**2007 revaluations to go out Jan. 15**

Property revaluations are in the works for 2007 and commissioners are bracing for the traditional volatile backlash.

At the Dec. 4 Macon County Commission meeting, Tax Administrator Richard Lightner explained the regulations behind the county's every four-year revaluation process, how revaluations are determined and how the appeal process works.

Citing several real estate sales in various areas of the county since 2003, he showed how the county's consistent growth and the rising market values of property will undoubtedly raise the tax base considerably in 2007.

Based on the 2003 revaluation, the county's adjusted tax base in 2004-2005 was $5,572,174,261. Lightner said the

• See REVALUATIONS page 11

**County to consider moratorium on Dec. 18**

Commissioners have heard the outcry. Now, following the county planning board's lead, they are ready to invoke a moratorium on high-rise construction in the county.

The Dec. 4 Macon County Commission meeting was continued until Dec. 18 at 6 p.m. when commissioners will vote on adopting a six-month moratorium on high-rise construction of commercial or residential buildings over four stories or 48 feet high.

Between now and Dec. 18, County Attorney Lesley Moore and County Planner Stacey Guffey will work on language for the moratorium. Moore said the moratorium must be narrowly crafted and involve a reasonable amount of time to be legal and binding.

The prospect of a 10-story condominium complex on U.S. 64 east across from the Community Bible Church has sparked a county-wide grassroots movement to prohibit such building anywhere in the county.

During the public comment

• See MORATORIUM page 4

**King and queen for the night**

Seniors Sara Bates and Nick Kerhoulas were crowned king and queen of the homecoming court Saturday, Dec. 2 at the dance held at the Highlands Country Club's Hudson House. See photos pg. 12. Photo by Jim Lewicki

**Commission makes plans for the future**

New faces took their seats at the Macon County Commission table Dec. 4 and new titles were assigned as Commissioners Allan Bryson and J.D. Shepherd left the table.

Vice Chairman Charlie Leatherman was unanimously nominated and elected chairman of the commission. After several nominations were offered and withdrawn, newly elected Commissioner Ronnie Beale was named vice chairman.

"In light of our tradition of bipartisan leadership on the commission, I would like to nominate Commissioner Beale as vice chair," said Commissioner Jim Dawis, who had been one of the commissioners nominated for the position.

Chairman Leatherman was quick to put forth his plan for the commission over the next few years citing upcoming changes in

• See COMMISSION page 3

**RiverWalk $400,000**

After breaking twice for closed meetings on the subject, hearing impassioned pleas from homeowners, attorneys, and evidence from town employees, the Town Board moved to hold RiverWalk developers accountable for soil and erosion violations at its site.

Instead of signing the $5,000 settlement resolution discussed at the Nov. 8 meeting with RiverWalk attorney Billy Clarke, at the Dec. 6 Town Board meeting, commissioners voted unanimously to reject the previously discussed settlement that would wipe clean 10 violations dating from the summer through Oct. 24 – each for $500.

"After hearing evidence to the substantial harm done and due to the significant amount of money it will take to remedy and rectify the harm done, I move that we reject the settlement and impose a $400,000 fine for the two distinct areas where we've had violations," said Commissioner Amy Patterson.

Patterson was referring to two
Riverwalk was never 'on track'

Dear Editor,

Mayor Don Mullen stated in his Nov. 16 From My Perspective column in Highlands' Newspaper that the Riverwalk development was "back on track."

As the sole independent homeowner located in the Riverwalk development, we respectfully disagree with the mayor. To be "back on track" suggests Riverwalk had to be "on track" at one time. Riverwalk has never been "on track."

Our home is located in the center of the development and for the past year we have been surrounded by construction chaos. We have lived through three complete staff changes with each change following a period of gross mismanagement, fines and further construction delays. Riverwalk has promised us the moon and stars only to deliver cut power, phone, and water lines; a washed-out driveway; blocked access to our property; along with many other things.

However, the worst of these offenses is their blatant disregard for the destructive amount of silt they are allowing to flow from their property into the Cullasaja River and ultimately Mirror Lake.

We have witnessed and photographed Riverwalk's numerous silt spills, several of them intentional where workers released silt fences holding water and silt into the stream bordering our property which drains to the Cullasaja River.

In every incident we called the town to complain and they responded with the appropriate fines to the development. Unfortunately, this did not and has not dissuaded Riverwalk from committing the same offenses again and again. Riverwalk continues to arrogantly violate the laws of Highlands and North Carolina and they have made it crystal clear that they have complete disregard for its neighbors and the town of Highlands.

Therefore one can imagine our frustration when we learned the Town Board "settled" with the Riverwalk developers for a grossly inferior fine amount. Other fines prior to this date are still outstanding.

Whatever the circumstances surrounding the settlement, we trust that in the future the Board will refuse to negotiate with the developers. The Town Board approved this development and is ultimately responsible for the finished product. One can only hope it will be what the developers promised... but beware Riverwalk has yet to live up to one of its promises.

We fear the town will be left with a monumental clean-up project, one that all taxpayers will bear. Each rain brings additional silt runoff and at this rate there could be a land bridge damming the Cullasaja River.

The Town Board has two options: either fine Riverwalk to the full extent EVERY time they break the law; or be prepared to require them to restore the waters and land affected by their failure to minimize the detrimental effects of the sedimentation pollution.

Stop settling with the developers! It is the Town Board's job, duty and obligation to ensure that the laws of Highlands are enforced. They need to remember the responsibilities they pledged to uphold when they were elected to public service.

There is nothing to be settled or negotiated, demand that Riverwalk follow the law.

Bill and Liz Daughtrey
Highlands
Highlands needs football!

Dear Editor,

Imagine a crisp, autumn, Friday night in one of our beautiful small mountain towns. Everything about the scene is ideal, except one thing, the fields are empty. A common thread in small towns America is high school football on Friday nights and our dream is to see football come to the mountains.

We understand the problems associated with being a small school and the limited resources we all have which is why we are proposing a different idea. 8-man football is played all over America especially in areas with smaller populations and smaller schools. It is played with significantly less coaches, but with the same intensity and feel of 11-on-11 football.

There are schools playing 8-man football all over eastern North Carolina although they are in the private school sector. After talking to the manager of one of their leagues, Russel Leake of Northeast Academy, I was able to discover what it would cost to outfit a player and the amount of students it requires to have a healthy program. We learned that we can launch a program from scratch for under...
\*OBITUARY\*

James Howard Keener

Jamie Keener, loving husband, devoted father and grandfather, and friend of many died peacefully on November 28, 2006 at the age of 69. Born in Mt. Pleasant, Arkansas on October 17, 1937, he served in the U.S. Army before spending his career with Keener Brothers Construction Company in Highlands, NC. Splitting his time between Highlands and Raytown, Georgia, Jamie enjoyed family, friends, Pat’s Store, fishing, deer hunting, barbecue contests, and cattle farming. He was chairman of Macon County School Board from 1978-1988.

Jamie is survived by his wife and lifelong companion, Mary Keener; daughters Sharon Manning and husband Mike of Charlotte, NC; son Tim and wife Donna of Raleigh, NC; son Michael and wife Stephanie of Zurich, Switzerland; daughter Melanie Miller and husband Buddy of Highlands, NC; and brother Johnny Keener of Destin, FL. He is also survived by his seven grandchildren, Christine, Kelsey, and Caleb Keener, and Benjamin and Jonathan Miller. An eighth grandchild is expected in March.

Admired for his generosity, sense of humor, and kindness, Jamie touched the lives of many throughout his life. As a husband, father, friend, and mentor, he demonstrated integrity, courage, wit, and a ready smile that should serve as an inspiration to all of us.

A funeral service was held at Yellow Mountain Baptist Church in the Norton Community at 11 a.m. on Saturday, Dec. 2. Officiating were Reverend Walter Wilson, Reverend Wayne Price and Reverend Keith Ashe. Interment followed at the Stewart Family Cemetery. Pallbearers were Tim, Michael and Don Keener, Buddy Miller, Mike Manning, David Sims and Gene Massey.

Memorial contributions may be made to the Lewis Rathbun Wellness Center, 121 Sherwood Rd., Asheville, NC 28803.

Arrangements were by Bryant Funeral Home, Highlands, NC.

...COMMISSION continued from page 1

Macon County, which the commission will have to deal with, he said.

“Macon County is going to face more changes in the next five years than it’s faced in the past 25,” he said. “This board will face some of the most difficult situations and circumstances and face the hardest choices then ever before, but the people have put us here to do what’s best for Macon County. The difficulty comes in separating that from self-interests.”

Leatherman said this term’s board needs to put Macon County in a position so 10 years from now it can talk about how Macon County is, not was.

“Change is upon us, but we need to keep our traditional values while dealing with change. It’s a delicate balance,” hesaid. “There will be development issues. We need to have a balanced economy.”

In coming years, Leatherman said the new board will have to face a challenging economy.

“Change is upon us, but we need to keep our traditional values while dealing with change. It’s a delicate balance,” he said. “There will be development issues. We need to have a balanced economy.”
Is that a banana in your pocket?

Before I even begin with this, I am going on record to confess I am a cheapo. Done! Finished! Call me Mr. Cheapskate! I am only going to find out money was not so tight. As time went on and things got even better, I could not put down my old ways. I constantly bargain shop. I look into the Internet for the best buys. I always put the generic brand in the shopping cart, but sometimes the discount will switch to a name brand if I'm not looking. No high priced spread in this house. Got the picture?

Years ago, there was a movie theatre in our neighborhood that let cops and their families in free. It was accepted practice in those days so one night I took the l'il missus to a movie only to find it was restricted with no passes allowed. Since I am too cheap to buy tickets, I told the cashier I would see another feature. Once inside the building, I made a quick stop at the rest room where I did nothing and a quick visit to the candy counter where I bought nothing. Then I looked around to see who was looking, grabbed an extremely reluctant wife and dragged her into the restricted show.

I was feeling real smug sitting there among a sea of people who had paid top dollar to be there. Just as the movie started, the theatre manager walked down the aisle and shined his flashlight in my eyes. "Excuse me sir, may I see your tickets?" I was speechless. Worse yet, as we were being thrown from the building, we met our teenage son walking in. He told a friend, "My parents are being kicked out of the building!" We were being thrown from the building, we met our teenage son walking in. He told a friend, "My parents are being kicked out of the movie. How cool is that?" He was so proud of us. Being a cheapo is very hard sometimes. Ask me if the l'il missus spoke to me for over a week. Ask me if I was on triple probation.

Have you priced candy at a movie theatre? No. I'm not talking about our Ruby Cinema but the big boys with 16 screens. Once I bought a normal sized package of M & M's and the cashier said "$3.25 please." I told her I didn't want the whole box but just one package but she insisted it was $3.25. Once inside the darkened theater I counted the morsels and learned I was being charged one cent each. What a rip off!

Now I smuggle food into the movies. It's easy using my new "movie pants" I bought, on sale of course, that have big cargo pockets. I always ask the missus, "Want a bite of my \l'il missus to a movie only to find it was restricted with no passes allowed. Since I am too cheap to buy tickets, I told the cashier I would see another feature. Once inside the building, I made a quick stop at the rest room where I did nothing and a quick visit to the candy counter where I bought nothing. Then I looked around to see who was looking, grabbed an extremely reluctant wife and dragged her into the restricted show.

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When is war justified? Part 2

It must have been clear from the first part of this essay that I think war is seldom justified. The whole concept of “just war” is an anachronism, left over from the days of omnipotent monarchs, states controlled by religious entities, or the proto-adolescent passion of nationalism.

We can acknowledge that nations, like individuals, are entitled to use force in self-defense. Sometimes they will need to come to the aid of an ally who is under attack, or intervene in a genocide conducted by some other nation-state.

But always they must have honestly exhausted all diplomatic means before waging war. This is the tricky part. Politicians will lie, rationalize, exploit, and find a thousand and one excuses to do whatever they want to do; after all, they’re human. And often what they want to do is deter the enemy with every weapon in their arsenal as long as they think they can win; after all, they’re human.

This is precisely what Israel did recently in Lebanon, or, for that matter, the U.S. is still doing in Iraq. It’s no coincidence that both misadventures turned out badly for the perpetrators. The same weapons that can be used to kill thousands and even millions can be neutralized by urban and guerrilla warfare.

Even the most powerful occupying force is often impotent in the face of hit and run tactics. The only exception to this rule are occupying powers that are willing to use draconic measures against the local population, like the Nazis and Soviets did.

A typical tactic was the mass execution of an entire village when a single soldier was harmed by guerrillas. Fortunately, democratic societies seldom have the stomach for such reprisals. In a time of quickened world communication and reaction, it’s almost impossible to get away undiscovered with such behavior, and to escape some kind of sanction.

I do believe that acknowledging our sometimes brutal nature is no longer an excuse for waging war (with the exceptions noted above) in the era of weapons of mass destruction. Distinctions between soldiers and non-combatants are extremely difficult to make, and armies are not well-suited for such subtlety. They are basically a conglomerate of individual killing machines, making up a far larger killing machine, like herds of hyenas or packs of wild dogs.

I think I know how wars among nations could be abolished, but it would take a presently unimaginable and revolutionary commitment to change by the major powers. First of all, every nation would have to give up some of its sovereignty to a central authority, like the U.N., or hopefully a better model, like the European Union. A military division would have to be formed, with personnel contributed by all nations. Gradually, national armies and possession of weapons would be prohibited. Given the hysterical reaction of many Americans to very minor abrogation of sovereignty, the chances of this happening are slim to none.

So why am I even suggesting such a scenario? I’m not an idealistic dreamer, but I fully believe that eventually some such alternative to war will exist. It will probably take a number of ugly nuclear or biological wars before nation-states come to their senses, but it will probably happen—or all sentient life on this planet will be destroyed beyond redemption.

Barring this kind of change, there is little hope of eliminating war. Today we are also experiencing a new kind of conflict, against an enemy of loosely organized cells, a type of warfare more like attacks by criminal gangs. If I knew how to stop this terrorist activity, I’d offer it to the Pentagon.

... MORATORIUM continued from page 4

Highlands’ mayor and on county boards said planning and zoning has been talked about for 25 years in the county and it’s time the county be proactive. “You can’t afford to be reactive when there’s time to fix something ahead of time,” he said. “The time has come to preserve what Macon County is all about. It’s time to be proactive and preserve what we have here. We don’t need high-density development like this in Macon County.”

Elaine Whitehurst and others said Macon County’s asset is its natural beauty, environment, climate and sweet atmosphere. People don’t come here to look at high-rise buildings. The economy depends on real estate, construction and development but the county’s biggest asset is its natural beauty. High-rises will take away from that and affect the county’s economy.

Leila Howland said growth is good, development can be good, but ill-conceived development that threatens a community is not good.

Commissioner Jim Davis said dealing with regulations about property rights causes him great angst. “But we have done well without high-rises and I think we can continue to do well without high-rises.”

The Dec. 4 Macon County Commission meeting has been continued Dec. 18 at 6 p.m at the courthouse. The moratorium will be voted on at that time.
So far its 6-1

On Nov. 28, Highlands beat Rabun Gap-Nacoochee 65 to 54.

High scorer was Jason Aspinwall with 26 points, 11 rebounds and 3 assists. Next up was Alec Schmitt with 27 points, 6 rebounds and 8 assists. Aspinwall, Schmitt, Nick Kerhoulas and Arthur Reynolds were on court for 32 minutes.

On Nov. 30, Highlands beat Hendersonville 71 to 62.

High scorer was Alec Schmitt with 27 points, 9 rebounds, 10 assists and 2 blocks. Next up was Jason Aspinwall with 24 points, 8 rebounds and 4 assists. Schmitt, Aspinwall and Nick Kerhoulas were on court for 32 minutes.

On Dec. 1, Highlands Homecoming Game, Highlands beat Andrews 51 to 46 in overtime.

High scorer was Alec Schmitt with 21 points, 5 rebounds and 5 assists. Next up was Nick Kerhoulas with 12 points, 3 rebounds and 1 assist; and Jason Aspinwall with 9 points and 1 rebound. Schmitt and Kerhoulas were on court 37 minutes. Aspinwall was on court 29 minutes.

On Dec. 4, Highlands beat Robbinsville 68 to 50. High scorer was Alec Schmitt with 28 points, 6 rebounds and 4 assists. He was on court 24 minutes. Next up was Jason Aspinwall with 16 points, 9 rebounds and 5 assists. He was on court 16 minutes. Darren Keener scored 11 points with 8 rebounds. He was on court 16 minutes. Nick Kerhoulas, on court for 24 minutes, scored 6 points, with 6 rebounds and 5 assists.

hn11-31

Highlander Jason Aspinwall shoots at the Rabun Gap-Nacoochee game.

Photo by Noel Atherton

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• ANOTHER VIEW •

Let’s cherish diversity

One of the things I noticed in Cape Town was the presence of a large Muslim minority. I didn’t actually count Muslims, but there were many. How did I know they were Muslim? It wasn’t because they were carrying explosives or slaughtering Jews and Christians. It was because many women were wearing the hijab, or head scarf. A few were wearing the burqa, which to my western eye, gave them a mildly sinister, ninja-like appearance. A few of those wearing only the hijab reminded me of Jackie Kennedy or Grace Kelly. Or maybe it was Katherine Hepburn, but it was a good look in any case. The point is that they were walking around, attracting little notice, except from me. We even saw a few men dressed in traditional garb. Maybe they were clerics.

We, in the Western world, get in quite a snit about the hijab. It seems to me that women with bodies like mine wearing hip huggers and midriff revealing tops should evoke far more outrage. We assume that the hijab represents repression of women. I remember when nurses wore a garment that resembled burqa, but with the face exposed. The habit, as it was called, was a loose fitting head-to-foot shroud and depending on the Order, featured an elaborate head covering.

When I was a boy growing up in the Catholic Church, women were required to cover their heads before entering the sacristy. I knew the world was changing when a young girl could simply pull a Kleenex from her purse, pop it on her head, and secure it with bobby pins.

When I was studying medicine, learning how to apply a Band-aid, nurses wore caps. The cap was awarded in a candle-light ceremony that marked the successful completion of the first year of nursing school, and as far as I knew, was worn with pride. Each school had its own distinctive design. Some were simple pill boxes. Others featured wings and racing stripes. Many required some assembly. They returned from the laundry starched stiff and as flat as a board. A crease here, a fold there, a strategically placed stud and a nursing crown was born. It was sort of like origami. I loved them all.

Major medical centers attracted nurses, and their caps, from around the country. It provided a pleasant illusion of diversity and individuality.

Nursing caps, hats in Catholic services, and elaborate habits for nuns have all disappeared victims of a number of factors, fashion, comfort, and feminism. But they were present, common, accepted, and expected just a few decades ago.

Both the French and Canadians have taken steps to ban the hajib in schools. Even in Canada, a country with relatively few problems, I would suspect that there are bigger fish to fry. And there is nothing that makes the scarf more attractive to a Muslim than attempting to interfere with the religious freedom to wear it. The scarf means different things to different people. It may be a symbol of modesty and devotion. In some cases it is a mark of Muslim pride. Wearing it has become a political statement. When it is required by Muslim imam, it may indeed be repressive, although there are far more tangible and troubling signs of male dominance in the Muslim world. Wearing of the scarf in the Western world may represent defiance in the face of anti-Muslim sentiment, while refraining from displaying it may defy the wishes of family and mosque.

Maybe we would be less leery of Islam and its outward manifestations were it not for the events of September 11, 2001. My view is that this melting pot that we call America has a good many lumps, and these lumps make for a far more interesting country, kind of like chunks of ham in split pea soup.

We attempt to homogenize America. I’m all for unity and assimilation, but I’m also all for religious freedom and individuality.

A cowboy moves from Texas and persists in wearing his boots. He pretends that it is for comfort but we know that it is because he is a Texan, and proud of it. We have exempted sushi, pizza, pad Thai, and burritos from the requirement for a bland nation. I find multicultural societies both exciting and reassuring. We don’t pluck the golden threads from a rich tapestry to make it uniform. In like manner, we should celebrate our
Live in town on Lake Sequoyah with water view & access

The Lodge on Lake Sequoyah – $1,699,000

The exterior is a balanced blend of stone, cedar shake and bead board. The interior is a collective masterpiece by three of Highlands distinctive artists. There are three master suites, four fireplaces, four full baths and one half bath. A great room, dining room, kitchen, exercise room, den, garage and workshop. The expansive decks on both levels make this home perfect for entertaining.

A lake front home with private dock and views galore!
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Lot 2: 0.59 acres 230 feet $550,000

The Lodge on Lake Sequoyah – $1,699,000

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Highlands’ Newspaper - Thursday, Dec. 7, 2006 - Page 7
Girls record 5-2
On Nov. 28, Highlands beat Rabun Gap-Nacoochee 38 to 27. High scorer was Toni Schmitt with 18 points. Next was Katie Bryson, Allison Winn and Brie Schmitt with 10 points each. Toni Schmitt led with 4 rebounds. The team had a total of 11 assists, 8 steals, and 5 blocks.

On Nov. 30, Highlands beat Hendersonville 53 to 49. Top scorer was Allison Winn with 20 points, then Katie Bryson with 12. Toni Schmitt and Kaylie Buras with 8 each and Brie Schmitt with 5. Katie Bryson led with 8 rebounds. Toni Schmitt followed with 6. Allison Winn led with 5 assists and Katie Bryson had 4. The team had 15 steals.

On Dec. 1, Highlands Homecoming game. Highlands beat Andrews 51 to 39. Top scorer was Allison Winn with 20 points. Next up was Toni Schmitt with 12. Katie Bryson with 11 and Becca Wyatt and Brie Schmitt each with 4. Toni Schmitt led with 5 rebounds, Becca Wyatt followed with 4. Toni led with 6 assists and Brie had 4 steals.

On Dec. 4, Highlands suffered its second loss of the season this time to Robbinsville. The score was 34 to 64. Top scorer was Allison Winn with 17 points.

At the Hendersonville game, Brie Schmitt manages to keep control of the ball. Highlands won 53-49. The next home games are Saturday, Dec. 9 against Rabun County. The girls play at 6 p.m. and the boys play at 7:30 p.m. Photo by Noel Atherton

Girls record 5-2

The Conservative POV

We haven't hit bottom yet

M y wife and I made our annual trek down to South Florida to spend Thanksgiving with our sons. In addition to the enjoyment of visiting with them and their ladies, I like the warm weather that usually prevails (it was in the low 40s and blowing like crazy when we got there) and there's a lot of nostalgia.

And then, there is always something political or some kind of public excitement going on; some public official is always getting canned or going to jail or whatever.

This trip we managed to be in Miami the night Larry Coker, the Miami Hurricane head football coach, got fired, and deservedly so. He managed to take a world-class football program and run it into the ground in six years. But I digress.

The night of his firing, University of Miami president, Donna Shalala, one of Bill Clinton’s smurfs (but a pretty capable administrator, I understand), made a magnificent statement regarding the search for Coker’s successor. She said that outside consultants would be called in, blue-ribbon committees would be empanelled and no stone would be unturned to find the absolutely perfect, most excellent in all respects, replacement. An admirable position and I applaud it.

On the other hand, another leader has been faced, and will continue to be faced, with many replacement choices. Of course, I speak of Nancy Pelosi, evident newly crowned leader of the free world. Perhaps she should have adopted Shalala’s high-road approach to her job search efforts.

Her first faux pas was the contemplation of John Murtha as House Majority leader. Murtha sort of refused a bribe offered in the ABSCAM sting operation (get back to me later) and was the recent poster boy for the cut-and-run element of the lunatic left. Saner heads prevailed (I guess) and Murtha failed to make the cut.

Next, she invited Alcee Hastings, impeached and convicted federal judge (bribery again; do I spot a pattern here?), would make a fine Chairman of the House Intelligence Committee. After all, the safety of $300 million or so deserves the very best and I’m told he’s the best money can buy.

At the time of this writing, she may be reconsidering her options. One wonders why she passed up Jane Harman, top ranking Demo on the Committee, and a sister Californian? Who knows.

One blessing in an otherwise murky political environment is that the Senate, not the House, confirms the next ambassador to the UN. I certainly hope the Senate doesn’t feel the need to have Pelosi advise them in the selection of John Bolton’s replacement. (He won’t be confirmed; he’s far too wuff and tuff on those wonderful folk with whom he has to deal).

In a line of brilliant choices, Nancy would see Sandy Berger, Clinton’s National Security Advisor and convicted critical document thief as the perfect replacement. I cannot find any bribery in his background, but his other credentials seem sufficient to qualify him. Let’s hope the Senate can suppress the impulse to resuscitate Sandy from the archives.

So, I find myself defending a liberal university president and her over the top effort to replace a football coach in contrast with a liberal who is staffing a ruling body of the most powerful country on earth. A chilling thought which was widely aired prior to the election is that Ms. Pelosi, the San Francisco treat, will be two heartbeats away from the presidency. Can you imagine the disastrous appointments she might make?

If you are a praying person, no matter what you think of President Bush, I suggest you pray for his well-being, especially considering VP Cheney’s health history. If you are one who thinks things have reached bottom, just look down.

Don Swanson
Feedback is encouraged. Email dswanson@dnet.net
Our culture has a problem with Christianity. One objection to Christian belief is the problem of evil and suffering. It is a very formidable problem not only for the Christian to answer, but for the non-Christian too.

The problem goes like this: “If God allows evil/suffering to continue because he could stop it, he may be all powerful, but not all good. This is indeed a problem which dates as far back as Epicurus’s old questions.”

In 1 Peter 3:12, St. Peter addresses the issue persuasively. “In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, so that your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.”

For the Christian, evil and suffering doesn’t have to weaken faith!

Peter is simply saying that abandoning belief doesn’t help us understand evil and suffering. Martin Luther King Jr., in his “Letter from Birmingham Jail” said, “If there is no God, then why can we say anything against the human law that is unjust. Like Peter, Martin Luther King Jr. knew that in order to beat the man-centered laws of segregation, he would have to appeal to a higher transcendent law than that of man. During the most haunting times of his life, Martin Luther King appealed to his fellow man by looking to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.”

If there is no God, then how can we say anything against the human law that is unjust? If there is nothing more natural than violence wrote Jean-Paul Sartre in his essay entitled “Existentialism.” Fyodor Dostoevsky wrote, “If God did not exist, then everything is permitted.”

On what possible basis can a culture reject that God doesn’t exist based upon evil? We might have personal feelings that something is evil or unjust, but how do we ultimately know this apart from our emotions? If all there is is the natural order of things, then why do people complain about evil and suffering? It seems only natural. In a Naturalistic universe, it’s just the strong eating the weak. What’s scary is that some people actually live their life like this.

In no way discount that evil and suffering is a problem for Christianity and belief in God. However, it’s a bigger problem for those who disbelieve in God. Here’s why. On what basis can we ask for a better world? So, how can we face evil and suffering? The cross of Christ.

Christianity cannot answer the question of evil and suffering any better than the non-believer. However, what I can say with certainty is this: I don’t have the answer as to why evil and suffering happens, I can only say that it isn’t because God doesn’t love us.

In the passion of Christ, in the divine sacrifice for the world, we see God emptying himself out for his people. If you’re a political prisoner, then God is there. Jesus was lynch before the ruling authorities. If you feel abandoned, God is there. Wesley’s son crying out to the Father, “Why, why.” If you have lost a loved one, God is there. Jesus died in and through the death of Jesus Christ and tasted death infinitely more than we ever will.

This is the grand mystery of Christianity which is the inherent promise of the prophet Isaiah, “Surely our grief He Himself bore, and our sorrows He carried; yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, and by His scourging we are healed.” (Is 53:4-5).

**SPiritually Speaking**

**The Problem of Evil**

**PLACES OF WORSHIP**

**BLUE VALLEY BAPTIST CHURCH**
Rev. Oliver Rice, Pastor (706) 782-3965
Sundays: School – 10 a.m. Worship – 11
Sunday night services every 2nd & 4th Sunday at 7
Wednesdays: Mid-week prayer meeting – 7 p.m.
Upcoming Events:
- Oct. 22: 7 p.m., 4th Sunday Singing featuring “New Image” from Alto GA.
- Oct. 29: 10 a.m., 5th Sunday Singing & Dinner featuring “Promised Land.”
- Nov. 6: 7 p.m., 4th Sunday Singing featuring “The Marks Men.”

**BUCK CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH**
School: 10 a.m.; Worship – 11
First Saturday: Singing at 7:30 p.m.

**CHAPEL OF SKY VALLEY**
Sky Valley, Georgia
The Right Rev. Dr. John S. Erbelding, Pastor
Church: 706-746-2991
Pastors residence: 706-746-5770
Sundays: 10 a.m. – Worship
Holy Communion 1st Sunday of the month
Wednesdays: 9 a.m. Healing and Prayer with Holy Communion each service

**CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER DAY SAINTS**
NC 28 N. and Pine Ridge Rd., (828) 369-8329
Rai Cammack, Branch President, (828) 369-1627

**CHRIST CHURCH**
(Anglican)
The Rev. Thomas “Tommy” Allen • 526-2320
Sunday: Holy Communion: 2 p.m.
(Community Bible Church)
Tuesday: Bible Study in Cashiers at noon
Wednesday: Men’s Bible Study at 6 p.m. at First Baptist Church

**CLEAR CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH**
Pastor Everett Brewer
Sundays: School – 10 a.m.; Worship – 11
Prayer – 6:30 p.m.
Evening Service – 1st & 3rd Sunday – 7 p.m.

**COMMUNITY BIBLE CHURCH**
(Evangelical Presbyterian Church)
www.ccbighilands.com • 526-4685
3645 U.S. 64 east, Highlands
Sundays: 9:30 a.m. Sunday School; 10:45 Worship;
Tuesdays: 10 a.m. Women’s Bible Study
Wednesdays: 5:15 p.m. Students’ Dinner (free for kids in 8th grade and younger);
5:30 p.m. Supper; 5:45 p.m. – 7:15 p.m Small Groups for kids Pre-K through 8th; 6:15 pm – 7:15 pm Adult Bible Study
6pm-7pm Choir Practice
Small Groups are offered for all ages throughout the week, see our website or call for more info.

**EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF THE INCARNATION**
Rev. Brian Sullivan – 526-2968
Sunday: 8 a.m. – Holy Eucharist-Rite I; 8:30 a.m. – Breakfast; 9 a.m.; Sunday School; 9:45 a.m. – Choir Practice; 10:30 a.m. – Children’s Chapel; 10:30 a.m. – Holy Eucharist – Rite II
Monday: 5 p.m. – Women’s Cursillo Group; 5:30 p.m. – Women’s Cursillo Group
Tuesday: 8 a.m. – Men’s Cursillo Group; 9:30 a.m. – Staff Meeting
Wednesday: 2 p.m. – Interlude; 6:30 p.m. – Choir Thursday: 7:30 a.m. Worship Cursillo Group Meeting; 10 a.m. – Holy Eucharist; with healing; 10:30 a.m. – Daughters of the King Meeting; 10:30 a.m. – Bible Study
Service on Channel 14 Sun. at 10:30 a.m.

**FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH**
Dr. Daniel D. Robinson, 526-4153
Sun.: Worship – 8:15 a.m., 10:45 a.m. 6:30 p.m;
School – 9:30 a.m.; Youth – 6:30 p.m.
Prayer – 7:15
Wednesday: Dinner – 5:30 p.m.; Team Kids – 6 p.m.
Prayer – 6:15 p.m., Choir – 7:30 p.m.
FIRST SUNDAY SINGING
Rev. J. Hunter Coleman, Pastor, 526-3175
Mondays: 8 a.m. – Men’s Bible Discussion & Breakfast
Tuesdays: 10 a.m. – Seekers
Wednesdays: Supper – 6 p.m.; Choir – 7
Sat: Adventists del Septimo Dia – 10 a.m. & 5

**HIGHLANDS ASSEMBLY OF GOD**
Sixth Street
Sundays: School – 10 a.m.; Worship – 11
Wednesdays: Prayer & Bible Study

**HIGHLANDS 7TH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH**
Wednesday evening prayer & Bible Study
Call Lloyd Kidder at 526-9474

**HIGHLANDS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**
Pastors Eddie & Kim Ingram, 526-3376
Sun.: school 9:45 a.m.; Worship 11 a.m.; 7 p.m. Youth Group
Wed: noon – Men’s Emmaus Reunion Group; 4:45 – Children’s choir and handbells; 5:30 – Supper; 6 – Adult Handbells; 6:15 – children, youth, & adults studies;
7:15 – Adult choir
(nursery provided for Wed. p.m. activities)
Thurs:12:30 – Women’s Bible Study (nursery)

**HOLY FAMILY LUTHERAN CHURCH – ELCA**
Rev. Delmer Chilton, Pastor,
2152 Dillard Road – 526-9741
Sundays: Worship/Communion – 10:30

**MACEDONIA BAPTIST CHURCH**
8 miles south of Highlands on N.C. 28 S. Satolah Pastor Jamie Passmore, (706) 782-8130
Sundays: School – 10 a.m.; Worship – 11
Choir – 6 p.m.
Wed: Bible Study and Youth Mtg. – 7 p.m.

**MOUNTAIN SYNAGOU**
St. Cyprian’s Episcopal Church, Franklin 369-6871
Rev. Tien, Priest

**OUR LADY OF THE MOUNTAINS CATHOLIC CHURCH**
Rev. Tien, Priest
Parish office, 526-2418
Sundays: Mass – 11 a.m.

**SCALY MOUNTAIN BAPTIST CHURCH**
Rev. Clifford Willis
Sundays: School – 10 a.m.; Worship – 11 a.m. & 7
Wednesdays: Prayer Mtg. – 7 p.m.

**SCALY MOUNTAIN CHURCH OF GOD**
290 Buck Knob Road; Pastor Alfred Szemore
Sundays: School – 10 a.m.; Worship – 10:45 a.m.;
Evening Worship – 6 p.m.
Wed: Adult Bible Study & Youth – 7 p.m.
For more information, call (706)-745-1842.

**UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP**
Rev. Maureen Killoran (part-time) 526-9769
Thurs:12:30 – Women’s Bible Study (nursery)

**WHITESIDE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**
Cathers, Rev. Sam Forrester, 743-2122
... COMMISSION continued from page 3
to keep an eye on our future and we need a
plan and a vision to follow and not be re-
active."

He said there’s a lot of emotion at-
tached to people’s roots in Macon County
and people born in the county or whose
families have been county residents for gen-
erations often feel differently about the
area as a “place” than those who moved
to the area.

“For those of us who were born here,
our appreciation for Macon County may
be likened to the appreciation one has for
a home versus a house. The same activity
takes place in both of those but they have a
different meaning due to the passion at-
tached to them,” he said. “It’s about the ap-
preciation versus the value. We have to be
sensitive to that.”

Leatherman assigned each commis-
sioner to county boards as commission li-
assons while outlining areas of concern.
“Fifty-percent of the county can be de-
veloped and that’s where the impact will
be,” he said. “We need to continue work-
ling on ordinances with the planning
board.” Leatherman asked Commissioner
Ronnie Beale to continue his work with the
planning board, this time as liaison. As a
previous planning board member, Beale
saw the high-impact ordinance pass and
was on the subdivision ordinance.

“Mr. Beale will act as the liaison for
the commission because his approach is satu-
rated in common sense; but, as we have seen
common sense isn’t so common. We just
have to see things as they are and do things
that need to be done,” said Leatherman.

Saying children are the most important
resource the county has, Leatherman
named Commissioners Bob Simpson and
Jim Davis liaisons to the Macon County
School Board.

He said the county has a new superin-
tendent, a new school board and new
school programs like the Early College High
School that all represent change and growth
in the school system — issues the board has
to meet head-on.

... RIVERWALK continued from page 1

violations issued — one on Oct. 24 when
silt fences were allegedly opened to release
silt buildup and one on Oct. 26 when silt
ponds were allowed to fill with silt so that
pipes meant to release clear water could
only release silt-laden water.

Mayor Don Mullen said the seven vi-
olations prior to Oct. 24 are “still out there.”
Those are $500 each. The fine was changed
to $5,000 per day per violation.

Town Attorney Bill Coward said it’s up
to RiverWalk’s attorney to pursue the cita-
tions prior to Oct. 24 totaling $3,500.

Proceeds from the $400,000 fine will
go to the state; as is the law. Mayor Mullen
said the town will pursue measures to ob-
tain a stabilization bond to “repair the
property.”

RiverWalk developers have hired a new
contractor to hopefully move the soil
erosion plan and subsequent development
toward the finish line but General Manag-
er Lingos admitted that the project has suf-
fered immensely.

“Exposing the deficiencies in the origi-
nal soil and erosion design and fixing that
has cost us $800,000 just for the engineer-
ing and design,” he said. “We’ve angered
the neighbors, the town and we probably
will never regain our reputation.”

The Dec. 4 commission meeting has
been continued to Dec. 18 at 6 p.m. The
first meeting in 2007 will be Monday, Jan.
8 at 6 p.m.
Concierge Service

Reviewing the sales to comparable properties in 2005—a 280% increase.

2003 sold for $1,325,000 in 2005—a 172%

parcels—47.72 acres valued at $488,190 in 2003, sold for $300,000 in 2005—a 213% increase. Another valued at $96,780 in 2003, sold for $330,000 in 2005—a 33% increase. Another valued at $249,850 in 2003, sold for $1,475,000 in 2005—a 164% increase.

Another valued at $1,035,760 in 2003 sold for $1,265,760 in 2005—a 21% increase. Another valued at $186,550 in 2003, sold for $1,200,000 in 2005—a 543% increase. Large parcels—47.72 acres valued at $488,190 in 2003 sold for $1,325,000 in 2005—a 213% increase. Another valued at $32,000 parcels in the county; in 2006 we have 43,000,” said Lightner. The building per-square-foot price has increased dramatically over the years, too. “People are willing to pay what it takes to get a builder to their site,” he said. “In the 1980s the cost per-square-foot was $38; now it’s $125 per-square-foot.”

Though property values county wide have increased dramatically since 2003, Highlands and Nantahala are seeing the highest percentage increase. A Highlands property valued at $21,000 in 2003 sold for $460,000 in 2005—a 14% increase in value, said Lightner. Another valued at $1,035,760 in 2003 sold for $1,475,000 in 2005—a 164% increase. Another valued at $96,780 in 2003 sold for $330,000 in 2005—a 213% increase.

Nantahala—destined to become the next Highlands, say some—saw large percentage increases, too.

A homeowner valued at $249,850 in 2003, sold for $330,000 in 2005—a 33% increase. Another valued at $96,780 in 2003, sold for $300,000 in 2005—a 213% increase. Another valued at $186,550 in 2003, sold for $1,200,000 in 2005—a 543% increase.

Large parcels—47.72 acres valued at $488,190 in 2003 sold for $1,325,000 in 2005—a 213% increase. Another valued at $32,000 parcels in the county; in 2006 we have 43,000,” said Lightner. The building per-square-foot price has increased dramatically over the years, too. “People are willing to pay what it takes to get a builder to their site,” he said. “In the 1980s the cost per-square-foot was $38; now it’s $125 per-square-foot.”

Lightner said the burden of proof is with the taxpayer to show that the property is exceedingly over valued. “Property owners have to show solid proof and a reason why the revaluation is wrong,” said Lightner. “If the proof is solid, like it’s a clerical error on our part or something else, we might lower it, but sometimes we increase it. We don’t like to do that, but sometimes it happens.”

Tax revaluation notices will begin to go out Jan. 15, 2007. He warned commission-ers to be ready. “Remember that when your phones start ringing please encourage people to go through the appeal process,” said Lightner.

“During the 2003 revaluation, we had several people who appealed saying their value was too high when they actually had a sales contract on the property for a higher price than the value,” said Lightner. “In one particular case, the property was valued at $262,710. The owner said the new value was unreasonable and all the time had a contract on the property for $300,000.

Commissioners said the tax rate will be set in July after they determine the amount of money they need for the fiscal 2007-2008 year. For a few years, commissioners have invoked a “Revenue Neutral Tax Rate” but they said it’s too early to know what will be done for the next fiscal year.

“Valuation is determined by the market, not us,” said Commission Chair Charlie Leatherman. “We determine the tax rate based on the county’s needs not the other way around.”
'Dance Like Nobody's Watching'

Highlands School high-schoolers did just that...danced like no one was watching, at the Homecoming Dance held at the Highlands Country Club's Hudson House, Saturday, Dec. 2.

Sara Bates and Nick Kerhoulas were selected as king and queen of the Homecoming Court at the dance. Seniors in the running were Alec Schmitt, Nick Kerhoulas, Jason Aspinwall, Grey Alexander, Allison Winn, Brittany Dryman, Katie Bryson, and Sara Bates. The court also included juniors: Greg Porter, Jake Heffington, Sally Wheeler, and Jessica Dryman. Sophomores were Hunter Lefter and Marisol Ruiz, and freshman were Matthew Potts and Ladonna Rodriguez.

Photos by Jim Lewicki
Long ago, it was big news when the circus came to Highlands trailing elephants up the mountain roads.

On Saturday, Dec. 2, history was made again when the Highlands United Methodist Church brought camels to town as part of the ecumenical float in the Christmas Parade. Mary and Joseph led the possession of shepherds, sheep, wise men and of course lots of children.

Crowds four people deep lined Main Street to watch the Highlands School band, cheerleaders and basketball teams; civic groups and churches dress the part as they heralded in the 2007 holiday season.
... ANOTHER VIEW continued from page 6

differences as much as we cherish our equality.

South Africa is a long way from a perfect state, but for a country which has been experimenting with majority rule for less than 15 years, they are doing well. Nelson Mandela walked out of 27 years of unjust imprisonment and said to his captors, hey guys, let’s build a country.

They avoided the massacre of whites which characterized the post-colonial period in the Congo. They have refrained from confiscation of white owned land, such as took place in Zimbabwe. They suffer a high crime rate and a frightful incidence of AIDS/HIV. They cope with tribal hostility and corruption. They are attempting to accommodate all the elements of their diverse population. They boast 11 official languages, and the constitution mentions several others from Portuguese to Hebrew, to Sanskrit. And a woman can wear the scarf without inciting fear or incurring ridicule.

We, the greatest nation and first democracy, a country founded both on unity and on individual freedom should be able to do as much.

... LETTER continued from page 2

$10,000!

Eight-man football teams most commonly consist of 15-20 players. Coach Leake recommended that a team needs 12 at a minimum but it has been done with as few as nine. That translates into fewer than five athletes per class! It is not uncommon in 11-man football for athletes to play both offense and defense; so it would be expected that the same may happen in 8-man as well. One of the major similarities between 8-man and 11-man football is that the equipment is the same. Based on his experience we can outfit our players with their equipment (excluding shoes) for $200 - $225 dollars. He also shared that they try to add two or three new pairs of pads a year while eliminating the same to keep costs down and equipment up to date. I’m sure that principle could be applied to helmets as well.

The process is simple, we need to hear from each athletic director confirmation that their school would like to go forward in this endeavor. Once we have support from enough schools we would make a formal proposal to the Little Smokey Mountain Conference, and upon their consent, they would petition the NCHSAA to allow us to begin to play.

Our goal is to ignite excitement and a sense of community by beginning full contact 8-man football in the fall of 2007!


... MULLEN continued from page 2

The county is taking seriously the desire to stop construction of a high rise unit on the Cashiers Road. The County Planning Department made the first step in the process by submitting a request to the Macon County Board of Commissioners for a temporary moratorium on construction of high-rise buildings over 38 feet. On Monday night, the Board voted to request the County Attorney and the County Planner to work on language authorizing a six-month moratorium on high-rise construction over four stories or 48 feet in height. This will be a temporary answer to the larger problem of zoning within Macon County. I hope this is a wake-up call for them to act on a permanent basis to limit unacceptable construction in our pristine area.

The Town Board of Commissioners has been experimenting with majority language authorization for many years. They are attempting to accommodate all the elements of their diverse population. They boast 11 official languages, and the constitution mentions several others from Portuguese to Hebrew, to Sanskrit. And a woman can wear the scarf without inciting fear or incurring ridicule. We, the greatest nation and first democracy, a country founded both on unity and on individual freedom should be able to do as much.

In another move the Town Board has approved a five year lease agreement with the Rotary Club to operate the Highlands Community Building and be in charge of scheduling events at the facility. The Town will continue the upkeep of the building. In fact, much maintenance work needs to be done on the building and this will begin soon.

Good news at the hospital. The Board has approved the purchase of important new diagnostic equipment recently and the first of this equipment has arrived. When I was doing cardiac surgery, we depended on good ultrasound equipment. Since then the equipment has come a long way with much improvements in the clarity of the images. Now the Highlands-Cashiers Hospital has a state-of-the-art ultrasound unit and both our cardiologist, Dr. Curtis, and our radiologist, Dr. Sinnett, are quite pleased with the quality of the equipment. The addition of this unit greatly improves the diagnostic abilities of not only heart imaging but blood vessel and abdominal procedures. Our hospital is making great strides in not only our ability to care for people in our area but also in management and governance of our great facility.
2006 Swearing-in Ceremony takes place at courthouse

Superior Court Judge for District 30A Judge James U. Downs swore in the winners of the Nov. 7 election at a swearing-in ceremony in Courtroom A at the Macon County Courthouse, Monday, Dec. 4 at 8:45 a.m. Center: Sheriff Robert Holland was first and was accompanied by his wife Marci. Above left: Downs swore in the new Macon County Comm-

mission members: incumbent Bob Simpson, Ronnie Beale and Brian McClellan, all accompanied by their wives. Above: Downs swears in the Macon County School Board members incumbent Tommy Cabe and Guy Gooder both with their wives by their sides.

Photos by Kim Lewicki

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Tile
Wall Coverings
Window Treatments
Why Not Knit announces ‘Manos de Amigos’

An ongoing Sunday evening knit-in to benefit the International Friendship Center of Highlands. Join us to make hats and scarves for children and adults in need of warm clothing. Knit-ins will be held from 5-7 p.m.

We will offer a selection of sale-priced yarn for your convenience or you may bring your own. Patterns will be provided.

Give us a call and let us know you’re coming by. We'll put the coffee on! Call 828-787-1972.

Incarnation soloists to be featured in ‘Christmas Oratorio’

Six of the Episcopal Church of the Incarnation soloists will be featured in the upcoming presentation of Camille Saint-Saens' beautiful “Christmas Oratorio” on Sunday afternoon, Dec. 17 at 5 p.m.

The choir, under the direction of Grammy Award winning conductor Fletcher Wolfe, will be accompanied by organist Barbara Luhn and internationally renowned concert pianist Robert Henry.

Mr. Henry, first-prize winner of many of the world's professional piano competitions, appears frequently as a soloist with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra.

The performance is free and open to the public and everyone is invited to attend a gala reception following the program.

‘Jesus Our Treasure’ at First Baptist Dec. 15 & 17

First Baptist Church choir, drama ministry, and orchestra invite you to join its congregation for the Christmas Musical Drama, “Jesus, Our Treasure.” The presentations will be Friday, Dec. 15, at 7 p.m and Sunday, Dec. 17, at 6:30 p.m.

Music has a big place in the celebration of Christmas. This year at First Baptist Church, drama will have a very meaningful part of the Christmas presentation. We will be presenting A Musical Drama for Christmas called ‘Jesus Our Treasure’, created by Mike Harland, arranged and orchestrated by Camp Kirkland and scripted by Lawrence Kimbrough.

Mike Harland takes the idea of looking back at Christmas through the eyes of an old shepherd’s still fresh memories from 40 years before. He shares these memories with his granddaughter who loves to hear how her grandfather was one to whom the angels spoke and actually saw the Lord Jesus in the stable where he was born.

Playing the part of Jacob, the grandfather, is Rick Trevathan. The granddaughter, Miriam, is played by Ali Cutshaw. Other characters are Mary and Joseph portrayed by Kirsten and Keith McKim, the boy Jesus, by Elias McKim, Herod by Bill Hogue, other shepherds by Chase and Brice Jenkins, and possibly others. The wise men are played by Dennie Davis, Bruce Oliver, and Jerry McGill.

Directors Elizabeth Loosier and Pam Powell are assisted by Sherry Gray and Shirley Layow. Others who are participating or who have contributed in various ways are: Lara Gibson, Jessica Dryman, Hannah Oliver, Greg Porter, Wendy Latta, Alice Dyer, Cindy Trevathan, Seth Robinson, Roy Potts, Marie Davis, Crystal Dempsey, Chris Cutshaw, Robby Reed, Casey Jenkins, and possibly some that are not listed.

Accompaniment will be provided by Anne Porter and June Hogue along with the First Baptist Church orchestra under the direction of Joe Powell. These, as well as the choir, have been working hard and long to make this possible.

We hope you will come and invite all your friends and relatives to celebrate with us on one of the above dates. God wants us to be active in telling His story.
Auditions for HCP’s ‘Caught in the Villian’s Web’ Dec. 10-11

The Highlands Community Players are ready to begin work on its next production “Caught in the Villian’s Web.”

Auditions are Sunday, Dec. 10 and Monday, Dec. 11, if needed.

The group will be casting, five women ranging in ages from 20-60 and four men ages 30-40.

Auditions are held at the Martin Lipscomb Performing Arts Center, Chestnut Street, Highlands. Sunday from 2-4 p.m. and Monday, from 5:30-7 p.m. - if needed.

Performance dates are February 22-25 and March 2-4, 2007

For more information please call: 526-2080. “Overactors” are preferred.

Scripts available at the Hudson Library.

HCP annual tradition continues with free Christmas presentation

The Players are presenting their free Christmas reading Thursday, Dec. 7, 7 p.m. at the Martin-Lipscomb Performing Arts Center with many of the same performers from last year and several new faces. The program is a mixture of poetry, prose, and music—some humorous, some serious, some inspirational—all entertaining and performed by talented readers and musicians.

For instance, brothers Chad and Brandon Price will sing several favorite Christmas songs; Ron Leslie will be reading “Christmas in Ten Pieces,” a hilarious account of a father trying to put together a toy for his son on Christmas eve; Elaine Whitehurst will read a touching account of a school Christmas play entitled “Trouble at the Inn;” and Dean Zuch will describe some of the celebrations associated with the Winter Solstice, introducing “the Mummers,” who will perform a centuries old Mummers’ play, “A Tale of Old Christmas.”

This is just a sampling of the fun to be had at the Community Players’ traditional Holiday program, a gift to the community, requiring no tickets, no reservations—just an audience.

It’s suitable for the whole family, and afterwards there’ll be hot cider provided by the Highlands Chamber of Commerce and homemade goodies provided by the Players.

For more information, leave a message on the Players’ answering machine, 526-8084.

Writers to read for the public

A local group of very talented writers is opening their December meeting to the public in the hopes that this will become a monthly event.

Ann Doggett, leader of the Highlands Writers’ Group invites the public to attend the first ever Writers – in – the Round to be held on Friday, Dec. 8 at the Studio on Main at 7 p.m.

This group of writers includes published and non-published authors of various genres: poetry, short stories, novels and even an intrepid songwriter, all of whom will be sharing from their own original works.

Ms. Doggett encourages lovers of the written word to attend this reading and will be glad to answer questions of anyone interested in joining the group. This group has been together for over 10 years and meets weekly in Highlands.

The reading is free and will be held at The Instant Theatre Company’s Studio on Main that is located at 310 Main Street, upstairs at Oak Square in Highlands. The studio has ample parking and easy elevator access to its intimate upstairs theatre.

For more information call Ms. Doggett at 526-8009 or visit the ITC website at www.InstantTheatre.org.
The Woopets are coming to town!

Mary Wooten and her giant puppets at Instant Theater on Dec. 9.

The enchantment and magic of the Woopets is coming to Highlands Saturday, Dec. 9 at 7 p.m. at The Instant Theater's Studio on Main.

Earlier this year, Mary Wooten brought her Giant Puppets, called Woopets to the Studio on Main for a children's theatre workshop and won the hearts of young and old. The Instant Theatre Company is bringing the Woopets back for a special winter performance that will delight and entertain everyone.

This holiday show consists of two different themes. Peter and The Wolf will feature a "real" full-bodied wolf and the Faerie Ring stars real live fairies. Children of all ages will be enchanted by the imagination and creativity the Woopets bring to the stage and there will be plenty of opportunity for audience participation, as well.

The show begins at 7 p.m. and tickets are $15 for adults and $5 for children under 17. No reservations are required.

For more information call The Instant Theatre Company box office at 342-9197 or visit the website at www.InstantTheatre.org.

The Studio on Main is located upstairs at Oak Square, 310 Main Street in Highlands. There is ample parking and easy elevator access to its intimate upstairs theatre.
HELP WANTED

VOLUNTEER TO DELIVER MEALS – Needed on Fridays. Must pick up meals at the hospital and deliver to individuals at their homes. Call the Rec Park Office at 526-3556 or Teresa Curtis at the Macon County Department of Aging at 349-2088 or 349-2235.

OFFICE MANAGER/DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR—Duties for this full-time position include membership development, book keeping, and office management. Candidate should have excellent computer, interpersonal, communication, and writing skills. Experience with non-profit organization a plus. Interested parties should mail resume and names of three references by December 31, 2006 to Highlands Cashiers Land Trust, PO Box 1703, Highlands, NC 28741 or email to htrust@earthlink.net.

LOOKING FOR LABORERS to clear land and landscape for December, January and February. Must speak some English. $10 per hour. Call Charlie @ 526-5939.

HIGHLANDS AREA LUXURY INN looking for breakfast chef. Call 828-526-8170 or fax résumé to 828-526-2625.

EARN WHILE YOU LEARN!—Are you interested in a new career? Become a Certified Nursing Assistant for Fidelia Eckerd Living Center at Highlands-Cashiers Hospital. We are now accepting applications for the next class beginning January 23, 2007. Students will be paid while in class Mondays through Fridays for 6 hours a day. Upon graduation, students will become a Certified Nursing Assistant and will receive a substantial increase in pay. Excellent benefits package after 60 days. Pre-employment substance screening. If interested in joining a dynamic health-care team, call Judy Miller at 828-526-1317, or apply online through our website, www.hchospital.org.

DIRECTOR OF NURSING AT HIGHLANDS-CASHIERS HOSPITAL: Must be a licensed Nursing Home Administrator in North Carolina. Minimum of three years experience preferred. Must have knowledge of regulations established by DFS and JCAHO. Responsibility includes overall management of the center, ensuring compliance with all standards, applicable laws, and State/Federal regulations. Excellent salary and full benefits after 60 days. Pre-employment substance screening. Call Mandy Talley, 828-526-1301 or apply online through our website, www.hchospital.org.

ACCOUNTING CLERK AT HIGHLANDS-CASHIERS HOSPITAL: Responsible for Accounts Payable. Will assist in payroll, general ledger, and fixed assets. You will also assist human resources in clerking duties as needed. Full time position Monday – Friday. Full benefits available after 60 days. Pre-employment substance screening. Call Mandy Talley at 828-526-1301, or apply online at www.hchospital.org.

RNS AT HIGHLANDS-CASHIERS HOSPITAL AND FIDELIA ECKERD LIVING CENTER: Have Part-time and PRN positions available for 12 hour day and night shifts. Our current wage scale is $19 to $27.74 per hour, depending on experience, with shift and weekend differentials. Full benefits available after 60 days. Pre-employment screening required. Call Mandy Talley at 828-526-1301 or apply online at www.hchospital.org.

COOK AT HIGHLANDS-CASHIERS HOSPITAL: Full-time, year-round employment. 10:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m., various days of the week. Must be able to work weekends and be able to read and speak English. Competitive salary and full benefits available after 60 days. Pre-employment substance screening. Call Mandy Talley, 828-526-1301 or apply online through our website, www.hchospital.org.

CNA OR CNA II: Interested in working in an environment where you can truly make a difference to those whom you care for? We have available Full, Part-time and PRN positions at the Fidelia Eckerd Living Center for day and night shifts. Our NEW WAGE SCALE for CNAs is $11 to $14.40 per hour, and you also receive shift and weekend differentials. Full benefits after 60 days. Pre-employment substance screening. Call Mandy Talley, 828-526-1301 or apply online through our website, www.hchospital.org.

Did you know?

• Did you know hearing aids are a medical device and considered as tax deductible?

• Did you know there are symptomatic similarities between Alzheimer’s Disease and untreated hearing loss?

• Did you know there are approximately 31.5 million Americans suffering from hearing loss?

• Did you know the majority of hearing losses can be treated with amplification?

• Did you know that Council On Aging studies show improvement in the quality of life with improved hearing?

Do You Hear What We Hear?

We provide sales and service of most brands of hearing aids, as well as in-house repairs. Our experienced staff is here to provide the quality service you deserve.

$1,000

Off MSRP of most major brands of hearing aids
0% interest payment plan to qualified applicants

Offering:
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CLASSIFIEDS

Call 858-354-0057.
CHARMING CABIN — Your own little taste of heaven in a home! 2 Bedroom, 1 Bath cabin for rent in Scaly Mtn. New carpet, appliances, this stone/wood cabin has an awesome view! $825 per month with a 1 year lease. Chapin Lane location. Call for details today! Won’t last long: 423-894-9566.

ONE-BEDROOM GARAGE APARTMENT – close in, for mature single. Sparingly furnished. $475 plus utilities. 526-5558.

COTTAGE OFF NORTON ROAD — (seasonal or yearly) – 1 bed, 1 bath cottage – great view – quiet location – only 1 mile off of U.S. 64. Close to Highlands and Cashiers. $700/month. Call Kelsey 404-788-1304.


THE CHAMBERS AGENCY REALTORS HAS YEAR ROUND HOUSING! #1) Two bedroom/one bath upper level apartment just off Main Street. Unfurnished. $700 per month; $700 security deposit. All homes require interview, rental application, credit and/or background check. Please come by The Chambers Agency, 401 N. Fifth St. or call 828-526-3717.

VACATION RENTAL - Sapphire/Cashiers: 4 bedroom/3 bath, stone FP, all conveniences (plasma TV, PC, good linens, towels, china, satellite). Gated community/club. Lake access, with horses, kayaks, canoes available. Weekly, monthly and long holiday weekends possible. $900 week, $3,000/month. 3 day minimum by-the-day/weekend. 770-479-5335 x239 days - Kevin. 770-704-9329 eves.

VACATION RENTAL – The Lodge on Mirror Lake, fish or canoe from deck. Available weekly, monthly, 3-day min. Call 828-342-2302.

REAL ESTATE FOR SALE

ON MIRROR LAKE – 3 bedrooms, 3 bath, plus cottage. Call 828-342-2302.

ON LAKE SEQUOYAH – Fabulous lake views. All newly remodeled executive home; 3 bedrooms, 1 1/2 baths, 4 fireplaces. Call 828-342-2302.

BY OWNER ON MIRROR LAKE – Cute 2/2 on Wyanoak. All Newly remodeled. $399,000. Call 828-342-2302.


HOME FOR SALE – Classic Country Home between Cashiers and Franklin, near Lake Glenville; 3,800 ft. elevation; 4 bed, 3 bath with 2,900 sq. ft. living area, plus garage and shed; 1,500 sq. ft. deck on 4.2 acres with perennial landscaping. Many extras. $399,000. Brokers Welcome. Call 828-743-5788.


HIGHLANDS IN-TOWN — Creekside, 3 bed, 2 bath, owner relocating. Completely renovated. For sale by owner. $550,000 OBO. Call 828-226-6123.

1-AND 1 1/2-ACRE HOME SITES CLOSE TO DOWNTOWN HIGHLANDS — Only 2.8 miles from Main Street. Lots of large rhodies, hardwood trees and mountain laurel. Some with creek front, some back up to National Forest. All are gentle, easy building sites with community well, telephone, electric and septic in place. Dramatic waterfall at entrance. Community will be gated. Price range from $169,000 to $329,000. Call 828-526-9622.

BY BUILDER – 4/3, new construction. Execu-
COLEMAN HEATLATER FIREBOX INSERT
with blower. Includes rack, vent pipes, brick front and hearth, mantle, screen, glass doors. Uses gas or wood. NEVER USED. REDUCED price $425 or OBO. 828-349-3230

1 LADIES 26" BICYCLE - 6-speed, very good condition. $25.00 828-349-3320

HEAVY BRASS ELECTRIC HANGING FIXTURE - Six green, glass panels, 4 feet of matching 22-inch diameter. $975. Call 526-1773.

ANTIQUE FURNITURE, beds, love seats, chairs, tables, lamps, curio cabinets and collectible paperweights, Royal Daltions, Hummels, etc. By appointment only. 828-526-3258.


ALL WOOD LARGE (6' T X 7' LONG) ENTERTAINMENT CENTER - lighted with stained glass upper doors, wood doors on bottom, has open shelves too, very nice $450 obo, King size bed frame with brass headboard $75 obo, please call 828-369-2223 or after 5pm 823-321-9422.

AKC REGISTERED SHELTIES. Sable Merle & Blue Merle. $300. Call 706-982-9325.

OAK ROCKER over 100 years old. From E.B. (Ted) Mell Estate in Athens, Ga. All original including leather seat. Call 828-349-4581.

RAINBOW E-SERIES VACUUM CLEANER - excellent condition with all accessories, $925 call Dee @ 828-369-9028.

SOLID DARK OAK DINETTE CABINET. 19"x64"x34" 3 glass windows on top. 3 drawers on bottom. 2 bottom doors with keys. Imported from Belgium. Excellent condition. $1,500. Call 369-3250.

VEHICLES FOR SALE

2004 CHEVY TRAIL BLAZER - 4 WD, 7 passenger, 1 1/2 years old, 11,800 miles, leather, sun roof, On Star, pristine condition. $19,900. Call 526-4874.

ANTIQUE 1926 MODEL T FORD TOURING CAR - Fully restored. Needs a new starter. Selling for health reasons. $15,000 but will discount cost of car and lots of fun. Call Horace Duncan at 526-3760.


2003 DODGE STRATUS - red exterior, gray interior, 30,000 miles, AM/FM cassette, A/C, PW, PS, PB, clean. $8,000 OBO 528-3257.


1991 SUBURBAN 1/4 TON, 130K miles, 20K on Tranny, 350 V8, lift kit, tires, air conditioned, never off-road, white/blue $4350. Call 200-0013.

GEM ELECTRIC CAR - Excellent Condition. Has two motors and will cruise at 40 mph. Many extras including new tires. Great for gated communities, golf courses, and senior citizen communities. Asking $6,500. email gem603@prodigy.net

UNWANTED ITEMS in good condition for a family of five. please call Tony @ 828-779-1765.

SERVICES

FIVE STAR CLEANING & MAINTENANCE - Light and detail cleaning, concierge services, openings and closings, grocery shopping, personal shopping, personal chef and table service, house repairs, improvements: lighting, plumbing, fixtures, tile, dry.

- See CLASSIFIEDS page 22

High Country Eaters

High Country Cafe
Down home favorites everyday!
Breakfast & Lunch
6:30 a.m. to 3 p.m
Saturday through Friday; Saturday, 7 a.m.-1 p.m.
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Open for lunch Mon-Sat.
Now Trans Fat FREE
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Open 7 days a week
7:30 a.m. to 7 p.m.
Coffee, tea, wine, pastries, sandwiches
384 Main Street

Stop in for slow-cooked BBQ, Ribs, Fried Chicken, Hot Wings and other Southern favorites that’ll have you coming back for more.

Buck’s Coffee Cafe
461 Spring Street • 526-2626

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**Classifieds**

- **C & C CONTRACTING – WE GET IT DONE** — Small or Large — Remodeling, decks, doors, windows or the whole house! Call Art Doughty at 828-508-1360 Workmen’s Comp, General Liability, References.

- **HIGHLANDS SHUTTLE SERVICE** — Atlanta Airport Shuttle. Drive - Away • Auto Delivery. All Out-of-Town Trips Driving Services. Call 526-8078.

- **H & D HOUSE CLEANERS** — We’re the team for minor cleans. Dishes, bed, floors, & baths. Give us a call “cause we are the Best!” 706-982-1994 or 706-782-0376.

- **SCOTTS CONSTRUCTION ‘ME FIX IT’** — Decks, roofs, pressure washing, painting, lawn service, small electrical, floors, carpet cleaning, house cleaning! No job too small. 30 yrs. exp. Call David at 828-369-5886 or 828-347-5051.

- **LOST DOG** — Two Dogs, Italian Pointer neutered male, tan and white, wearing an orange collar, 90 lbs., and female Weimaraner, silver-gray, wearing a pink collar. May be seen together. Last seen in Highlands, NC. Very upset child waiting for their return. Please call with any information or if you have seen either one. REWARD OFFERED!! 828-526-2197.

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**Solution for puzzle # AB13 in the Nov. 30 issue**

**Pseudocube** © 2006

a new mind game

No. AB13

THE SETUP:
The cube has 27 consecutive numbers in it, arranged in three layers with 9 numbers each. These numbers are arranged in a special pattern: For each layer, the sum of the three numbers in each row, column or diagonal, is 3 times its center number. Eight diagonals connect all 3 layers by running through the center number of the middle layer. Each diagonal contains 3 numbers equaling the total of the three center numbers. One of the diagonals is shown with circles.

THE CHALLENGE:
Start with the three center numbers for each layer and two other numbers. Now pour a cup of coffee, pick up a pencil and eraser and try to figure out where the other 22 numbers belong. Good Luck!
The first correct solution emailed earns a coupon for a FREE cup of coffee from Buck’s Coffee Cafe on Main Street.

Email: pseudocube8@aol.com

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**2007 fire & rescue officers elected**

At its Dec. 3 meeting, Highlands Fire & Rescue Dept. volunteers elected officers for 2007.

James “Popcorn” Manley was elected Chief; Allan “Ricky” Bryson was elected Assistant Chief; Robbie Forrester was elected Captain; Wayne Henry was elected 1st Lt.; Roger L. Wilson was elected 2nd Lt.; Jimmy Tate was elected Rescue Captain; Eric Pierson was elected Rescue Lt.; Terry Watson was elected Treasurer; Lenny Metrick was elected Secretary and Chief Manley appointed Buddy Miller as Chaplain.

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**Thank You Notes**

On behalf of my family, I would like to take this opportunity to say “Thank You” for the cards, flowers, food, visits, thoughts, and prayers that were brought forth during the loss of our loved one. Please know that we appreciate all that has been done for our family. We are so blessed to live in such a great community. May the legacy of our dad, husband, grandfather, brother, uncle, and friend live on forever.

Melanie Miller and The Family of Jamie Keener

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**First Pseudocube winner announced**

Blanche Pavlis enjoys her free cup of coffee at Buck’s Coffee Cafe on Main Street as the first winner of a correct entry for Pseudocube puzzle number 12. Blanche, spry at 82, is a grandmother of 12, a year-round resident at Wildcat Country Club and loves doing mathematical puzzles.

Photo by Pete Sargeant

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**Fire & Rescue Report**

The following is the Highlands Fire & Rescue Dept. log entries for the week of Dec. 3-6.

**Dec. 3**
- The dept. was first-responders to assist EMS with a medical call at Chestnut Hill. The person was transported to the hospital.

**Dec. 4**
- The dept. responded to a vehicle fire on U.S. 64 west at Lake Sequoyah. The vehicle was destroyed.
- The dept. responded to an alarm at a home on Flat Mountain Road. It was un-founded.

**Dec. 5**
- The dept. provided mutual aid to Cashiers. The call was cancelled en route.
- The dept. responded to a call of a brush fire at N.C. 28 south and Rich Gap Road. A construction burn got out of control but there was no damage to nearby houses.

**Dec. 6**
- The dept. was first-responders to assist EMS with a medical call at the Mountain Living Center on N.C. 106. The patient was transferred to the hospital.