dedicated in Junior Johnson's honor. Johnson was present with fellow driver Ned Jarrett. He says no one is more worthy than Benny Parsons.

He loved Wilkes County and the people loved Parsons, Johnson says.

After retiring from NASCAR, Parsons took on another project: broadcasting. Friends like Allen Bestwick called him unforgettable.

The ceremony was held at the Benny Parsons Racing Museum in Wilkesboro.