Transfer station work to begin in March

Landfill on Rich Gap Road to remain open through June.

With an 18-point agreement between the county and the town of Highlands signed and sealed, construction on the municipal solid waste (MSW) transfer station and the construction and debris (C&D) transfer station is set to begin.

The finance package is expected to be finalized this week of March. The bid was preliminarily awarded to the lowest bidder, Perry Bartsh Jr. Construction in the amount of $786,287.96.

New standards mandated by the state concerning solid waste has forced the county to change the landfill on Rich Gap Road to a solid waste transfer station. As of July 1, 2008, all solid waste will be inspected.

State says county’s wells must be inspected

Another unfunded mandate from the state — this time involving wells — has the county reworking the health department’s environmental services component.

At the Feb. 11 Macon County Commission meeting, Director of the Health Department Jim Bruckner and Environmental Services Director Barry Patterson requested funding for two full-time employees to handle the state’s new requirements.

The state’s new rules — well construction standards — are related to the permitting of Private Drinking Water Wells (PDWW) and go into effect July 1, 2008.

“We are not adequately staffed to coordinate or implement this new program,” said Patterson. “Currently, in Macon County it is estimated that 500 wells are drilled annually. It will take two additional Registered Sanitarians to handle the load.”

Start-up costs for the new program are estimated to cost $89,629 and will include salary, benefits, general operating, computing, vehicles and required training costs for two employees.

“There are currently no revenues to cover these initial costs,” said Patterson.

Once implemented, the program should cost approximately $10 per well per year.

Seniors honored at Friday’s game

Cheerleaders Katie Durham and Shelby Johnson hold senior Sally Wheeler during senior night Friday, Feb. 15. The teams played Blue Ridge at home. For more on the girls’ and boys’ games, see page 8.

Photo by Stephanie McCall

Zoning Board issues SUPs and more

The Zoning Board approved two Special Use Permits (SUP) that came before it Wednesday, Feb. 13.

With the ordinance stipulating the minimum size of a new commercial building at 800 sq. ft. amended for ATM kiosks, the State Employees Credit Union (SECU) returned to the Zoning Board for a SUP rehearing for construction of an ATM in Highlands Plaza.

“Since there was substantial change, a rehearing is allowed,” said Josh Ward, code enforcement officer.

Rather than the customary change of plans required to rehear a case, the “substantial change” was the amended ordinance OK’d by the Town Board.

The SECU representative presented a floor plan and elevation of the ATM including the size, type and material for signage, and a construction schedule.

The Appearance Commission had requested the kiosk mimic the Car Spa as much as possible incorporating stone and horizontal wooden siding, a metal roof, similar colors, and an indirectly illuminated single sign on the front of the building.

Since the use of stone would be cost prohibitive, the Zoning Board accepted SECU’s plans which will incorporate the Ap-
Random thoughts while attempting to recover from the Siberian Death Flu.

So about last week...um...all I remember was waking up with a 103-degree fever and then being visited by creatures from the planet Ny-Quil. All in all a very strange week -- one from which I am attempting to fully recover.

Roger Clemens used 'roids? Really? A 40+-year-old pitcher who gained a ton of weight and whose performance actually improved with age? And no one suspected this? Actually, I have suspected it for years and have said so in various columns about Barry Bonds. It's amazing to me that with all of the focus and emphasis on Bonds that no one thought he's such a "nice guy." (Nice guy being the code phrase for a guy who would throw his teammates, his agents and even his own wife under the bus to save his failing legacy -- what a trooper!)

Duke lost to Wake Forest on Sunday night because the shots weren't falling. I've been saying it all year -- jump shooting teams cannot win championships, and Sunday night was your visual evidence.

Duke has enough talent and enough shooters to beat anyone on any given night, but when they hit a cold stretch they are vulnerable to less talented teams who play with poise. And while we are on the subject of Wake Forest, my vote for Coach of the Year goes to Dino Gaudio. He's taken a last place team whose coach died suddenly in the off-season and has them playing over .500 in the ACC this year and fighting for a NCAA tournament birth. Token NASCAR comment...Ryan Newman...Daytona 500...booyah.

This may not be the time to mention this, but I love those GEICO commercials where the kid talks about putting Mike Wallace into the wall. That kid is funny stuff.

Once upon a time, in a land far, far away, there was an evil wizard who wore a grey hooded sweatshirt. That wizard had concocted the most powerful team in all of the National Football League and that team was feared by all who tried to tame it.

Unfortunately for the wizard, a young boy named Eli came of age and vanquished the evil wizard much to the delight of the 1972 Miami Dolphins. Or, at least that's how it happened in my mind anyway. (My daughter has been watching too many fairy tales lately.)

And that team was feared by all who tried to tame it.

I happened to drive over to Hiwassee Dam Tuesday night to watch the Highlanders in action in their conference game with the subject of Wake Forest, my vote for Coach of the Year goes to Dino Gaudio. He's taken a last place team whose coach died suddenly in the off-season and has them playing over .500 in the ACC this year and fighting for a NCAA tournament birth. Token NASCAR comment...Ryan Newman...Daytona 500...booyah.

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**Obituary**

William Jesse Munger

William Jesse Munger, 95, of Highlands, N.C. died Thursday, February 14, 2008 at the Highlands-Cashiers Hospital. He was a native of Macon County, the son of the late James S. and Nancy Lenora Jones Munger.

He was married to the late Lona Crane Munger, who passed away in 1995. He was retired from the US Forest Service, he had also worked as a groundskeeper for Highlands School and was an electrician for the Town of Highlands. He was a member of Macedonia Baptist Church.

He is survived by one daughter, Martha Owens and her husband Jayce of Highlands, NC; four sons, John Munger and his wife Alfreda of Clayton, GA, Andy Munger and his wife Gail of Seneca, SC, Jim Munger and his wife Peggy and Fred Munger and his wife Madge all of Highlands, NC; one brother, Pearly Munger of Franklin, NC; 21 grandchildren, 40 great-grandchildren, and several great-grandchildren also survive.

Funeral services were held, Saturday, February 16 at 2 p.m. at Macedonia Baptist Church, with Rev. Everette Wilson and Rev. Walter Wilson officiating. Burial will be in the Church Cemetery. Pallbearers were Rick Munger, Joe Munger, Tony Munger, Jess Munger, James Owens, Allen Shearl, Gene Owens, Benny Owens, Dennis Owens, and Johnny Owens. Bryant-Grant Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements.


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Town agrees to help fund Greenway

About 1 1/2 years ago, talk about a comprehensive greenway trail in Highlands began in earnest.

Since that time public input sessions were held, ordinances have been adopted concerning trail rights-of-way, buffers and development.

At the urging of Hillrie Quin, director of the Greenway committee, the Town Board agreed to put aside $100,000 a year for the acquisition of rights-of-way and development of the trail.

The only stipulation to funding was that the Town Board be advised as to specific expenditures as needed.

At the Feb. 6 Town Board meeting, Quin requested matching funds for a $5,000 grant through the N.C. Department of Natural Resources Adopt-A-Trail.

“The grant and town match will allow the Highlands Plateau Greenway committee to purchase a small trailer, tools and safety equipment,” said Quin. “The equipment will be housed in the trailer and kept at the Rec Park.”

The grant also provides for an initial supply of trail maps, brochures and plastic trail blazes to be used for the greenway.

Quin said the tools will be used to build the trails; the safety equipment will be used by those who build and maintain the trails and everyone using power...
Seniors recognized at Friday’s game

Principal Brian Jetter presented each senior basketball player with flow-ers which they in turn gave to their parents at Senior Night, Friday, Feb. 15. It was the last home game against Blue Ridge. Left is Jake Heffington and right Austin Brooks.

Photo by Stephanie McCall

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A fungus among us!

D on’t I have enough to worry about? There’s the war in Iraq and Afghanistan. I fret about whether Iran will wipe Israel off the face of the map when they finally get the bomb. And will that start World War III?

Then there’s that scary, shrinking list of presidential candidates. One of those characters will actually be our next president. Yikes, think about that! Will Hillary take away my perfectly good health care plan and make me buy a government plan that doesn’t work? Name one program the government has run in the last 100 years that actually worked well and wasn’t in the red. Go ahead, name one... I’m waiting!

And how about this Obama character? I call him the riddler because he sure talks a lot and says nothing. I used to know a preacher like that. Worse yet, what happens if a Republican gets back in? I can’t take another four years of this prosperous life.

Now, piled on top of all those worries, I open the Highlands Newspaper last week and learn that the Indiana bat has a fungus. For crying out loud, don’t I have enough on my plate without this?

And why are these disease ridden bats hanging out (ha) in Western North Carolina caves? Are there no caves in Indiana for them to infect? This is serious stuff. Next thing you know these infected Indiana bug eaters will be passing the disease on to our cute little brown North Carolina bats that will pass it on to the scary vampire bat.

There is real cause for concern, not for the bats but for the cone heads that work for the U.S Fish and Wildlife Service that actually spend our tax money by going out and counting bats. These people are very scary and I’m betting they’re all women.

According to these bat counters, the Myotis sodalis has developed white nose syndrome and it’s spreading. (I was awake all night with worry.) While the number of bats is increasing, the increase is decreasing. At last count, there were 533,000 of these little guys left; up from a mere 469,000 last year. I learned how to speak this way when I had to explain how crime stats worked. I majored in confusing the public on the decrease of increasing numbers in college.

I recently had the pleasure of interviewing one of these infamous bat counters in a dark cave near Bryson City.

Here’s the part of our conversation that could be put in print.

“Thanks so much, Ms. bat counter, for inviting me to your cave for a bat count. And thanks for the Smoky Bear hat. It sure does help keep the bat droppings off my shirt. And thanks for warning me not to open my mouth when I look up. Let’s get down to business. All these bats look the same to me. How do you know which ones are the Indiana bats?”

“That’s easy, Mr. Newspaper man. While the Indiana bat looks much like the North Carolina brown bat, a closer inspection will reveal that the Indiana bats have bigger feet. See that group over there? They all have the bigger feet and belong to the Myotis sodalis family.”

“Awesome,” I said, pretending I could actually tell the difference in their feet.

“And there’s more,” she continued. “The Indiana bats have pink lips. “So, you’re telling me they’re footed, pink lipped bats in here from Indiana. There are so many thousands of bats in here. How are you able to count them all?”

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“That’s the easy part,” she smiled. “We count all the big feet, then divide by two. We would count pink lips but because many are covered with white nose syndrome it’s hard for us to see their little lips.”

“This is really fascinating,” I quipped. “Tell me this. When your department finally determines a bat count, have they included the thirteen living in my belfry?”

She looked at me with suspicion. “Are you poking fun at me? I am, after all, a certified bat counter.”

I defended myself. “No, I’m not, but I noticed your agency seems to round off their bat count to the nearest hundredth. There are a lot of belfries out there with bats in them. And here’s another question. Did you consider that some of these bats may only have one leg? That would throw your count way off, wouldn’t it?”

“Mr. Newspaper man, get out of my cave!”

I got outta there like a bat out of hell. I didn’t want to sic her bats on me.

• Read Fred online at www.highlandsinfo.com, scroll down, click on News
Senator Clinton is in trouble. She may yet prevail in her quest for the Democratic nomination, but I'd be surprised. What happened to the once inevitable candidate who enjoyed double digit leads over all challengers? The answer is simple. Barack Obama emerged as the inspirational leader, not of black Americans, or Democratic Americans, but of Americans. Senator Clinton still doesn't seem to understand. She continues to point to her experience and the specifics of her program for America. What is the great experience that she boasts, anyway? First Lady of Arkansas? First Lady of the USA? Or eight years in the Senate?

She claims to have a vision of America, but I, and apparently a good many other Americans, don't believe her. Her vision, if she has one, is of becoming President of the United States. And that vision is rapidly blurring. She is much like the smartest girl in eleventh grade, the one with all the A's in history and social studies. She really doesn't care if the school parking lot is repaved, if Coke machines replace juice machines in social hall, or if the cafeteria stops hot lunch in favor of pizza and Big Macs. She wants, more than anything, to be senior class president, and she will rail against hot lunch, pot holes, and healthy potables if that is the path to success.

What Hillary fails to understand is that she can't bury Barack Obama under a 13-page document which outlines her prescription for an ailing economy. She can't diminish his appeal by claiming that he is long on rhetoric and short on specific solutions to the problems that plague us. She can no more crush him under a stack of proposals than she can catch a lightening bolt in a butterfly net. His candidacy exists on a different plane. Senator Clinton is the kind of person who makes lists of chores. She is basically a technocrat.

Senator Obama is the man who dreams great dreams and inspires us to dream them too, and he has great speech writers, or is himself a great speech writer. He might even borrow a great line from the pulpit of African American churches. I can find inspiration in “I have a dream,” but I can't claim ownership. It stems from a culture, not my own. Senator Obama has become, not a black leader, but an American leader. His appeal extends beyond the black community to the young, to the educated, to all things, southern white males.

America has changed. I remember well the 1980s. Basketball fans cheered either for the Larry Bird (white) led Boston Celtics or the Magic Johnson (black) led Los Angeles Lakers. I didn't know one black guy who cheered for the Celtics or one white guy who favored the Lakers. Just a few years later, we were all able to celebrate Michael Jordan and his Chicago Bulls. Maybe if there had been a white guy to act as a foil to Jordan, it might not have happened. There wasn't, and it did. In the white world of professional golf, fans everywhere cheer for Tiger Woods because he is far and away the best golfer on the planet, because there is magic in his clubs. By the way, he is black.

Finally, we can accept greatness in a person of color beyond the athletic field. A leader has emerged who calls to us to be better, as a nation, than we have been. Isn’t that the role of the President of the United States, to inspire us, to bring us together, to bridge the widening partisan gap that exists today? Hillary can't do it with her lists of things for America to do. Mike Huckabee can't do it with his focus on Christian issues. And John McCain, whom I admire enormously, doesn't understand the need for a new direction. I don't agree with Senator Obama on every point. After opposing the war in Iraq for years, I find myself fearing a precipitous withdrawal. I doubt that we can effectively educate inner city youth, rehabilitate convicts, or achieve many other lofty goals without some fundamental changes in our society, the most basic of these, to borrow from an Irish anthem, is to become “A Nation Once Again.” I’d like to give the guy a chance to try.
**Reflections from Turtle Pond**

Preserving our collective legacy

Sometimes I think we are so enamored of current technology we overlook the incredible legacy of human thought all around us. Look at your sock. Think about the amazing ingenuity it took to figure out how to perfectly shape knit material around the human heel. Imagine yourself with two knitting needles and a ball of yarn and no instructions. How long would it take you to knit a sock?

Think about the food you eat. Think about the people, tens of thousands of years ago, who first discovered the relationship of seed to plant, and then learned to grow plants to feed themselves. Think about this: almost no new plants or animals have been domesticated in the last 10,000 years.

Our lives are built upon a long accumulation of human intellectual achievement, much of which we take completely for granted today. In this age of industrialized agriculture, when only a fraction of the population is involved in food production, most of us take our food for granted: we just go to the supermarket when the refrigerator is empty. Imagine if you had to grow all the food your family ate and preserve enough seed to grow next year's crop.

Learning to preserve seeds was one of the first skills our ancestors learned as they transitioned from hunter-gatherers to farmers. Archeologists have found seed deposits in Jamo, Iraq, that date from 6750 B.C.

As farmers replanted their seeds, over time their crops became adapted to local growing conditions. As a result of these adaptations, enormous diversity developed — there are over 120,000 varieties of rice alone. For a local example, my late neighbor Hazel Killebrew grew a variety of tomato she called Thomas Wilson that has been growing up here for generations and is therefore perfectly adapted to Highlands, which can be a difficult place to grow tomatoes (too cool and wet). And shame on me, I don't have any of those seeds.

In the 1920s hybridization was discovered to produce robust harvests and farmers began to purchase the new hybrid seeds instead of saving their own. This brought about the “green revolution” in the 1950s and 1960s that saw third-world countries’ agricultural output quadruple and hunger drop.

However, the adoption of hybrid varieties by farmers meant that agricultural crop diversity began to decline. In the U.S. in the last century, the number of cabbage varieties grown dropped from 548 to 28, cauliflower from 158 to 9, and pears from 2683 to 326. In addition, the hybrids were developed for production and transport, so often had less flavor and nutritional value than the older varieties.

Today our farms are planted with “monocultures” of the same crop variety, which means the entire national crop becomes extremely vulnerable to disease, insect attack, or climate change. For example, in 1970 corn blight hit cornfields in the southern United States; some states lost 50% of their crop.

Genetic diversity in agricultural crops means the difference between a white potato and a Yukon Gold, but it also encodes 10,000 years of growth in different climates and ecosystems. Nations around the world maintain seed banks in the recognition that the future of their food supply requires the preservation of this genetic legacy; the U.S. National Plant Germplasm System in Fort Collins, CO, holds nearly 300,000 kinds of seeds.

The Global Crop Diversity Trust is an independent international organization which was created to ensure the conservation of crop diversity worldwide.

From their website (croptrust.org): “Together with the air we breathe and the water we drink, crop diversity is one of the most fundamentally important resources for human life on earth. This diversity provides the natural, biological basis of our ability to grow the food required today, as well as to meet the challenges of population growth, changing climates and constantly evolving pests and diseases. No country in the world is self-sufficient in crop diversity — agriculture everywhere depends on it. Yet this diversity, contained and stored in seeds, is at risk of disappearing. But we don’t have to sit back and let this happen.”

Their solution is the Svalbard International Seed Vault that will house seed samples from nearly every country in the world with the aim of protecting the agricultural heritage of humankind from catastrophes, such as nuclear wars, asteroid strikes and global warming.

The seed vault is built into a mountain near Longyearbyen, the largest settlement in the Svalbard archipelago, which is part of Norway. The Norwegian government has paid the construction costs of $5 million.

The seed vault will be built 120 meters inside the permafrost, 330 meters above sea level. The seed samples — there’s room for 4.5 million — will be stored at –18 degrees Celsius. “By building the vault deep inside the mountain, the surrounding permafrost would continue to provide natural refrigeration if the mechanical system failed,” said Gary Fowler, Executive Director of the Global Crop Diversity Trust.

The grand opening is scheduled for February 26, 2008. The Norwegian Ministry of Agriculture reports that seeds are coming in from every corner of the world:

- several thousand potato seeds from Peru
- 30,000 different beans from Colombia
- 10,000 types of maize from Mexico
- 30,000 seed samples of mostly barley and wheat from the Middle East
- the biggest contributor of all is the seed bank of the Philippines, shipping 70,000 different varieties of rice from 120 different countries.

If you are planting a garden this year and would like to try some traditional “heirloom” varieties of vegetables, a couple of choices are Seeds of Change (seedsforchange.com) and Seed Savers Exchange (seedsavers.org). These companies’ plants will produce viable seeds and you can replant them to produce your own Highlands varieties.

For more information on preserving our collective legacy, please visit www.kathleenbrugger.com.
Feeling the Burn

John and I just hired a personal trainer, and I want you to know that after only a few sessions, I can already feel the burn. Yup, I am so burned up, I could catch on fire. It burns me up that there are actually people out there who enjoy working out. I’m not one of them.

Putting on exercise shorts, tennis shoes, and one of my collection of t-shirts with something witty/bitng/sarcastic on it, has to qualify as one of life’s more humiliating episodes, and it burns me up that we are actually paying for this torture. It reminds me of high school, when we girls had to don egregious sea foam green one-piece gym suits with bloomer legs. Should one of our male classmates say us in such garb, we knew we were in for days of merciless teasing in the lunchroom. My poor mother had beautifully embroidered “M. Mead” on the pocket of my gym suit, which really amounted to putting lipstick on a pig. I think I actually torched that gym suit after graduation, giving me one of the few feelings of satisfaction to be connected to my experience of high school.

I arrived in Highlands in November of 2005, and since then, the bathroom scale has slowly crept up. Granted, I was coming out of knee surgery, and had lost weight during that procedure. Still, the realization that there were now 30 more pounds of me to love was not a happy one. John and I are going to be getting married in a few months, and we do not need to get serious about becoming the “body of a god” he declared the other day. “Unfortunately, that god is Buddha.” We agreed that our gym membership last year had been a step in the right direction, but that neither one of us had the motivation to do it alone. Enter our personal trainer, Marsha.

Marsha had been my own personal angel after knee surgery. She had the perfect combination of encouragement, teasing, and discipline to whip me back into shape. I couldn’t have done it without her. Not surprisingly, when John and I realized we needed help getting fit, Marsha was the one person I knew we needed. Fortunately for us, she was studying to become certified, and agreed to take us on. It seemed like a match made in heaven. That is, until the first day of exercising. Suddenly, combining sore, humiliated, and tired didn’t seem like such a great idea after all. Still, we had decided to stick to it, and stick to it we have.

On Monday, we add another aspect to our own personal Battle of the Bulge–Yvonne, the nutritionist. I’m not just a “meat and potatoes” girl. I am a butter, croissant, and foie gras girl. My idea of a meal is not a spinach salad composed of two wilted leaves with lemon juice squeezed on them. My idea of food includes wild and crazy things, like bread and sauces and things that actually have taste. I’m going to try to keep an open mind, but if you’re like me, life’s just too short to eat tofu.

We just attended the Heart Healthy Fair at the Rec Center, in an attempt to get some ideas and motivation for our healthier lifestyle. In all fairness, it was surprisingly fun and interesting. For one thing, I got a chance to sip a drink I’d seen people drink before. Perhaps you know the one – that nasty looking green stuff that looks like what you get if you take a pressure washer to the underside of your lawn mower? Well, I’m pleased to

• See HIS & HERS page 9
Hiwasssee Dam
The girls played Hiwassee Dam's tough Lady Eagles on Friday, Feb. 8 losing 80-30. Taylor Buras led the Lady Highlanders with 8 points and Bobbi Jo Talley added 7. All team members contributed points, respectively. Marlee McCall scored 4 points, and Susan Johnson, Sarah Power, Brie Schmitt, Jessica Gagne and Kate-Marie Parks each scored 2 points.

Nantahala

Brie Schmitt led the team with 19 points, 5 assists, and 8 rebounds. Sarah Power followed with 15 points, 12 rebounds. Taylor Buras had 12 points, 5 rebounds, and 7 assists. The team had a total of 41 rebounds and a shooting percentage of 60%.

Marlee McCall: 6 points, 1 rebound and 1 assist; Bobbie Jo Talley scored 4 points with 3 rebounds; Kate-Marie Parks got 2 points with 7 rebounds; and Jessica Gagne scored 2 points and had 4 rebounds, 1 assist and 1 block.

Hendersonville
Brie Schmitt led with 15 points and Taylor Buras added 10 but the Lady Highlanders lost to Hendersonville 61-34 on Tuesday, Feb. 12. Schmitt also made 2 assists, 1 block and 3 steals. Buras made 2 assists and had 2 rebounds.

Marlee McCall scored 6 points made 1 assist and 1 rebound; Kate Marie Parks scored 2 points and had 7 rebounds; Sarah Power: scored 1 point made 5 assists, 3 rebounds, and 1 block/steal; Bobbi Jo Talley had one rebound.

Blue Ridge
Highlands made a much deserved win against Blue Ridge, Friday, Feb. 15 at home. The score was 73-41.

“It was a total team effort tonight as the Lady Highlanders won the last game of the regular season,” said Coach Brett Lamb. High scorer was Brie Schmitt with 17 points followed by Rachel Power with 13 and Courtney Rogers with 12.

Next up was Taylor Buras with 9 points; Marlee McCall with 8; Jessica Gagne with 6; Kate Marie Parks with 5; Bobbi Jo Talley with 2 and Susan Johnson with one point.

Hiwassee Conference Game
The boys won the first conference game 78 to 72 against Hiwassee Dam on their home turf, Tuesday, Feb. 19.

Michael Shearl was high scorer for this game scoring 21 points. He was followed by Jake Heffington with 18 points and Andrew Billingsley with 13 points. Next up was Michael Baty with 6 points and Casey Molinary with 2 points. The team slammed Hiwassee Dam during the second quarter scoring 31 of their points.

The team's overall record is 9-20 and its conference record is 3-3. The next game is the finals of the Conference Tournament against Blue Ridge on Feb. 21.
A strange thing happened this morning. I turned on the financial news channel I watch every day, and instead of business news and interviews that is the channel’s format, I am looking at Rep. Henry Waxman’s flaring nostrils (the man has a porcine-like nose). What is the Chairman of the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee doing on a business channel? Investigating the use of steroids and human growth hormones in major league baseball, of course.

For two hours I watched members of the Committee grilling Roger Clemens and his personal trainer over Clemens’ alleged use of said banned drugs. It was interesting watching two grown men yelling at congressmen (a brilliant strategy learned from a then sitting President). A number of questions leapt to mind. First, why was CNBC, a business news network, televising such a non-business related proceeding? I have no answers.

Next, why was Congress investigating a baseball issue in the first place, televised or not? While harboring cynical thoughts it is not my style, shouldn’t Congress have something better to do than to delve into the turpitude of professional sports? It seems to me that they burn the midnight oil on the last day of the session passing volumes of bills they haven’t read. I guess slipping in all those earmarks can wait until the baseball police have finished their investigation.

Next, why did Congress get involved at all? Because the esteemed former Senator George Mitchell was charged with the responsibility of getting to the bottom of the performance-enhancing drug use in baseball. For 20 months, he and his staff interviewed dozens of ballplayers, equipment room managers, babysitters (no kidding) and anyone else who would talk to them. At the end of his extensive investigation, the Mitchell Report was issued.

The Mitchell Report, 409 pages long, concluded that, yes, there was such a problem. Yes, senator, that is why you were hired. It recommended that players should be educated as to the deleterious effects of such drugs. It recommended that an effort should be made to keep drugs out of the clubhouse. It recommended that club security personnel should do a better job of watching out for abuse. Profound.

Let’s take one more step backward, shall we? Major League Baseball was enjoying a huge resurgence after their stupid labor dispute ended the 1994 season prematurely. Barry Bonds, Sammy Sosa and Mark McGwire had some prodigious home run production and the fans responded. Major League Baseball rose from the ashes due to the increase in homer frequency. People turn out to see the ball leave the park. The three had something else in common.

They were all accused of using performance-enhancing drugs, along with dozens of other ball players. Enter Bud Selig. Jr. Bud was named acting Commissioner of Baseball in 1992. At the time, he was thought of as a dufus and the 1994 strike seemed to verify the idea. Then ball was starting flying out of the park, fan interest perked up, attendance soared, and, in 1998, Bud Selig Jr. was named Commissioner without the acting part. Now, everyone knew the increased production was due to the players’ use of drugs. Bud certainly knew it but looked the other way, to the pleasure of the players’ union, team owners and the fans.

Pressure started to build, and I know not from where, to do something about the rampant use of drugs and finally Bud acted. He hired former Senator George Mitchell to investigate; never thinking that the result of his action would end up being splattered all over national television in February 2008. Many seasoned baseball fans watched a baseball icon, Roger Clemens, being ripped and torn by Congressmen. At a time when many of us should be starting to think about spring training and the start of the season, we’re faced with charges, counter-charges and general legal mayhem. Nice work, Bud.

Some of you won’t agree with this, and that is your prerogative. Baseball players are entertainers. People go to games to be entertained, nothing more, nothing less. Frankly, I don’t care if they shoot up with jet fuel if it makes the game more entertaining. Before you spaz out, consider rock stars. They are entertainers. Almost all of them use drugs to produce a more enjoyable performance. Yet no one insists that they be drug tested. Sure they ruin their bodies and die before they should, but who really cares. The concert’s the thing, isn’t it?

And don’t give me the role model story. Ball players have been replaced by the rockers as role models, for better or worse.
As we ponder the story of the woman at the well found in John 4:4-45 we contemplate what must have been going through her mind when she realized she was face to face with the Messiah. As we think about her sitting, listening, taking in what this stranger had to share, we think of our children. As a child we depend on our parents to take care of our basic needs. The most important of those needs seems to be food and water. Can you hear the little voices whining... I mean calling now from the back seat of the car... “I’m thirsty!”

The scene at the well that day must have been powerful. Jesus, a Jew, having the audacity to ask a Samaritan for water. Then, proceeding to challenge her further, He called her to the proverbial carpet. He impressed upon her the knowledge that he knew her inside and out! He tells her that only He can give her the water that will quench her thirst. Jesus tells her about this “Living Water” that will be a “spring within, gushing fountains of endless life” (The Message). Can you imagine a trickle of water that will result in gushing fountains? That’s a lot of water!

Not only is He making an offer to the woman, but her village, other Samaritans, too, will know the Messiah has come. Jesus is offering them a chance for rebirth and renewal. The thirst he is offering to quench is the thirst for illumination that can only come from a relationship with God. Rebirth and renewal is what we look for on a daily basis. It’s the understanding that God wants to give us the water as much as we desire it.

When we are children, things are so easy to understand. Our theology is very basic. Jesus loves me. As adults we become thirstier without completely understanding why. We’re supposed to have childlike faith, yet somewhere along the line we’ve stopped asking our Father for something to drink. We tend to depend on our own water rather than seeking the living water. We’re missing the kind of water that not only quenches our thirst, but gushes forth a fountain. If we sit and listen, accept the water that quenches our eternal thirst, we have a presence, a power that the Holy Spirit provides. We have the comfort and excitement that Jesus shared that day with the Samaritan woman. Once our thirst is quenched, imagine the thirst of those around us, how we too can return to our village and share the excitement, the passion of the one who came to give us living water. This water is not only offered to the Samaritan...
This weekend is the last weekend for ITC LIVE! Don’t miss it!

ITC LIVE!, makes its final two appearances at 1:30 p.m. Friday, Feb. 22 and Saturday, Feb. 23 at the Instant Theatre Company’s Studio on Main.

ITC LIVE!, features long form improvisation which is seldom seen outside of Chicago and San Francisco.

From one audience suggestion the monologist in the troupe delivers an impromptu monologue, and from that monologue the players in the troupe create 40-45 minutes of non-stop hilarious scenes and characters. It has to be seen to be believed.

Act II of ITC LIVE! is comprised of short form improv games that Highlands audiences who have attended the previous three ITC improvisation shows are familiar with.

However, even if you are familiar with the format of the games, no two will ever be alike. As no performance of ITC LIVE! is ever the same.

Frequently audience members return to see the show for a second or third time. If you have already seen the show and wish to see ITC LIVE! again you may purchase your ticket for $5 off the regular ticket price of $20.

For reservations please call the ITC box office at 828-342-9197. The Instant Theatre Company’s Studio on Main is located at 310 Oak Square, Main Street, Highlands.

The Instant Theatre Company is very grateful to its generous sponsor of ITC LIVE!, Meadows Mountain Realty.

This weekend is the last weekend for ITC LIVE! Don’t miss it!

... GREENWAY continued from page 3

... equipment like chainsaws will undergo a training session prior to use.

“We approved $100,000 for the Greenway and they’re asking us for considerably less than that,” said Town Administrator Richard Betz.

The Adopt-A-Trail grant will fund $4,978.42 and the town will fund $4,107.83 for items not covered by the grant – trailer with ramp, combination lock, chain saw, chaps, helmet, gloves, hardhat, shin guards, and safety glasses.

The board voted unanimously to fund the request.

Quin said the trailer, tools and equipment will also be available for other groups to use.

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SERVING AND COUNTER HELP NEEDED at SweeTreats, Highlands. Call 526-9822.

MAINTENANCE ENGINEER POSITION AVAILABLE at Hampton Inn/Highlands Inn. Year Round/Full time. Must have basic knowledge of electronics, plumbing, minor electrical and construction. Send Resume to P.O. Box 1060 Highlands, NC 28741 or email to info@hamptoninn-nc.com. Call Sabrina for interview 828-526-5899.

FRONT DESK REPRESENTATIVE position available. Year round/full time. Must be friendly, enjoy working with the public and good at multi tasking. Send Resume to P.O. Box 1060, email info@hamptoninn-nc.com. Call Sabrina for interview 828-526-5899.

PIANIST NEEDED for sweet little mountain chapel. Holy Family Lutheran Church, Highlands, is seeking a pianist for one service per week, Sundays at 10:30 a.m. Piano/keyboard only, no organ, no choir. Will pay stipend plus mileage. Please contact Chaplain Margaret Howell at 704) 516-7893.

COMMUNITY BIBLE CHURCH is accepting resumes for a part-time office assistant. Computer skills, people skills and creative abilities are required. 828-526-4685 or office@cbchighlands.com

CHESTNUT HILL IS CURRENTLY SEEKING A RESIDENTIAL ASSISTANT in a 26-bed ASSISTED LIVING CENTER. Benefits. Pre-employment drug screening and background check. EOE. Please apply in person at 64 Clubhouse Trail, Highlands, NC 28741 or call for an appointment at 828-526-5251.

CHESTNUT HILL OF HIGHLANDS seeking a courtesy officer. Benefits, pre-employment drug screening and background check. EOE. Apply in person at 64 Clubhouse Trail, Highlands, NC 29741. (828) 526-5251.

CHESTNUT HILL OF HIGHLANDS seeking a maintenance helper. Benefits, pre-employment drug screening and background check. EOE. Apply in person at 64 Clubhouse Trail, Highlands, NC 29741. (828) 526-5251.

CHESTNUT HILL OF HIGHLANDS therapy assistant needed at Highlands-Cashiers Hospital. Full-time position available Monday through Friday. Must be North Carolina certified. One year experience in hospital setting and CPR certification is preferred. Full benefits, or the option to opt out of benefits for an increase in pay, available after 30 days of full-time employment. Pre-employment screening required. Call Human Resources at 828-526-1301 or apply online at www.hchospital.org.

DIRECTOR OF NURSING is needed in the beautiful mountains of Western North Carolina. Experienced nurse leader for a 24 bed Critical Access Hospital, responsible for managing a budget, quality of patient care, customer satisfaction, and the oversight of management for the Acute Care Unit (Med/Surg), ER, OR, PACU and GI Lab, Hospice, and Cardio-Pulmonary. Must be able to provide leadership for managers and staff, and conduct recruitment and retention activities. Masters degree with a background in nursing leadership required. This position reports directly to the CEO/President of Highlands-Cashiers-Canopy. Working closely with the QA Nurse Manager and the VP of Operations. Full benefits, or the option to opt out of benefits for an increase in pay, available after 30 days of full-time employment. Pre-employment screening required. Call Human Resources at 828-526-1301 or apply online at www.hchospital.org.

RESPIRATORY THERAPIST at Highlands-Cashiers Hospital. Full-time position with 8 and 12 hour shifts. Responsibilities include taking call and being able to respond within 20 minutes. Also must be able to intubate a patient. Current registration or certification in North Carolina, along with current ACLS and/or ARS required. Experience with rehabilitation and disease prevention preferred. Full benefits, or the option to opt out of benefits for an increase in pay, available after 30 days of full-time employment. Pre-employment screening required. Call Human Resources at 828-526-1301 or apply online at www.hchospital.org.

RN’S at Highlands-Cashiers Hospital and Fidelia Eckerd Living Center, Full, Part-time and PRN positions available for 12 hour day and night shifts. Excellent wage scale, with shift and weekend differentials. Full benefits, or the option to opt out of benefits for an increase in pay, available after 30 days of full-time employment. Pre-employment screening required. Call Human Resources at 828-526-1301 or apply online at www.hchospital.org.

CNAs or CNA II at Highlands-Cashiers Hospital and Fidelia Eckerd Living Center. Full-time, Part-time, and PRN positions for day and night shifts. Excellent wage scale, with shift and weekend differentials. Full benefits, or the option to opt out of benefits for an increase in pay, available after 30 days of full-time employment. Pre-employment screening required. Call Human Resources at 828-526-1301 or apply online at www.hchospital.org.

EMERGENCY ROOM RN’s needed at Highlands-Cashiers Hospital. One Full-time and two Part-time positions available. 12 hour night shifts. Shift and weekend differentials. BCLS and ACLS required. Full benefits, or the option to opt out of benefits for an increase in pay, available after 30 days of full-time employment. We are now offering part-time employees, working at least 24 hours a week, medical insurance. Pre-employment screening required. Call Human Resources at 828-526-1301 or apply online at www.hchospital.org.

VACATION RENTAL

HIGHLANDS COUNTRY CLUB – Sorry, golf and club privileges not available. $2,495 a week. Call 912-230-7202.

THE LODGE ON MIRROR LAKE – Fish or canoe from deck. Available weekly, monthy, 3-day min. Call 828-342-2302.

ON LAKE SEQUOYA – Three master suites with jetted tubs and showers, sleeping nook with private bath, 4 fireplaces, 2 living areas, newly renovated. Private dock with canoe and firepit. Call 828-342-2302.

REAL ESTATE FOR SALE

LOT FOR SALE. 90 acre, drive graded, 2 bed septic approved. Shared well, off Turtle Pond and Dendy Orchard Road. 4 miles from center of town $39,000. Call Ty at 828-577-9261.

SCALY MOUNTAIN Building lots, views, wooded. 2.5 acres, start at $150,000 by owner, owner financing available. (404) 831-0222 or GoodRealtor.com. Call 919-340-2260. LOTS FOR SALE IN SHELBY $110,000 each. Call 828-256-2874.

MOUNT VERON, SOUTH CAROLINA – 126.88 +/- acres. 4 BR/3 BA, home, creek, lake. $460,000. Call: 478-552-6677 or 706-401-9035.

TENNILE, CENTRAL GEORGIA – 5.71 acres. 5 BR/3.5 BA, brick home, 7-board fencing, barn pecan orchard. 11-acre lake. $799,000. Call: 478-552-6677 or 678-313-5090. www.landofgeorgia.com.

UPPER CLEAR CREEK ROAD AT CORNET LANE 1.20 acres less than 4 miles to Main Street. Paved Access. Some winter views 3 side corner lot has old logging road as your driveway. $62,500. Call 526-9021 or 787-2307.

BUCK CREEK: 1600 sq. finished basement, creek front. Handicapped accessible wheelchair friendly; 8 BR 2 large BA $329,000. 828-524-6038.

IN TOWN – 3 bedroom, 2 bath, stream, large level yard. Easy walk to Main Street. $450,000, by owner. Call 828-226-6123. 12/21.

HOUSE FOR SALE (ISLAMORADA, FLORIDA) – Two bedroom, one and 1/2 bath, corner house facing the ocean, Avila Beach, with ocean views. Call 526-1684.


HOUSE FOR SALE – HFCC 2 story split, 3/2, large lot, lake, golf course, mountain views, membership available but optional. $795,000. Call 526-4154.


OCEANFRONT LOT KEY LARGO, FLORIDA – Waterfront lot 1/2 acre. $150,000. Call 526-2874.

FOR RENT

1 BEDROOM, 1 BATH, Furnished Apt. 1/2 miles from downtown. $700 a month plus utilities & satellite. Call 828-362-0130 or 526-4589.

BUILDING FOR LEASE, Heathstone Center, Hwy 64 in Cashiers, 2,052 sq ft. great retail office location, plenty of parking. Call (828) 243-2093 or (828) 734-9454 for more information.

REAT 3 BED 2 BATH HOME IN MIRROR LAKE, area, less than 1 mile from Main Street. Available monthly/weekly. Call 770-977-5692.

ONE BR/ONE BATH FURNISHED APARTMENT close to town including all utilities except phone. $750. Contact Tucker or Jeannie Chambers, The Chambers Agency, REALTORS. 828-526-2217.


RETAIL/OFFICE SPACE - 800 - 3,000 Sq Ft. Located in Highlands Plaza. Offices. Excellent wage scale, with shift and weekend differentials. Full benefits, or the option to opt out of benefits for an increase in pay, available after 30 days of full-time employment. Pre-employment screening required. Call Human Resources at 828-526-1301 or apply online at www.hchospital.org.

FREE Classified Ads for items FOR SALE less than $1,000. All other terms: 20 words for $5; $2 for each 10-word increment. Email copy to: highlandseditor@aol.com or FAX to 1-866-212-8913.
ID A – Cleared, buildable with all services. Last improved lot in Silver Shores subdivision. $599,900. For information and photos call Frank (954) 964-7694 or email ft442@bellsouth.net.

NC. OTTO, 36 ACRES – 10 miles from Georgia State line, high elevation, big views, driveway and homestead cleared. Call owner, 770-952-9100.


ITEMS FOR SALE

Barely used 30GB Zune Video MP3 Player. Comes with leather case. $150 or best offer. Call Davis at 828-526-9152 for more information.

SEARS WASHER & DRYER – Washer, 3 years and older dryer. Both in excellent working condition. $275 for BOTH. 526-3647.


TWO SIT-ON TOP KAYAKS – Orange. Paddles included. $500 for both. Call Lisa at 770-842-3784.

THREE “HOUSE OF DENMARK” BOOKCASES – walnut, 3’ x 6’, containing TV, tape player, turn table, radio/CD. Sold as an ensemble. $900. Call 706-831-0892 owner/agent.

ANTIQUE CHERRY DINING TABLE from Estate Sale. Double drop-leaf. Rope carved legs. Seats 4-10 people Extends to 4x10 ft $1,500 obo 828-787-1515.

DOG KENNEL – 10’ x 10’ x 6’, heavy gauge chainlink. Like New. $175, was $270. 828-389-2722 Hayesville, NC.

DELUXE VENTED GAS HEATER – $490, heat high btu, slightly used. $100. 524-6038.


BEAUTIFUL FLOORING: Wormy white oak flooring, resawn, milled and ready to lay w/ tåg, 6-12” widths, $9/sq ft. 215-529-7637.

LOG CABIN KIT – 32 x 24 x 8 1/2 inch yellow pine logs. Walls only. $9,999. Call 526-0241.


SLEEPER SOFA – Neutral Pleated. Like New.

SOLID DARK OAK DINETTE CABINET – 19”x64”x84” 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


2002 TOYOTA TACOMA TRUCK – Good Condition. 67,000 miles, new battery, wipers, tires. $7,000. 828-526-2416.

2006 SUZUKI DR 200SE MOTORCYCLE – 29 miles, only, perfect condition. $3,000. 828-324-6789 or home at 828-526-5507.

SERVICES


AFFORDABLE HOME IMPROVEMENT – Tile, Painting, Decks, Siding, Repairs Etc. Licensed & Insured General Contractor For Estimates call Scott @ 828-577-9261.

FIREWOOD “Nature Dried” Call 526-2251.


TREE SERVICE – From view clearing to the most complicated tree removal, under brushing, stump removals/grounding/brush chipping/hauling and storm clean-up. For good quality, dependable services, fully insured, give us a call at 826-526-2251.


J&J LAWN AND LANDSCAPING SERVICES – complete lawn and landscaping service, spring cleanup, gutter cleaning, under-brushing, tree removal, lot clearing, storm cleanup, rock work, retaining walls, flowerbeds, firewood. 826-526-2251.

SHIPPI NG SERVICES – STORK’S WRAP PACK & SHIP UPS Ground & Next Day Air services and large furniture shipping available. Packing services and/or supplies. Gift wrapping and fax services. 323 Hwy 107 N, Cashiers, NC (1/2 mile from crossroads) (828) 743-3222.


MARK’S SEDAN DRIVING SERVICE – All airports – Atlanta, Asheville, scenic tours, parks special occasions, restaurant trips, auto delivery. Town Car. Call 828-524-0424 or cell (229) 292-3623. 10/25

BUSINESSES FOR SALE

HIGHLANDS RADIO SHACK IS FOR SALE! Own a successful year-round business on Main Street. Asking $399,000. Call Thea or Chuck at 526-3350.

WANTED

WHITE MALE, AGE 48 looking for female companion, cook. Call Donna. 706-335-6496 or write P.O. Box 411, Ila, GA 30647.12408

LOST

... COACH’S CORNER continued from page 2

Coach Smart has done a fantastic job as usual with a team that is very young, and beating the Eagles on their home court is no easy task. While the Highlanders had an 18-point lead at one point – this was no blowout. The Eagles made a strong run in the second half, cutting the lead to 5 at one point, but the Highlanders kept their composure and were able to remain calm despite adverse conditions. These qualities, coming from a young team in particular, are a direct reflection of the head coach – and there are none better than Coach Smart.
Through Friday
• Spring Soccer Registration at Highlands Recreation Park from 5-7 p.m. Cost is $40 for fall registered players, $50 for new or non-registered players. The season is April through June. Games will be played on Sunday afternoons. Age divisions are determined by the child’s age as of July 31, 2007. All new players need a copy of a birth certificate. For more information, call Christy Weller at 526-9931.

Every Monday
• Recreational Bridge 1 p.m. at the Rec Park. $3 per person.

Every Tuesday
• Highlands Rotary Club meets at noon at the Highlands Conference Center.
• Weight Watchers meets at the Highlands Civic Center. Weigh-in is at 5:30. The meeting starts at 6 pm.
• Open Studio Night Figure Drawing: Informal instruction available for beginners. Bring your sketch pad or paint box for a leisurely session of figure drawing/painting. Cost is $12, $10 for “Friends” of the Gallery.

Every Wednesday
• Adult handbell rehearsals at Highlands United Methodist Church at 6 p.m. If you’re interested in playing but can’t be here this Wednesday, please let Carroll Harris know. 526-3376.
• Gospel of John Bible Study Pastor Todd Struble is leading a study this spring on the fourth Gospel (using the Efird Bible Study Series) Wednesday Supper begins at 5:30 with the Bible Study at 6:15 – 7:15.
• Highlands MountainTop Rotary Club meets at the Highlands Conference Center at 7:30 a.m.
• Men’s interdenominational Bible Study at 8:30 a.m. at First Baptist Church.
• Study sessions at the Universal Unitarian Fellowship Hall in Franklin. A $5 soup-supper will be served at 5:30 p.m. Study sessions will begin at 6:30 p.m. For more information call 828-524-6777 or 706-746-9964.

Every Thursday
• Al-Anon Meetings, noon in the First Presbyterian Church basement at Fifth & Main Street.
• Men’s interdenominational Bible Study at 8:30 a.m.

Every Friday
• The Girls’ Clubhouse meets in the school cafeteria 3-4:30 p.m. All 6-8 grade girls are welcome. Come have fun while serving others. For more information, call Kim Lewicki 526-0782.
• Improv has returned to the Instant Theater Company's Studio on Main with an all new show, ITC LIVE!, and playing every Friday and Saturday night at 8 p.m. in February. For tickets and further information please call the ITC box office at 828-342-9197.

Saturday, Feb. 23
• Improv has returned to the Instant Theater Company's Studio on Main with an all new show, ITC LIVE!, and playing every Friday and Saturday night at 8 p.m. in February. For tickets and further information please call the ITC box office at 828-342-9197.
• Highlands Annual Chili Cook-off, Salsa, & Cornbread Competition is scheduled for Saturday from 6:30-9:30 pm at the Community Building.

Sunday, Feb. 24
• Free Health Tracks Mini Fair at the Cashiers Community Library from 10:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. For more information on the month's events, call HealthTracks at (828) 526-1FIT (1348). Monday through Friday during regular business hours.
meeting noon at the Rec Park. After a light lunch there will be a meeting and program with lifetime members J.Jay Joannides on encaustic wax painting -- an ancient medium dating back to the Egyptians. The public is invited for the special painting -- an ancient medium dating back to the

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

- **Friday, March 7**
  - Bingo at the Highlands Community Building from 6:30-8:30 p.m.
  - Starting Monday, March 10
  - Family-to-Family free 12-week Education Program will be offered by NAMI Appalachian South at Southwestern Community College, Macon campus from 6:30-9 p.m. The class is for family members of loved ones with a mental illness. NAMI Appalachian South is an affiliate of the state National Alliance on Mental Illness. Please contact Ann Nandrea 828 369-7385 or Mary Ann Widenhouse 828 524-1355 to register or for more information. Some comments from previous participants: “Valuable information about Brain Disorders,” “Let me know that I am not alone.” “Learned more about coping.” “That there is help and hope.”
- **Thursday, March 13**
  - Highlands School PTO and fundraiser at 6 p.m.
- **Tuesday, March 18**
  - Hunting Heritage Super Fund Auction and Dinner will help benefit the National Wild Turkey Conservation at 6 p.m. at the Dillard House Conference Center in Dillard, GA. All ticket holders are eligible for prizes and items up for auction. Tickets are $55 and help support wildlife management on private, public and corporate lands and preserve hunting as sport.
- **Sunday, March 25**
  - First Presbyterian Church will host an old-fashioned hymn-sing at 4 p.m. Those attending may choose a hymn from the 1938 Cokesbury Hymnal. The song leader will be Stella Hue and Angie Jenkins will play the piano.

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**ZONING continued from page 1**

...ear Commission’s requests, except for the stone.

**Town Zoning Director Joe Cooley** said the ATM will require one parking space and there is enough parking in the plaza to accommodate the ATM requirement.

**Highlands Storage Village**

The board also issued a SUP for Phase II of Highlands Storage Village on U.S. 64 east of the B-501 zone. With 56% of building one occupied, owner Bucky Meredith is ready to secure financing and begin construction of the two final buildings in the complex.

During the construction phase, a temporary entrance will be used and upon completion will be replaced. Total construction is expected to be completed by Dec. 31, 2009. Building two is expected to be completed by the end of the month and building three is expected to be completed by March 2009.

Construction techniques will be the same as building one — that of a metal building, but instead of an embedded stone building, but instead of an embedded stone.

**Super Fives Rotary Bingo - March 7**

The next Super Fives Rotary Bingo will be on Friday, March 7 at the Highlands Community Building from 6:30-8:30 p.m. Super Fives features a final Super Bingo game prize of $500 for a full card Bingo in 55 number calls or less - $250 if more than 55 calls. What does Rotary Bingo cost? New deal here too! Ten bucks gets you one card for the first fourteen games. Want to play more than one card? - just one dollar per card per game. The Super Bingo game is this same price for all the cards you want.

How much can I win? January's Super Five Bingo paid $30-545 for regular Bingo. Actual amount paid depends upon the number of players per game - the more players the higher the prize. Super Fives Rotary Bingo is family oriented with children and grandchildren welcome to an evening of fun, humor, socializing and Bingo. Refreshments provided by Scouting. At least half of the money paid for Bingo games is awarded as prize money. Highlands Rotary Club donates its proceeds to local non-profit organizations. Highlands Rotary Club is licensed by the State of North Carolina to operate Bingo.

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**See ZONING page 16**
... ZONING continued from page 15

Colors will be lighter than what’s on building one but will be in accordance with the town’s color chart.
Yard lights will be mounted under two-foot eves to illuminate downward.
Landscaping on building one will be completed this spring.

Highlands Plaza

Prior to leaving the Zoning Board for the Town Board race, member Buz Dotson requested detailed plans of Highlands Plaza.

At Wednesday’s meeting, the board received a complete Highlands Plaza site plan drawn to scale labeling and delineating property lines, neighboring properties, adjacent streets, existing or proposed structures, a show of setbacks, the number of parking spaces and layout, and an indication of utilities and natural features.

Cooley also reported that the owners of Highlands Plaza have been notified by letter that the stucco façade affixed during last year’s renovations has put the plaza out of compliance. The owners can opt to change it, appeal to the Zoning Board or go to the Superior Court of Macon County to settle the matter.

Old Edwards Hospitality Group
OEI representatives have been issued a zoning certificate to remove the buildings at the Old Creek Lodge site. They will return for a permit for new construction once removal is complete.
OEI has also been issued a permit for

• See ZONING page 18
The Economic Impact of Travel on North Carolina Counties

Visitors to Macon County spent $111.16 million in 2006, an increase of 8.4 percent from 2005. “This significant increase in spending by visitors to Highlands and Macon County clearly demonstrates the continuing popularity of our community and the surrounding area as a vacation destination,” said Bob Kieltyka, Executive Director of the Highlands Area Chamber of Commerce and Visitor Center.

Tourism impact highlights for 2006:
- The travel and tourism industry directly employs more than 1,150 people in Macon County.
- Total payroll generated by the tourism industry in Macon County was $21.07 million.
- State tax revenue generated in Macon County totaled $5.18 million through state sales and excise taxes and taxes on personal and corporate income.
- Some $9.41 million in local taxes were generated from sales and property tax revenue from travel-generated and travel-supported businesses.
- Governor Mike Easley announced at the Annual Governor’s Conference on tourism in March that visitors to North Carolina spent a record $15.4 billion in 2006, an increase of 8.3 percent from 2005 and the largest single year increase since tracking began in 1990. The number was also higher than the national average which was 7.7 percent.
- The tourism industry is a key to our state’s economic well being and I am committed to maintaining our position as one of the top travel destinations in the country,” Easley said.
- These statistics are from the 2006 Economic Impact of Travel on North Carolina Counties. The study was prepared for the North Carolina Division of Tourism, Film and Sports Development by the Travel Industry Association of America.

Some $496 million in local taxes were generated from sales and property tax revenue from travel-generated and travel-supported businesses.

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... WELLS continued from page 1

$181,332 annually to operate but will be covered by permitting fees, said Patterson. "This is an unfunded mandate but the program can be sustained with a fee," he said. The proposed fee for the PDWW program is $375 per inspection. "The fee was determined on the actual cost of operating the program," he said.

The Environmental Services arm of the Health Department has five certified wastewater employees whose main job is septic permits. Bruckner said the idea is to have all seven employees cross-trained so all aspects are covered.

"We're just afraid it's going to turn into another septic field fiasco," said Commissioner Ronnie Beale.

Patterson said septic tank permits are about on track. "It's about to a three-week process now," he said.

Employees with the health department must work with the four or five well-drilling companies in the county which is why Patterson and Bruckner asked for two employees.

"It will take additional permitting steps after the well is drilled and we will have to meet them onsite," said Patterson.

The health department must now verify the depth, verify the grouting is done properly, and test for various metals and bacteria among other things and send the results to the state.

He said the state is saying it will take 48 to 72 hours for the results to return on the metals and bacteria samplings.

"We can't cap the well until they've been out there, so they have to be 'Johnny on the spot' said Fred Crane with Crane Brothers Well Drilling.

Commissioner Bob Simpson asked what guarantee Patterson and Bruckner could offer that the well drillers wouldn't be left waiting on the job for their arrival.

Patterson said it will take communication on both ends. He said a call a couple of hours prior to a job would enable his staff to be scheduled properly and arrive when it's time to do the testing.

Crane questioned the need for extra staffing when he said he can supply the same information, but Chairman Charlie Leatherman said the county was bound by state regulations. "Are you guys willing to work with us?" he asked. "Do you understand this is something we have to do?"

Crane said he and others in the business would certainly work with the county and did understand the county's position.

In the end the commission voted 3-2 to fund the two PDWW positions. Commissioner Simpson and Beale voted against the request.

... SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING continued from page 10

... ZONING continued from page 16

The Visitor Information Program airs at 7 am, 9 am, 4 pm, 6 pm, 9 pm, and 11 pm.

... Armor for Congress

Armor and supporters gathered at High County Cafe recently to kick off his campaign for the 11th District Congressional seat. Fighting crime is just one of his big issues, and he is “running for congress and expecting to win.” For more see www.armorforcongress.com
**HIGHLANDS POLICE, FIRE & MACON COUNTY SHERIFF REPORTS**

The following is the Highlands Police Dept. log entries for the weeks of Feb. 13-20. Only the names of persons arrested, issued a Class-3 misdemeanor, or public officials have been used.

Feb. 13
- Officers received a call requesting a check on the number of residents living in a home on the Franklin Road. It was determined they were all related.

Feb. 15
- At 9:20 p.m., a motorist at Fourth and Chestnut streets was cited speeding 39 mph in a 25 zone.
- At 10:25 p.m., a motorist at Third and Main streets was cited speeding 38 mph in a 20 zone.

Feb. 16
- At 8:15 p.m., a motorist at Main and Third streets was cited for speeding 34 mph in a 20 zone.
- During the week officers issued 4 warning tickets and responded to one alarm.

Feb. 19
- The dept. responded to a fire alarm at a business on Main Street. It was false.

Feb. 20
- The dept. assisted in a search for two missing fisherman on the Chattooga River.

The following is the Macon County Sheriff Dept. log entries for the Highlands Township for the week of Feb. 14-20

Feb. 14
- At 6:20 p.m., Juan Carlos Contreres, 20, of Scaly Mountain, was arrested on an outstanding warrant from Habersham County in Georgia for the possession of cocaine.
- At 7:30 p.m., Miranda Franks Miller, 28, of Lake Toxaway, was arrested for the possession of narcotics, and other drugs, drug paraphernalia and equipment, and possessing amphetamines and methamphetamine. Her vehicle had been stopped for a revoked license tag and no insurance.

Feb. 15
- At 10:25 p.m., Juan Carlos Contreres, 20, of Scaly Mountain, was arrested on an outstanding warrant from Habersham County in Georgia for the possession of cocaine.
- At 3:20 a.m., a motorist at Main and Third streets was cited for speeding 38 mph in a 20 zone.

Feb. 16
- At 12:25 a.m., a motorist at Main and Third streets was cited for speeding 34 mph in a 20 zone.
- At 9:24 a.m., a motorist at Third and Main streets was cited for speeding 32 mph in a 25 zone.
- At 1:05 p.m., a motorist at Fourth and Chestnut streets was cited for speeding 35 mph in a 20 zone.

Feb. 17
- At 4:05 a.m., a motorist at Main and Third streets was cited for speeding 30 mph in a 20 zone.
- At 8:25 a.m., a motorist at Fourth and Chestnut streets was cited for speeding 33 mph in a 20 zone.
- At 12:25 p.m., a motorist at Main and Third streets was cited for speeding 32 mph in a 20 zone.

Feb. 18
- At 9:30 a.m., a motorist at Main and Third streets was cited for speeding 31 mph in a 20 zone.
- At 11:25 a.m., a motorist at Fourth and Chestnut streets was cited for speeding 30 mph in a 20 zone.
- At 1:25 p.m., a motorist at Main and Third streets was cited for speeding 32 mph in a 20 zone.

Feb. 19
- At 4:20 a.m., a motorist at Main and Third streets was cited for speeding 30 mph in a 20 zone.
- At 6:25 a.m., a motorist at Fourth and Chestnut streets was cited for speeding 34 mph in a 20 zone.

**Missing fishermen found Wednesday**

Law enforcement and rescue agencies from Macon County, Jackson County and Seneca, S.C., collaborated on a search for two missing fisherman Tuesday and Wednesday of this week.

The two men from Franklin, N.C., went fishing on the Chattooga River at the Bull Pen section early Tuesday, Feb. 19. When they didn’t return that night, the authorities were notified.

The Macon County Sheriff’s Dept. began searching Tuesday night. Other law enforcement agencies joined in early Wednesday morning.

"They went fishing yesterday, stayed a little too late last night and actually got wet at one point so decided to spend the night and walk out today, which was the appropriate thing to do," said Macon County Emergency Director Warren Cabe. "They were located around noon and are fine."

**Pseudocube©**

**# BZ1D – Level of Difficulty – EASY**

**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 the other numbers given. Now pour a cup of coffee, pick up a pencil and eraser and try to figure out where the other 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

**Solution to #AN3E in Feb. 14 issue**

**N-Cryptoku©**

**Object:** Assign 9 different letters to each cell of 9 columns and 9 rows. In addition, nine 3 x 3 cells in the layout have the same nine different letters (this is similar to Sudoku but uses nine letters instead of nine numbers). A ‘mystery word or phrase’ using all nine different letters is designated by circled squares (other short words appear when solving, for which a list of meanings is provided). Every puzzle has a different ‘mystery word or phrase’ (no spaces).

**How to Solve:** Determine the nine different letters among those given. Try to solve the mystery word using the clue given and write it in. Other small words will appear in the puzzle. As in conventional crossword puzzles, a list of meanings for these ACROSS/ DOWN words is given and number positions shown. Doing them will speed up your solution to the puzzle. Using your powers of induction, inference and insight, place missing letters in all blank squares according to the rules noted above. Focus attention where the least number of letters are needed to complete a line, column or 3 x 3 cell.

**Mystery Word**
"Radiation Oven"

**Across**
1. River (Sp.) (3)
2. Point towards (3)
3. Verbal argument (3)
4. Undulation (4)
5. Me (Fr.) (3)
6. Ship’s personnel (4)
7. Read-only memory (abbr.) (3)
8. Upper body limb (3)
9. Company (abb.) (2)
10. Virginia (abb.) (2)

**Down**
11. Virginia (abb.) (2)
12. 23. 24.
13. 15. 16.
14. 17. 18.
19. 20. 21.
22. 23. 24.
27. 28. 29.

**Solution to Feb. 14 puzzle**

**FRANCIS**

**EOWICV**

**MCIR**

**AMER**

**E9O**

**RA**

**M**

**VIRC**

**IEWVR**

**ATRIOTESV**

**SFIEVRAOT**

**IOETSFAIFR**

**ISOAETRVF**

**FAVORITES**

**RESFVOAI**

**EISVTORFA**

**TVEFRAESIO**

**ORAFISVT**