Highlands' electrical lines stolen

Copper thieves are on the prowl nationwide and the trend has hit Highlands. Because copper wire is difficult to link back to a specific company or project, theft has proliferated.

In Murfreesboro, copper wire thefts from phone towers and landlines has increased in the past two years, and cost Verizon about $250,000. In Tampa, Fla., 8,000 feet of signal wire was stolen from railroad tracks.

In Fresno, Calif., thieves took copper wire out of street lights. In Michigan’s Tuscola County, copper wire thieves struck the Dykeshouse Pickle Company and the Michigan Sugar Company. In Highlands, copper wiring, specifically, a neutral copper line about a mile long on the town’s electrical system, was stolen.

Late Wednesday afternoon, a member on the town’s electric crew was on his way down Horse Cove Road when he noticed that about a mile of copper line had been cut from the top of Horse Cove Road to Rich Gap Road.

Citizens meet to talk about need to expand schools

By Sally Hanson
Reporter

About 40 people turned out for the newly-formed Citizens for Community Schools and Quality Education group’s first official meeting Tuesday evening. County Commissioners Charles Leatherman, Jim Davis, and Ronnie Beale were in attendance, as were Board of Education members Roberta Swank and Tommy Carcel.

Before the meeting began, Joey Curtis took a moment to promote the upcoming auction being held by the Academic Foundation on March 8 at Carroogehaye School. The auction starts at 6 p.m., and will be preceded by a dinner provided by Hog Wild Barbecue at 5 p.m. The Academic Foundation provides mini-grants to teachers throughout the system to help pay for things that are not normally covered for their classrooms.

Curtis also mentioned that Commissioner Leatherman, who is a teacher at Macon Middle School, donates his entire salary supplement each year to the Academic Foundation, and Agog with anticipation, Maggie (Breta Stroud), Diana (Carla Gates), and Julia (Jody Read) eagerly await the arrival of the great tenor Tiljo Merelli (Wayne Coleman) in the Highlands Community Players’ comedy "Lend Me a Tenor," Thursday-Sunday and continues Friday and Saturday, March 7 and 8 at 7:30 p.m., and Sunday, March 9, 2:30 p.m., at the Performing Arts Center in Highlands. Call 526-8084 for reservations. See story on page 18.
Is a tax hike really necessary?

Dear Editor,

For years, we have maintained that Macon County has too much of your money in their bank account. For years, we have been told that we don’t understand.

We think we understand that the County doesn’t need $28.4 million in the bank to properly do their business and pointed out this fact to the Commissioners.

Instead of considering what we had to say, they continue to borrow and promise to raise our taxes. Again, we were told we don’t know what we’re talking about.

O.K., let’s assume they’re right. The John Locke Foundation is a think tank that operates in North Carolina and they do know what they’re talking about. Using figures that the County supplied to the State Treasurer’s office, they concluded,

in a brief dated Sept. 27, 2007, “There is plenty of money available to meet Macon County’s needs. The last thing the county needs is a tax increase. County spending has not been properly managed or prioritized. Currently,” it continues, “about $21.6 million is available to be spent on high-priority government functions, such as school construction.”

Prior to the recent failed referendums, the people were threatened with a tax increase if we didn’t bow to the Commission’s demands that the bond referendums be passed. They failed to tell us that if they were passed, a tax increase would ensue anyway. When the threats didn’t produce the desired effect, we were promised that we would be punished with the tax rate hike. Sure enough, the County management says that borrowing, which they insist is necessary, will require about a 2.25 mil increase in the next two years and an additional 1.15 mils in the following year.

By my reckoning, this will raise about $7 million additional tax dollars. Contrary to what the Commissioners may think, we can calculate that, based on information provided to us in the County’s annual report, the County has $6.2 million more in the bank than they themselves agree that is needed. Perhaps rather than raising taxes, they might pay for the increased debt by simply writing a check and reducing the excess accumulated surplus. Since the bank balance increases by an average of $2

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From the Munger Family

The family of Jess Munger wishes to extend a heartfelt thank you to the many people who cared for him: Dr. Mark Hefington for many years of care, Dr. David Wheeler and hospital staff for his hospital care and spoiling him.

Thank you to the friends who prayed, sent food, visited, and the flowers. The ladies of Macedonia Baptist church for providing an incredible amount of wonderful food after the service.

Thank you to John Sherrill for digging and covering the grave and finally to Bryant Funeral for their usual good job.

Community is blessed

The Lewicki family will forever be indebted to the faculty and staff of the Eckerd Living Center and to Dr. Mark Wagner for the attention and steadfast devotion given to Alex Lewicki. Everyone affiliated with the center is to be commended for the caring they deliver and the love they shower on all the residents day and night.

For the 15 months Alex was a resident there, he was made comfortable and welcomed. In fact, the center became home for him. Everyone associated with the center became family and the faculty and staff became family which was comforting for him and for us. Dr. Mark Wagner was keenly aware of Alex’s needs and capabilities and always treated him with dignity and compassion. He was also patient with us as we tried to understand the effects and finality of the debilitating disease that is Alzheimer’s. Thank you also, to the Highlands community for the kind words upon Alex’s passing and to the Catholic and Methodist churches for the wonderful food.

The Lewicki Family
Louise Margaret Clark

Louise Margaret Clark, age 56, of Highlands, NC, died Thursday, February 21, 2008 at Highlands Cashiers Hospital. She was a native of Essex County, New Jersey, the daughter of Walter Asseng, Jr., of Cliffwood Beach, New Jersey and the late Ruth Ziegler Asseng. She was a homemaker and was a volunteer at the hospital gift shop.

She is survived by her husband of 25 years, Wayne Clark; two daughters, Ruthann Edwards of Rabun County, GA and Jennifer Hughes of Lexington Park, Maryland; two sisters, Donna and Ellen; and one brother, Walter; three grandchildren also survive.

Memorials may be made to Bolivian Mission, c/o Highlands First Methodist Church, PO Box 1959, Highlands, NC 28741.

A memorial service will be held at a later date. Bryant-Grant Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements. An online obituary is available by visiting www.MeM.com or www.bryantgrantfuneralhome.com

Alexander Francis Lewicki

Alexander Francis Lewicki, age 87, of Highlands, NC, died Friday, February 22, 2008 at the Eckerd Living Center. He was born in Brooklyn, NY, the son of the late Adam and Stephanie Lewicki. He was a member of the Lady of the Mountain Catholic Church in Highlands.

He is survived by his wife of 63 years, Clara Cetner Lewicki; his two sons, William P. Lewicki and his wife Gail of Tracy, California and James M. Lewicki and his wife, Kimberly and two granddaughters, Rachel P. and Megan H. Lewicki all of Highlands.

A service was held at the Lady of the Mountain Catholic Church on Monday, Feb. 25 followed by a graveside ceremony.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to The Alzheimers Caregiver Retreat, 125 Hyatt Road, Franklin, NC 28734.

Bryant-Grant Funeral Home was in charge of arrangements. An online obituary is available by visiting www.MeM.com or www.bryantgrantfuneralhome.com

Daniel Dean Montague

Daniel Dean Montague, 93, of Seneca died Saturday, February, 23, 2008. He was born in Jacksonville, Fl. and was the son of William Claudius and Emily Hunter Montague. He was preceded in death by his parents, 3 brothers and 3 sisters. Surviving are sons, Gilbert and wife Amanda Montague of Seneca, SC., Frank Montague of Seneca, SC, and Robert and wife, Peggy Montague of Anderson, SC.

Grandchildren, Danny and wife, Courtney Montague, Eddie and Greg Looney, Renee Thomas also survive. He has 8 great-grandchildren. Entombment services were at 2 p.m. Monday, February 25, 2008 at Oconee Memorial Gardens Mausoleum Chapel with Rev. Baker Crane officiating. The family requests donations be made to charity of choice. Brown-Oglesby is in charge of arrangements.

R.C. “Charlie” Kennedy

R.C. “Charlie” Kennedy 86 of Eustis, part-time resident of Highlands, N.C., died on Saturday February 23, 2008. Born in Bronwood, GA his family moved to Eustis when he was six months old.

Mr. Kennedy was a 70-year member of the First Presbyterian Church of Eustis where he was an elder and had served as a deacon. He was the former owner of Zeller, Kennedy & Hamlin Funeral Home in Eustis. He was a highly decorated combat veteran having served in the South Pacific with the U.S. Navy during WWII. Mr. Kennedy was a former member of the Eustis Kiwanis Club and a member of the Ernest Westbrook Post 44 of the American Legion of Eustis and served on the Board of Directors of the First State Bank and Trust Company of Eustis.

He was predeceased by his wife Belle V. Kennedy in 1998 and is survived by his stepson Dr. William V. “Mary Lou” Zeller of Eustis, sisters Nell Harris and Martha Barker both of Eustis, sister in law Carolyn Kennedy of Eustis, grandchildren William C. (Tara) Zeller and Rachel (Jeff) Fulcher both of Orlando and a great granddaughter Elizabeth Zeller.

The family requests those desiring direct memorials to Hospice of Lake and Sumter. Graveside services with Military Honors were held in Greenwood Cemetery Eustis at 11 a.m., Tuesday, Feb. 26, with Rev. William Kramp officiating.

Condolences may be left with hamlinhibish.com. Hamlin & Hibish Funeral Directors 326 E. Orange Avenue, Eustis 352-357-4193

Tommy Lasley graduates from CIA

Carl Thomas Lasley, IV (Tommy) of Highlands graduated with honors from the Culinary Institute of America in Hyde Park, N.Y. on February 8. Tommy did his externship at Blue Hill at Stone Barns in Tarrytown, N.Y. under the mentorship of renowned chef, Dan Barber.

The Culinary Institute of America is recognized as the leader in culinary education with its graduates becoming leading international chefs. Tommy and his wife Olga will be living and working in New York City. Tommy is the son of Jenny King of Highlands and Tom and Lynn Lasley of Asheville.
I was only on the football team for about a dozen practices before I tossed in the towel. I knew I was too scrummy and puny to make an All State Championship team like Male High but, nevertheless, I had to try. Things were a lot different back in those days. Our coach was a sadistic, brutal, angry guy who loved torturing kids and treated football players like meat. Since my high school was State Champion each and every year, the facility vigorously supported his brutality. The end always justified the means.

I knew he was after me from the first day. He kept asking, “What’s your name again, kid?” He finally gave up and called me “Hey, you.” Practically no one was kicked off his team. Because he made life so miserable for wimps like me, they would eventually quit. Am I DUH, or what?

I worked hard at trying to learn the play book but I must be a slow learner. Coach had a system for helping me. He would take me to the locker room, make me put on my helmet and stand next to a locker. Then he would get up in my face and shout, “16 bulldog red 7 on 3, hut, hut, hut,” spraying spittle all over me. I had seconds to blurt out the play and if I didn’t, he would grab my helmet by the ear holes and slam my head against the locker six or seven times while shouting “Think, think” each time my head hit the locker. Eventually, I took his advice and did some thinking, then quit. To this day, I remember his bad breath.

Flash ahead a half century and look at life in the good ole USA. For the most part, corporal punishment has been replaced with more tame methods of getting people to see one’s point of view. Torture is no longer acceptable on the school football teams.

While taking a switch to my kids for misbehaving was still acceptable, thumbscrews and waterboarding was not. Later, when my kids became parents, I waited for my grandkids to enter state playoffs with the #2 seed from the Little Smoky Mountain Conference.

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Conference Tournament Game 1 vs. Nantahala

Brie Schmitt had 17 points, 4 steals and 8 assists as the Lady Highlanders beat Nantahala in game 1 of the conference tournament. Sarah Power added 12 points, 3 steals, and 7 rebounds. Taylor Buras added 11 points, 4 assists, and 3 steals. Marlee McCall helped with 9 points and 4 rebounds. Courtney Rogers added 4 points and Kate-Marie Parks had 1.

This win allowed the Lady Highlanders to enter state playoffs with the #2 seed from the Little Smoky Mountain Conference.

Conference Tournament Game 2 vs. Hiwassee Dam

The Lady Highlanders lost a tough battle versus a tough Lady Eagles, who were undefeated in the conference. Sarah Power led with 12 points and had 8 rebounds. Taylor Buras followed with 9 and Courtney Rogers, Marlee McCall, Brie Schmitt and Kate-Marie Parks added 2 points each. Brie Schmitt also had 8 rebounds; Kate Parks had 6 and Taylor Buras added 5 for a total of 25 rebounds for the team.

“…”
Candidates shouldn’t try to be all things to all people

A famous heart surgeon once said that surgery was the most fun you could have with your clothes on. Either he knew very little about naked activities or too little about political maneuvering. Just as John McCain was completing a truly remarkable comeback and being anointed the Republican candidate, the New York Times published a story suggesting hanky-panky with a female lobbyist, and arguably more importantly, reminding us of his membership in the “Keating Five.” Mike Huckabee has enough money and conservative support to remain a nuisance. Republicans will distrust John McCain long after they’ve forgotten their anger with the New York Times over the story, although they will, no doubt, find other reasons to be upset with the Times.

The real fun is on the Democratic side, where the Obama campaign displayed far too much outrage over an old picture of Obama dressed as a Somali elder. The picture was taken when the Senator was touring Africa and, as is the habit of junketing politicians, donned the local gear. Remember recent images of George Bush sword dancing with a Saudi official? It’s embarrassing, but harmless. Obama might have quipped, “You think I look silly? You should see the picture of Hillary in Tahiti!” Instead he blamed the Clinton campaign for fear mongering, for keeping alive the ridiculous notion that he is an African Muslim, and as such, a threat to homeland security.

Meanwhile Senator Clinton was waging Obama campaign mailings in the air at a speech, and claiming that his campaign material misrepresented her positions on health care and trade. We need a guy with a green eye shade and a female lobbyist, and arguably more importantly, reminding us of his membership in the “Keating Five.” Mike Huckabee has enough money and conservative support to remain a nuisance. Republicans will distrust John McCain long after they’ve forgotten their anger with the New York Times over the story, although they will, no doubt, find other reasons to be upset with the Times.

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Just what do we mean by change?

I love “Bulworth,” the courageous film Warren Beatty made in 1998 about American politics. It opens with Senator Bulworth in the middle of a complete mental breakdown, planning his suicide while he watches his latest campaign commercials play over and over again endlessly repeating the slogan, “We stand at the doorstep of a New Millennium.” The senator is surrounded by photos of himself with Martin Luther King and Robert Kennedy; he’s sick to death at the loss of his integrity. He has sold his soul to the devil of modern American moneypolitics. He found himself playing the same old cheap tricks on the sleeping public that he had campaigned against so long ago, back when he was an idealistic young man on the side of “change” and “reform,” and “openness and transparency in government.”

Last week I listened to a speech by Barack Obama for the first time. As he talked about “change,” and “working across the aisle,” and “stopping the bickering,” I kept feeling like I was hearing someone else in my head, and then it hit me: these were the same things George W. Bush said eight years ago. “I want to change the tone in Washington.” Remember that? How about: “I’m a uniter, not a divider?” Or: “I worked with Democrats in the Texas Legislature. I will do it in Washington.” And this perennial favorite: “We need someone from outside Washington to come in and clean it up.”

And that got me thinking, why is that sentiment a perennial favorite? I did a little research on the Internet, and found that the idea of “change” as part of a presidential campaign isn’t an invention of this year’s crop of candidates. In 1944 Republican Thomas Dewey’s slogan was “It’s time for a change.” That line was so evocative Dwight Eisenhower reprised it in 1952. (Television ads from every presidential campaign from 1952-2004 are available on the Museum of the Moving Image website.)

In 1976, Jimmy Carter offered the slogan “A leader, for a change.” Ronald Reagan may not have used the word, but in 1980 his slogan was “Let’s make America great again,” which sure sounds like change to me. In 1992 Bill Clinton used the word “change” 10 times in his nomination speech, which was as many times as he uttered the better-remembered word, “hope” (as in, “I still believe in a place called Hope”). (see A.L. Times, “Change the Empty Word,” January 13, 2008)


So we elect an outsider who gets in power and then becomes just the same as the ones we threw out, so we elect a new outsider to clean up the mess, who gets in power and becomes the same... Why do we keep falling for it?

I can certainly understand why a young person would vote against Hillary Clinton. Imagine this: if you are 18 years old, for your entire life the president of the United States has been either Bush or Clinton.

But I don’t understand the Obama-nia among older people. (To be clear: I am not a Clinton partisan.) I hear Obama praised for his uplifting rhetoric and inspiring vision of change. But what exactly is Obama’s vision? In last week’s debate Obama said himself that there is very little difference between his policy proposals and Clinton’s.

The banner on his official website says: “I’m asking you to believe. Not just in my ability to bring about real change in Washington... I’m asking you to believe in yours.” But just what are we supposed to believe we can change into? That’s what I don’t get. I don’t hear anything that is truly new or revolutionary in his proposals, and I have looked through his website. It’s the standard safe-bet to the left-of-center Democratic positions.

He’s taking money from all of the same special interests. He’s beholden just like all the rest of them...

Are we supposed to be excited about the prospect of everyone all of a sudden playing nice and getting along because a President Obama asks them to? Do you really believe that is going to happen?

I think Obama comes across as extremely naïve in his belief that he can make common cause with conservatives. In an article last week in The New York Times about John McCain, Rush Limbaugh was quoted (transcript of his radio program): “The important question for John McCain today is, Is he going to...”

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Running for Congress, expecting to win

Many of you who read these columns know I ran for Congress in 2006. It was in the primary against a 16-year incumbent named Charles Taylor. Given just that information, you’re not surprised that I lost, getting just 20% of the vote. I was not surprised, either. But 2008 is a different kettle of fish.

I was right, by the way, about the end of Taylor’s career. I said he was at the end of the line. He was. He got beaten soundly by a Democrat whose claim to fame was that he once played football. Heath Shuler’s the name.

In 2008, regardless of what happens nationally in the Presidential Election, I should be nominated for Congress in the 11th District of North Carolina in the primary on 6 May, and then be elected on 4 November. Why am I confident in 2008, when I got trounced in 2006?

Here’s why: the period for filing for office in North Carolina is open now, until February 29. It is possible that some other Republican might file for Congress between now and then, but it looks like the list of candidates will close at three. Here are the other two:

Carl Mumpower has served six years as an Asheville City Councilman. He is a Doctor of Psychology. Spence Campbell is a 25-year Army veteran, who later worked in insurance. He has a Masters in Russian Area Studies. I won’t say anything about either of these two men, or about any particular issues. See for yourself why I should win the nomination against these opponents.

Go to this Internet address: http://www.youtube.com/ArmorforCongress

There you will find the complete and uncut first debate between Armor, Campbell and Mumpower, conducted in Hendersonville last November. That video was shot by and broadcast on URTV, a public access channel in Asheville. It shows what I brought to the table, and how I handled myself, compared to the other two. You may well conclude that I should win the primary with a competent campaign. Five more debates are already scheduled, and there may be more. Now, the harder part of the equation. Why do I think I will defeat the freshman incumbent Democrat, Heath Shuler?

The 11th District registration is about 40% Democrat, 39% Republican, and the rest are almost entirely Independents. The history of the District, however, shows that it has consistently voted for Republicans in the House, the Senate, and for President for the past 16 years, with the sole exception of Shuler’s win in 2006.

The reason for this is that many of the Democrats and more than half of the independents classify themselves as “conservative.” Shuler ran as a conservative. But the first vote he cast was to elect Nancy Pelosi, a San Francisco liberal, as Speaker. And since then, he has voted 84% of the time the way Speaker Pelosi wanted.

Telling the voters of the 11th District the plain, unvarnished truth about Heath and about me, plus debating Heath every time I can get the chance, is all that it will take for me to win in November. I will have the backing of the Republican Party. As a Washington newspaper pointed out in detail two weeks ago, there are 29 Districts the Republicans must target if they want a shot at regaining control of the House. The 11th District is high on that list.

Want more information about me?

Go here: http://www.ArmorforCongress.com

Want more information about Mumpower? Go here: http://www.Mumpower08.com

Want more information about Campbell? Go here: http://SpenceCampbell2008.com

Yes, I know my website is not as crisp as the other two. My Internet gurus are working even as we speak, to make that visually simpler and better.

How many candidates have you ever run into who give equal time to their opponents? Danged few, I reckon. But I believe in good old-fashioned side-by-side comparison shopping. On the Internet, in fast food, on cars, on politics, and on the ideas of how government should, and should not, be run.

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Hours are from 9:00 - 5:00, Monday thru Saturday, 4-5 days minimum, including Memorial & Labor Day Sundays plus Sundays in October. Salary is negotiable.

Contact: Katrina Laverty for interview at 800-437-2741 or 828-526-2769. E-mail us for application: slnc@verizon.net.

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Owner/Operator
Henny-Penny - ‘The Sky is Falling’

S
omewhat over a year ago, after the Democrats swept the national election, I bemoaned the fact that Nancy Pelosi and Harry Reid would be running Congress.

Their dismal performance has lived up to my expectations. Shortly thereafter, the presidential entries made themselves known, and the Dem list was frightening. Unfortunately, the most frightening names (with the exception of Dennis Kucinich, who goes beyond frightening) prevailed, and here we are with Hillbilly and Barack.

Hillary Clinton has that she has 35 years of experience. I’m thinking, experience at what? So, I checked out what she’s been up to since 1973. Living with Bill in DC, she did post-graduate studies until he moved to Arkansas, and she followed.

Ironically, she held out on the marriage issue, thinking her accomplishments would be viewed in the light of someone else’s accomplishments. Ultimately, she gave in. She joined the infamous Rose law firm and made partner. Bill became governor and she became an expert in cattle futures trading, parlaying $1,000 into over $100,000 in 10 months. I could never understand why she quit trading (wink-wink). I guess her phenomenal success being made public may have had something to do with it.

Meanwhile, that (Billary’s) involvement in the Whitewater Development Corporation, a real estate venture gone south, bubbled up and would haunt them forever. The Clintons were two of four principals in Whitewater. The other two were convicted of fraud, and 13 others associated with the scandal, including Gov. Jim Guy Tucker, went to prison. Miraculously, the Clintons were not convicted of charges brought against them.

Bill is elected prez in 1992 and Hillary maintains that she has 35 years of experience. I’m thinking, experience at what? So, I checked out what she’s been up to since 1973. Living with Bill in DC, she did post-graduate studies until he moved to Arkansas, and she followed.

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Bill is elected prez in 1992 and Hillary assumed her rightful place in the West Wing of the White House, the only First wife to do so. Bill gives her the job of nationalizing health care by forming the Task Force on National Health Care Reform and putting her in charge. She shuts out the Republicans and meets with her committee in secret sessions, bringing the wrath of nearly everybody down on her. The result of her efforts was the Clinton Health Plan (Hillarycare) which failed to pass either house in August, 1994, both of which had Democrat majorities. So bad was the manner in which she arrived at the “Plan” and so bad was the finished product that it was given credit, at least in part, for the Republican sweep in the Congressional election of 1994. Thanks, Hill.

Then there was Travelgate. Hillary had the entire staff of the White House Travel Office fired so that one of her buddies could take it over and run it “her way.”

Not content to ruin the lives of the seven staff members with longevity of 8 to 30 years in the office, she contrived charges against Billy Dale, director of the office, and turned him inside out defending the imaginary grievances of which he was ultimately acquitted.

And then there was Filegate. Quoting from Wikipedia, “Craig Livingstone, director of the White House’s Office of Personnel Security, improperly requested, and received from the FBI, background reports without asking permission of the subject individuals. The incident caused a firestorm of criticism because many of the files covered White House employees from previous Republican administrations. … Under criticism, Livingstone resigned from his position. Allegations were made that senior White House figures including First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton may have requested and read the files for political purposes, and that the First Lady authorized the hiring of the underqualified Livingstone.”

And then there was Fostergate. In July, 1993, White House counsel Vince Foster was found dead in Ft. Marcy Park in DC. Foster’s death was officially ruled a suicide, but anybody with a pulse knew at the time that there was a cover up. There was conflicting evidence, a forged suicide note and very good reasons for Foster to be removed. I don’t begin to know what really happened to Vince Foster. He knew too much about too many Clinton misdeeds. At the time, many thought Hillary was deeply involved in Foster’s demise. Assistant Attorney General Webster Hubbell was quoted in an Esquire interview, “Don’t believe a word you hear. It was not a suicide. It couldn’t have been.”

In all fairness, Hillary served on many boards, non-profit and otherwise, led movements to increase women’s involvement in governments around the world, fought to give children the right to sue their parents and wrote a book preaching that villagers should replace parents in child-rearing.

Hopefully, the primaries on March 4 will end her presidential quest for now. If this is experience, I don’t want it. I also don’t want Obama’s lack of it.
Paving to cost more, but still happening

There is a treat coming up for everyone who is a theater goer. One of the three theater companies in Highlands, the Highlands Community Players, is putting on a hilarious play, "Lend Me a Tenor," these next two weekends. This group has put on some outstanding plays in truly expert fashion over the past 10 or so years with local talent, and I would highly recommend those interested in really fine entertainment to pick a day they will be performing at the Performing Arts Center and go. It never ceases to amaze me how much talent we have in our immediate area of Highlands and Cashiers in so many different fields.

Supporting these folks’ energetic efforts is highly recommended if you are looking for an entertaining evening. My wife and I certainly will.

Speaking of talented people, do you realize we have a man in this town who has climbed to the highest point in all 50 states in the United States which includes many of the highest mountains in the world such as Mt. McKinley in Alaska? Now Florida and Kansas would not be a problem for you or me but most of the others would! Hillrie Quinn not only has done that but is a huge contributor of his voluntary time to many organizations in town including being chairman of our Greenway Committee. He works tirelessly for our town in many ways. Tell him you appreciate him when you see him.

We had an important meeting with leading representatives of the NC Department of Transportation last Friday regarding the paving of Hickory Hill, Chowan and Cullasaja Roads. As many of you know we have had approved money from the State contingency fund of about $270,000 but find out from DOT that may not be enough in spite of the fact that they had done the calculations. So our meeting was to work out the details of this important project.

State Senator John Snow and Representative Roger West were also very important attendees to that meeting. After much discussion regarding the construction in detail, another estimate will be made immediately, and Senator Snow and Representative West assured us that, if indeed the cost turns out to be more, we will get more money out of the contingency fund. The main thing is that we are still on course to get these roads paved by our own standards late in the spring of this year. The roads will be turned over to the town, the work will be done by DOT and will be done on schedule.

That all is a relief for not only the people who live on these roads but also for the protection of our water supply from silt buildup in the lakes where our pumps are. We also talked to Senator Snow regarding money for clearing the existing silt from Big Creek. We soon will have an estimate from Mountain Engineering regarding the cost of this big project and hopefully the senator will be able to help us obtain funding for this as well.

It is hard to believe that the large project started by USFS at Dry Falls is threatened with incompletion because of a short fall of funding. Why would they start a project such as this if they did not have funding to complete it? The parking lot and bridge over the Gorge Road at the site of Dry Falls is not only a safety issue but also a convenience issue for the many people who enjoy the falls, particularly in the spring, summer and fall. I have encouraged the USFS to find enough money to complete this project in a timely manner and not leave a mess in a very important part of the plateau which is one of our biggest tourist attractions.

An important event took place at the Pine Street Park this past week. The Pine Street Park Committee has raised enough money from the Town of Highlands and Macon County along with private donations to repay Mark Meadows (thanks for your patience, Mark!) for the cost of the park. On Tuesday a week ago, the group turned the property over to the Town of Highlands and it is now officially belongs to the people of Highlands.

The Recreation Committee of the town has worked out the necessary guidelines for the use of the park and that will be submitted soon to the Board of Commissioners at which time the regulations for its use will be made public. Hopefully, sometime in the near future we can begin to plan a pavilion and rest rooms for the site so that it can be used for public events. We all need to congratulate the Pine Street Park committee for their dedicated work on this project for the good of all Highlands.
The word “hate” is one of my mother’s most hated four letter words. Growing up, I can recall exclaiming how much I “hated something” (or someone) and my mom laying the verbal smackdown on me for using such a strong word.

The concept of hate has had a tremendous amount of effect on the sporting world within recent years—especially with the influence of the Internet among fans and their favorite teams. There are numerous websites that claim hatred for teams, players, coaches and even opposing fans.

Any discussion of hate needs to begin with a proper definition. Merriam-Webster defines hatred as “intense hostility and aversion usually deriving from fear, anger, or sense of injury.”

As the popularity of the Internet has spread, the number of opportunities for that hostility has grown immensely. One of the things that psychologists have discovered over the years is how pressure from outside sources can reduce a single person’s capacity to make moral judgments and decisions. Sociologist Irving Janis defines this as “groupthink.”

The most common example of groupthink in regards to sports fans can be found on internet message boards, where rational discourse amongst fans has been replaced by paranoia, sensitivity and irrational thoughts that are consistent with the aforementioned definition of hatred.

While the usual suspects of Notre Dame, Duke, Dallas and yes…the Yankees are the subject of some of these discussions — the Internet has brought about this attitude with rivals and fans from all schools. One would be shocked and surprised to find the things said about opposing players/fans/coaches on these fan message boards. For example, while one poster might conclude something harmless (such as Coach K’s rather…rodent like features or how Roy Williams looks a bit like Huckleberry Hound) the ant must then be upped by questioning player’s sexual preference or referring to coaches as Hitler or an adulterer.

While this behavior might seem harmless to some — if it spirals out of control fast enough it can cause major damage to the reputations of these players, coaches or to the program itself.

Last year Arkansas football coach Houston Nutt resigned in part because of some overzealous fans/haters who checked his phone records and concluded that he was having an affair with an Arkansas news anchor. While this may be explained by some as an isolated incident, it is one that is becoming far more common in the age of the internet.

The other half of this equation is the role that the media plays in furthering of the hatred of fans by reporting on it and making it seem more and more as an acceptable part of society. It seems like once a week now that you read a piece reporting on why fans hate Duke, or why fans hate the Yankees, or why fans love to hate Kobe Bryant or Randy Moss.

Books have been written and published on the philosophies of hating certain programs, and rivalry games are promoted as a spectacle of good old fashioned hatred between fans and schools.

In fact, one of the major measuring sticks of a true rivalry, according to the media, is just how much the two teams (or schools) really hate one another. Unfortunately, with the advent of the 24-hour news cycle and the endless quest for a scoop, the media’s concentration on hatred is likely to become even worse as time moves along.

While I am sure that the three or four people who read this column (thanks grandma) are now asking the question — do we hate now more than we did 50 years ago? The answer to this is…sort of.

While I don’t think that any rivalries have become more heated in recent years. I do believe that fans have become more and more influenced by this groupthink mentality.

In the past, if North Carolina beat Duke I could expect some good natured ribbing from Skip Keener and Mike McCall (RIP). Now if UNC wins the big game I can turn on my Facebook page and read plenty of profane remarks about myself and the school that I support. It is a dynamic that has truly changed with the technological advances that bring news and information to our fingertips every day.

In closing, I must say that I may be adding to this phenomenon, mainly because I can offer no solutions to these problems that I have identified today. Despite my attempts to remain as objective and balanced as possible, there are times that I cannot control the searing jealousy and anger that I sometimes feel towards the New York Yankees or the North Carolina Tarheels.

As I attempt to remind myself that these are just people playing a game (after exploding at the television watching Tyler Hansbrough take 4 steps before dunking or watching the Patriots get a timely defensive holding penalty in their favor) sometimes I wonder if I should just give in to the feelings and bask in the glory of intense hostility. After all, as Will Blythe says, “To Hate Like This Is To Be Happy Forever.” (I’ll probably try it sometime)
One day upon a time...

By Darlene Melcher
Community Bible Church

A day upon a time... Truitt and Worley received their instructions for their new jobs at the stone quarry. As each man stood before individual stacks of stone the Master Foreman explained, “Each day’s load is set out for each man. Carry the day’s load to the designated spot. Also, each day’s bread will be set out for you, fresh every morning.”

The task seemed simple enough. While each man’s load was different, it was neither more or less than each man could bear. Correspondingly, the day’s bread was sufficient for each man, not too much, but not too little. Worley noticed many stacks of varying sizes laid out to the side as he asked, “Master, what are these stacks laid out?”

The Master replied, “Each day’s load is already laid out ahead of time. But take no thought of another day’s load, just focus on the task at hand.”

“But Master,” Worley wondered, “can a man carry other day’s loads?”

“No. Each man must carry the day’s load set out for him.”

With that, the day began. However, Worley’s eyes kept straying to the other piles and he noticed that Friday’s load seemed awfully large. Reasoning to himself, he decided that getting a start on that day’s load would really be wise. So, he began to work hurriedly trying to carry the current day’s load as well as part of Friday’s each day. Worley would come in and carry the day’s stack and try to carry some of Friday’s load as well. As time wore on Worley’s strength began to wane, but Friday’s stack seemed just as overwhelming as ever. Truitt tried to remind him of the Master’s words, but Worley was too preoccupied to hear his friend.

Friday finally came and Worley dragged himself to the quarry. To his horror, there stood the day’s load, Friday’s load, not nearly as large as it had seemed before but seemingly untouched. In despair, Worley crumpled to the ground in exhaustion and began to weep loudly. Truitt ran to get the Master, but the Master was already there watching Worley and waiting. Finally, Worley lifted his bleary eyes and met the Master’s gaze. Sobbing, Worley explained to the Master how he had tried to carry this load in addition to each day’s load. The Master looked at Worley and had compassion on him. Worley had the impression that the Master already knew all about it. The Master spoke, “I told you not to worry about tomorrow, because tomorrow’s load will be taken care of tomorrow. Besides, each day’s load is sufficiently troublesome on its own.”

The Master wiped the tears from Worley’s face; then, together, they carried the day’s load. From that day forward, Worley learned never to try to carry another day’s load, but only what the Master had wisely set out for each day.

As with Truitt and Worley, God provided bread for Israel in the wilderness. Some gathered much and some gathered little but no one lacked and no one had excess. As an act of obedience and a lesson on dependence, the people looked to God daily for their nourishment and thus their strength. Likewise, Jesus instructs us to pray for “our daily bread.” Then He refers to Himself as the Bread of Life which has come from heaven. He gives us the strength and the power we need to live each day. Notice He does not instruct us to ask for our weekly bread, or today’s bread and Friday’s bread. Fresh “bread” is available to us each day and it is sufficient for our needs.

• SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING page 21

• 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.

BUCK CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH
Sundays: 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: 706-746-2999
Pastor’s 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) 369-8229
Rai Gammack, Branch President, (828) 369-1627

CHRIST ANGLICAN CHURCH
Rev. Cass Daly - Office - 526-2320
Sunday: Holy Communion – 11 a.m.
(Highlands Community Center on U.S. 64 next to the ballfield in Highlands)
Monday: Evening Bible Study at 6 p.m.
Wednesday: Men’s Bible study at 8 a.m.
At First Baptist Church
Pot Luck Lunch last Sunday of each month.

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

COMMUNITY BIBLE CHURCH
www.cbc-highlands.com • 526-4685
3645 U.S. 64 east, Highlands
Sundays: 9:30 a.m. Sunday School; 10:45 Worship;
6:30 p.m. High School Group
Wednesdays: 5:30 p.m. Supper (free for kids 8th grade and under); 6:15 p.m., Adult Bible Study; 6:30 p.m. programs for students.

Thursdays: 9:30 a.m. Women’s Bible Study

EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF THE INCARNATION
The Rev. Brian Sullivan - 526-2968
Sunday: Breakfast; 9 A.M. - Sunday School 10:30 A.M. Holy Eucharist (Rite II)
Sunday Service on Channel 14 at 10:30 A.M.
Monday: 4:30 Women’s Cursillo Group
Tuesday: 8 A.M. Men’s Cursillo Group
4:30 PM. Education for Ministry
Wednesday: 6:30 PM. Choir Practice
Thursday: 10 A.M. Holy Eucharist (Chapel)
10:30 A.M. Daughters of the King
Sunday Service on Channel 14 Sun. at 10:30 a.m.
FIRST ALLIANCE CHURCH OF FRANKLIN
Rev. Mitch Schultz, Pastor • 828-369-7977
Sun. Worship 8:30 & 10:45 a.m.; 6: p.m.
(nursery provided)
Sun. school for all ages 9:45 a.m.
Wed: dinner 5 p.m. followed by children’s Pioneer Club 6 p.m.; Jr & Sr Youth Group 6:30 p.m.; Adult Bible Study & Prayer Meeting 7 p.m.
Small groups available throughout the week.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Rev. Mark Kayser, Interim Pastor
Dr. Don Mullen, Parish Associate 526-3175
Mondays: 8 a.m. - Men’s Bible Discussion & Breakfast
Tuesdays: 10 a.m. - Seekers
Choir – 7

HIGHLANDS ASSEMBLY OF GOD
Sixth Street
Sundays: School - 10 a.m.; Worship - 11
Wednesdays: Prayer & Bible Study – 7

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

HIGHLANDS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
Senior Pastor Todd Struble; Asst. Pastor Mike Harris 526-3376
Sun.: school 9:45 a.m.; Worship 11 a.m.; 5 p.m. Youth Group
Wed: Supper; 6:15 - children, youth, & adults studies; 6:15 - Adult choir
(nursery provided for Wed. p.m. activities)
Thurs: 12:30 - Women’s Bible Study (nursery)

HOLY FAMILY LUTHERAN CHURCH – ELCA
Chaplain Margaret Howell
2152 Dillard Road – 526-9741
Sundays: Worship/Communion – 10:30

HEALING SERVICE on the 5th sundays of the month.

LITTLE CHURCH OF THE WILDSOOD
Services at the Church in the Wildwood in Horse Cove. Sundays at 7 p.m. through Labor Day. Dress is casual. Old fashioned hymn-sing.

MACEDONIA BAPTIST CHURCH
8 miles south of Highlands on N.C. 28 S in Satolath
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 SYNAGOGUE
St. Cyprian’s Episcopal Church, Franklin 369-6871
Friday: Sabbath Eve Services at 7 p.m.
For more information, call (706)-745-1842.

OUR LADY OF THE MOUNTAINS CATHOLIC CHURCH
Rev. Tien, Priest
Parish office, 526-2418
Sundays: Mass - 11 a.m.
Saturday Mass: 4 p.m.

(Since last Saturday of October)

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 Sizemore
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 526-3212.

SHORT OFF BAPTIST CHURCH
Pastor Rev. Wayne Price
Sundays: School - 10 a.m.; Worship - 11 a.m.
Wednesdays: Prayer & Bible Study – 7

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP
2152 Dillard Road - 526-9741
Lay Led Sunday School 10:15 a.m.
Sundays: Worship - 11 a.m.

WHITESIDE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Cashiers, Rev. Sam Forrester, 743-2122
Sundays: School - 10 a.m.; Worship - 11 a.m.

See SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING page 21
Wiley Sloan wins McCulley's Cashmere Raffle for the Instant Theatre Company

McCulley's Cashmere raffled off a luxurious cashmere sweatshirt to benefit the Instant Theatre Company. Wiley Sloan, who won the drawing, said, “It never occurred to me that I would win the raffle. I just bought tickets because I wanted to support the Instant Theatre Company.”

Wireless Internet now at the Hudson Library

Grab your laptop and head for the Hudson Library, Highlands’ new “hot spot.” The library’s wireless Internet service is up and running. Stop by to check your e-mail, download files, or surf the Web. Wireless Internet access is a local area network (LAN) run by radio waves rather than wires. The wireless signal is broadcast from a central hub which is a hard-wired device that actually brings in the Internet connection. The hub, located at the main computer system, broadcasts Internet connectivity to anyone within “hearing” range whose computer is equipped with a wireless LAN card.

The connection speed at the library will be better than dial-up and many DSL and cable modem connections. However, the more people using it at any one time the slower the speed will be. Also, the signal will only work inside the library building.

Many laptop computers are automatically configured to pick up a wireless signal, but if yours isn’t, it is a simple matter to select the Hudson Library frequency: In Control Panel, choose Network Connections. Right-click Wireless Network Connection, then choose “FRL Wireless.”

The librarians can’t help you configure your computer, but you can ask at the desk for a Fontana Regional Library brochure “Your Guide to Wireless Internet” that has instructions for Windows operating systems stretching back to Windows 98.

Passport applications now at Town Hall

If you are planning to travel you may now pick up an application to obtain a new or renewed passport at Highlands Town Hall.

Macon County Clerk of Superior Court Vic Perry said that he is making the applications available in Highlands as a convenience for Highlands residents but said the town is not a passport agent. The Clerk’s office in the courthouse in Franklin remains the only accepted passport agency in Macon County. If your application is for a new passport or for the recently-introduced passport card, you will need to appear at the Clerk’s office with your completed application.

Renewal applications may be mailed by the applicant. The application forms contain instructions and contact information for applicants who may have questions.

Perry said the State Department is now offering the wallet-size passport card that may be used for travel only by land or sea between the United States and Canada, Mexico, Bermuda and the Caribbean. The card will provide a less expensive, smaller and more convenient alternative for those who travel to those destinations. Travelers may apply for the card now, however the State Department has said it will not begin processing those applications until later in the spring. The passport fee for the card will be $20 for persons age 16 and over and $10 for persons under 16. In addition to the passport fee, there will be a $25 execution fee for each card.

The passport fee for the traditional passport book for persons 16 or older is $75. For minors under the age of 16 the passport book fee is $60. There is also a $25 execution fee payable to the acceptance agency. The fee for an expedited application is an additional $60.

Perry urges anyone who has questions about the passport application process to contact the State Department via the contact information included on the application or to call the Clerk of Court’s office at 349-2042.
Highlands School students and parents honored at Rotary

Each month the Rotary Club of Highlands honors exemplary students from Highlands School as Rotary Scholars of the Month. The students are selected by the school faculty and are recognized, along with their parents, at one of the weekly Rotary noon meetings. At the February 19, 2008 meeting, Jake Heffington, Abigale Gilbert, Cristell Ruiz and Sydney Harris were introduced and presented a certificate of accomplishment by Rotary Club of Highlands President Jeff Weller.

Macon County Health Department gears up for new residential well law

Environmental Health Specialists at the Macon County Public Health Center are busy making preparations for big changes in the way Macon and other NC counties protect drinking water supplies. These changes are the result of a new law signed by Gov. Easley, which as of July 1, 2008 will require permitting and inspections of new residential drinking water wells. The task of implementing this new law will fall to local health departments across the state.

Barry Patterson, RS, Environmental Health Supervisor with the Macon County Public Health Center said the new law will have a positive impact on the drinking water supply by testing each new well for coliform bacteria, nitrates, and several metals. It also will prevent future contamination of wells by ensuring proper grouting during installation. Patterson feels this program is good for public health, although it will mean additional site visits for his staff and an additional application for the public. Local well drillers will also be affected because they will need to coordinate their drilling schedules with site visits required of the Environmental Health Specialists. After July 1, 2008 each new residential well to be drilled will require the owner to obtain an “Authorization to Construct”. During construction, at least one on-site visit will be required to oversee grouting of the well by an environmental health specialist. Once the well is constructed, a final inspection will be required at which time a water sample will be collected and a “Well Completion Permit” will be issued.

Patterson said that Macon County commissioners have given approval for two additional staff members to implement the requirements of the new law. The county’s cost to administer the program will be recouped through application fees. Environmental health staff at the health department met last fall with local well drilling contractors to discuss the new program. A second meeting is scheduled for May 2, 2008 to review the new rules, applications, scheduling process, and inspection requirements.

Additional information about North Carolina’s new well law can be found at http://www.ncwelldriller.org/CountyWellRegulationPrograms.htm and at http://h2o.ens.state.nc.us/admin/rules/documents/2C.doc or by contacting the Macon County Public Health Center at 349-2490.
By Sally Hansen

February's League of Women Voters meeting featured new County Manager Jack Horton. Horton is no stranger to the role of Macon County — he previously served as county manager of Macon County from 1985-1991, then moved to Haywood County and spent 15 years managing that county. For the past two years Horton was Caldwell County’s manager.

Horton gave a little background about how he got into his profession. He grew up in Mecklenburg County north of Charlotte, and attended Appalachian State University (ASU). While at ASU in 1976 Horton had the opportunity to an internship in local government in Bryson City.

After college Horton worked as a tax collector for 15 months. “You learn a lot about people when you collect taxes,” Horton said. He became the first county manager of Swain County in 1978, a position he held until three years later when he moved to Waynesville to work in the private sector.

Horton then spent two years as a manager before moving to Macon County to become County Manager when Sam Greenwood retired from the position. “It’s like deja vu all over again,” Horton said, as this time he’s also replaced a retiring Greenwood in the position.

Horton said that most of the issues facing any county can be summed up using the “three Es”: education, environment, and economy. He talked about the educational issues facing Macon County and said that the county commissioners have committed to the plans that were included in the failed school bond referendum in November of last year, and that these plans will still be carried out.

“The property for the new 5-6 middle school has already been purchased,” Horton said. “North Macon School will be more complicated” since there isn’t already sewer, water, and other infrastructure in place like there is at the site of the new middle school. He also said that commissioners had voted to authorize the county to work with Southwestern Community College (SCC) towards the design of a new classroom building on the SCC’s Macon Campus on Siler Road. Horton said this building would be for the Early College High School students, which are currently sharing the Groves Building on the newly-completed campus.

“Education is a high priority, and we will continue to do what we can to make sure we have the funds not only to pay for teachers but also for facilities for the kids to use,” Horton said.

Next, he touched on the environment. Horton praised the changes that have taken place over the last 30 years concerning litter, erosion control and steep slope development. “I’m encouraged to see that people are looking down the road to the next generation to see if the environment is what it should be,” he said.

Horton said that while growth is inevitable, counties can plan for it to make it more manageable. “Drinking water is going to be a top priority not just here but all across the state,” he said. Horton said that when he was in Haywood County, all the water that is used by the county originated in that county. This is not true in Macon County. “A lot of our water comes out of Georgia, and we can’t control the headwaters of that unless we can negotiate with those where the water starts,” Horton said. He predicted that one of the biggest issues over the next decade will be protecting water resources.

Moving on to issues of the economy, Horton said that he has been meeting with the Economic Development Committee (EDC), and he emphasized the need to diversify the local economy. Until recently most of the local economy has been based on the housing industry, but this may be leveling off, which would not be good for our economy. “We need to do something to create opportunities for people not just to move here to retire, but to afford to raise a family here,” he said.

Horton said one of the highest priorities is to take advantage of fields like information technology, to promote our children and grandchildren to stay in this area instead of moving away to find jobs. “We need to have a plan in place, and the EDC is working toward the idea of developing a long-term, long-range strategy that will create and sustain jobs and growth and the economic sector of the county,” he said.

The county is currently working with Southwestern Community College, the Department of Commerce AdvantageWest, and the chambers of commerce to try to promote the county and retain workers and attract new businesses.

Horton said they would work with anyone else involved in business and industry and job creation to do what they can to establish and maintain a good, stable economy. “It doesn’t just happen overnight, we have to take steps to make it happen,” he said.

... HIS & HERs from pg 7

I cordially invite all who read this column, and have read my columns before, to decide whether I would be a good addition to the 111th Congress. If so, please get in touch with me, and help me how you can, now, for the primary, I think you’ll be pleased with the results.

About the Author: John Armor practiced in the US Supreme Court for 33 years. John_Armor@aya.yale.edu He is running for the 11th Congressional District of North Carolina.
Learning about germs

Germs were one of several topics drawing the attention of some 20 third, fourth and fifth graders from Summit Charter School in Cashiers during a behind-the-scenes tour last week of Highlands-Cashiers Hospital. In addition to covering all of the many things the hospital’s laboratory routinely does, Lab Supervisor Dan Rogers (above) also explained how technicians run cultures on various types of bacteria and viruses to help physicians determine what antibiotics they should use to treat patients. The surgical hats, masks and gloves worn by the students weren’t because of any danger of lurking “bugs,” however. They were the “big hit” of an earlier visit to the hospital surgical department, where students learned about the hospitals’ ever-vigilant efforts to maintain its extremely low infection rate. The students weren’t allowed to actually venture into the operating rooms (because they are sterile areas), but they got a lesson on why surgeons and nurses wear special clothes and pay so much attention to scrubbing up before a procedure. Other lessons during the visit about the importance of hand washing as the first line of defense against spreading illness proved particularly timely, since the area is currently in the midst of cold and flu season.

County’s school nurse asks parents to keep sick children home

The Macon County Public Health Center and Macon County Lead School Nurse, Jennifer Garrett, issued a statement today advising that Macon County Schools have been experiencing increased number of absences in the past few days.

Reasons include illness such as strep throat, cold symptoms, possible cases of the flu, and vomiting and diarrhea, which may be accompanied by a headache.

Parents are being asked not to send their children to school if they have a fever of 101.5 or greater, if they have any vomiting and/or diarrhea, and children diagnosed with strep must be on antibiotics for 24 hours before returning to school.

Garrett encourages practicing good infection control measures such as:

a. Avoid close contact with people who are sick. When sick, keep your distance from others to protect them from getting sick.

b. Cover mouth and nose with a tissue or cough/sneeze in sleeve.

c. Wash hands often and avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.

Children and adults should seek prompt medical attention if their symptoms worsen or do not resolve in a few days.

Blood drive at Highlands School

Highlands School is hosting a blood drive in the AnMed Blood Center’s bloodmobile parked outside the school from 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Friday, Feb. 29.

High school students, teachers and the general public are invited to participate. AnMed supplies blood to Highlands-Cashiers Hospital and a number of other hospitals around a three-state region. In recent years, the number of units raised in the Highlands-Cashiers area accounts for less than half the number needed to treat local patients. Hospital officials are encouraging potential donors to participate in the school’s drive, which is being sponsored by the Interact Club.

Highlands School Junior Class Rib-Eye Steak Fundraiser Dinner

March 13 • 4:30-6:30 p.m.

(Advanced ticket sales are requested. Fill out form and return to Highlands School or mail to P.O. Box 940)

Name: __________________________

Homeroom: ____________ Phone#__________

I would love to support the Junior Class!

Please send me:

_____tickets for an Adult at $10 each and
_____tickets for children under 12 for $6 each

The total amount enclosed is $ ________.

See you on March 13th

...PLANNING continued from page 1

To remedy the situation, he has initiated incorporating the town ordinance in Starling codifiers. Cooley suggested that developers take a look at the ordinances and find all related topics.

Mike Bryson suggested an ordinance disallowing a developer to clear large tracts of land at one time. He said the town’s ordinances are confusing for people. They have evolved over time, so ordinances pertaining to particular development issues are scattered throughout the ordinances and it’s tough to find what’s related to what, he said.

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HELP WANTED

THE INTERNATIONAL FRIENDSHIP CENTER OF HIGHLANDS, NC is seeking part time administrative assistant starting May 1, 2008. Applicant must have both written and oral Spanish knowledge, must be motived and be able to work well with others. Basic computer skills are necessary. Additional training will be given once applicant begins. For more information please call Jill at 828-526-9938 x 290.

SERVING & 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-hc.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-hc.com. Call Sabrina for Interview 828-526-5899.

PIANIST NEEDED for sweet little mountain church. 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@chbhchurch.com.

PHYSICAL THERAPY ASSISTANT needed at Highlands-Cashiers Hospital. Full time position. 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.

DIRECCTOR 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. Must agree with a background in nursing leadership required. This position reports directly to the CEO/President of Highlands-Cashiers Hospital, 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 to within minutes. Also must be able to intubate a patient. Current registration or certification in North Carolina, along with current BCLS and/or ACLS 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.

ANGER MANAGEMENT THERAPIST needed at Highlands-Cashiers Hospital. Full time position. Must be experienced in anger management. 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.

HIGHLANDS COUNTRY CLUB – Sorry, golf and club privileges not available. $2,495 a week. Call 912-230-7020.

THE LODGE ON MIRROLAKE – Fish or canoe from deck. Available weekly, yearly. Great fishing. $400 a week plus utilities. Call 912-607-3300.

LAKESIDE COTTAGE – One bedroom cottage with jetted tubs and showers, sleeping nook with great mountain views, sleeper sofa, great mountain views and home entertainment unit including 2 Advent speakers, high definition cable, Nintendo Wii video system, CD player, turn table, radio/CD. Sold as an individual unit – no lease agreement – $2,495 a week. Call 912-230-7020.

CLUB HOUSE TRUCK DRIVER – Full time, full benefits, $950 a week. Call 912-230-7020.

GOLF CART DRIVER – Full time, full benefits, $950 a week. Call 912-230-7020.
... STOLEN continued from page 1

“They knew what they were doing because they didn’t get fried doing it,” said Town Engineer Lamar Nix. About 7,200 volts run through the adjacent lines so if they didn’t get fried doing it,” said Nix. The price has more than quadrupled in the past five years as consumption surged in China, the world’s biggest metals buyer. Officials say metals used in China will continue to berobust as the world’s fastest-growing major economy builds more homes, cars and appliances.

Nix notified the Town Board Wednesday night of the theft.

“I want you to be aware of what's happening and to be on the lookout for anything or anyone that looks out of the ordinary,” he said. He said he will be filing a police report and will be up to the police to discover where the market is for local copper and perhaps track down the thief.

Well, the weather is doing a job on us again. These warm days we've had coaxed many of the bulbs to sprout, and us again. These warm days we've had coaxed many of the bulbs to sprout, and we again. These warm days we've had coaxed many of the bulbs to sprout, and

Highlands' Newspaper - Thursday, Feb. 28, 2008 - Page 17

... STOLEN continued from page 1

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Well, the weather is doing a job on us again. These warm days we've had coaxed many of the bulbs to sprout, and the cold snaps will surely shock them. Let's hope that some of these sprouts are sturdy critters.

DOT representatives met with Town Engineer Lamar Nix on Friday, Feb. 22, so hopefully work will begin soon. The Greenway Trail committee has plans to upgrade the old Greenway. Eventually, there will be benches at several spots around the lake as well as other areas along the Greenway.

We welcome Drs. Patti Wheeler and Richard Olson to the Mirror Lake area. Best wishes to your new Hicks Road location.

Our next regular meeting is Monday, March 17 at 7:30 p.m. at the civic center.

Elaine Johnson
Beginning April 2

On-going
• Cardio Dance Class. $5 per calls, MWF at 8:30 am @ the Rec Park (downstairs).
• Yoga at the Rec Park, 7:30 am Monday and Wednesdays.Call 526-4340 for information.
• Yoga in the bottom floor of Jane Woodward Building 10:30 am. Thursdays. Call 526-4340.
• NA open meeting every Saturday at 7:30 p.m. of the ACC Satellite Group at the Graves Community Church, 242 Hwy 107 N. in Cashiers. Call 888-764-0365 or go to the website: www.ncmana.org.
• StepAerobics at the Rec Park, 4-5 p.m., Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays. $5 per class.
• AI Health Tracks at Highlands-Cashiers Hospital, various exercise classes. Call Jeanette Fisher at 828-526-1FIT.
• The Circle of Life' support group continues at the Highlands-Cashiers Hospital at the Jane Woodward room 201, 10 a.m. until noon. Call Barbara Buchanan at 526-1402 or Florence Flanagan at 828-6777 or 706-746-9964.
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First Mondays
• Participate in your hospital by joining the Auxiliary of the Highlands-Cashiers Hospital. Auxiliary meetings are held the first Monday of each month at 10 a.m. at the hospital.

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 p.m.
• 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 Hams know 526-3376.
• Gospel of John Bible Study Pastor Todd Struble is leading a study this spring on the fourth Gospel (using the Eifrid 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.

Every Third Wednesday
• 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.
• Al-Anon Meetings, noon in the First Presbyterian Church basement at Fifth & Main Street.
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Ruby Cinemas
Hwy. 441, Franklin • 524-2076
Feb. 29-March 6
NO COUNTRY FOR OLD MEN
• Rated R
• Winner - Best Picture, Best Supporting Actor, Winner - Best Director, Winner - Best Adapted Screen Play
Fri: (4:15), 7, 9, 15
Sat & Sun: (2), (4:15), 7, 9, 15
Mon – Thurs: (4:15), 7

VANTAGE POINT
• Rated PG-13
Fri: (4:05), 7:05, 9:05
Sat & Sun: (2:05), (4:05), 7:05, 9:05
Mon – Thurs: (4:05), 7:05

THE SPIDERWICK CHRONICLES
• Rated PG
Fri: (4), 7, 9
Sat & Sun: (2), (4), 7, 9
Mon – Thurs: (4), 7

FOOL’S GOLD
• Rated PG-13
Fri: (4:10), 9:10
Sat & Sun: (4:10), 9:10
Mon – Thurs: (4:10)

JUMPER
• Rated PG-13
Fri: 7:10
Sat & Sun: (2:10), 7:10
Mon – Thurs: 7:10

UPCOMING EVENTS

Opening night for HCPs 'Lend Me a Tenor'
Famous opera star Tito Merelli, played by Wayne Coleman, and his wife Maria, played by Diane Rosazza, make a grand entrance complete with piles of luggage carried by struggling bellhop Dean Zuch in HCP’s "Lend Me a Tenor," opening Thursday, Feb. 28 and running through Sunday, March 9, at PAC in Highlands. Call 828-526-8084 for reservations.

The show opens Thursday, Feb. 28, that magical night of butterflies and suspense behind stage as the actors wait for their opening cues and the audience files in ready to laugh and enjoy. For this play is a comedy, a rolling one by Ken Ludwig with an experienced cast of Highlands Community Players ready to entertain.

Lend Me a Tenor involves an opening night as well. World famous tenor Tito Merelli, played by Wayne Coleman, is scheduled to sing at a gala fund raiser for the Cleveland Grand Opera. Opera manager Henry Saunders (Bob Tietze) orders his assistant Max (Stuart Armor) to keep a close eye on Merelli, who has a weakness for wine and women. Female fans of the great tenor can seldom resist his romantic charms, much to the disgust of his long-suffering wife Maria, played with wonderful comic flair by Diane Rosazza.

Needless to say, Max fails in his watchdog duties and shortly before the opera's opening night, it appears Merelli will not be able to go on. A wild and funny scramble ensues, as the directors try to find another tenor.

Lend Me a Tenor is directed by Annette Coleman, assisted by Carol Lucas. It is sponsored, in part, by WHLC-Radio. Round out the cast are Breta Stroud, playing Max's girlfriend, Carla Gates, a soprano scheduled to sing with Tito; Jody Read, chairman of the Opera Guild; and Dean Zuch, a bellhop. Kathryn Evans designed the set; contractor Bill Futral supervised construction.

Lend Me a Tenor will be presented at the Martin-Lipscomb Performing Arts Center Feb. 28 through Sunday, March 9, evenings at 7:30 p.m., Sunday matinees, at 2:30 p.m. Individual tickets are $15 for adults, $8 for students, and $12 each person for groups of 15 or more except on opening night. Reservations may be held by VISAT or Mastercard. The box office 828-526-8084, will be open at PAC from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., except on Sundays, when it will open at 1:30 p.m. before the matinees.

Please note it is rated PG 13, as it contains a few adult situations.
Wallace Branch, including a couple of side trails. Meet at Westgate Plaza in Franklin (opposite Burger King) at 2 p.m. Drive 8 miles round trip. Bring a drink, a snack if you wish, and wear sturdy comfortable shoes. Hikes are limited to 20 people. Call leader Kay Conell, 369-6220, for reservations. Visitors are welcome, but no pets please.

Wednesday, March 5
- The new “Be a Good Neighbor Committee” will hold an educational meeting, discussing all the opportunities for recycling in Macon County. Wednesday at 1 p.m. in the meeting room of the Macon County Public Library on Siler Road, Franklin. The public is invited. For more information, contact Debby Boots at 349-5201.

Thursday, March 6
- NAMI Appalachian South will hold an organizational meeting with a brief program at the home room of the Macon County Public Library on Siler Road, Franklin. For more information, contact the Highlands Community Players’ box office, 526-8084.

Friday, March 7
- American Red Cross Blood Drive at South Macon Elementary School Blood Drive (Addington Bridge Road; Franklin, NC) noon to 5 p.m. For ticket information call, the Highlands Community Players’ box office, 526-8084.

Tennessee Jed coming to ITC

Every once in a blue moon a magic band comes together. Usually they are made up of those back-up musicians that make superstars sound so good again.

Tennessee Jed has assembled one of those bands: Eric Chesson (guitar), Jason Patrick (bass), and Tennessee Jed (lead vocal and guitar) were all members of the Jason Michael Carroll band (Billboard’s #1 country artist in 2007). There is also a nod to the generosity of Drekel’s Diamond Gallery, Wanda and Gary Drake have generously donated a stunning diamond for this year’s raffle to be given away at the end of the season. This means that one ticket, or better yet, several tickets, makes you eligible for a beautiful certified diamond.

Of course, all of this requires the support of our wonderful patrons and audience members. We rely on you to keep your kids busy while you are at the Playhouse and we would love for you to be a part of the 2008 season. Auditions for the upcoming season will be held on Saturday, March 8.

Tennessee Jed and Molly from his new CD Acoustica.

The Playhouse announces exciting lineup to commemorate 70 years of entertainment

In 2008 Highland’s Playhouse will celebrate its 70th Anniversary. The Playhouse has a long tradition of presenting the best live entertainment and this season will be no different. We are still working on the details of 2008 season but we promise you first rate performances that will celebrate the rich history of the past 70 years. We are pleased to announce the following shows:

June 19-July 6: Always Patsy Cline
July 10-27: On Golden Pond
July 24-Aug 10: 70th Anniversary Diamond Review
Aug 14-31: Inherit the Wind

The 70th Anniversary Diamond Review is a show that exemplifies the best kind of entertainment from our past. This show is developed and written by Mr. DaMon Goff and Mr. Sam Dunaway, both of whom are familiar to Playhouse goers of the last three seasons. It is also a nod to the generosity of Drekel’s Diamond Gallery. Wanda and Gary Drake have generously donated a stunning diamond for this year’s raffle to be given away at the end of the season. This means that one ticket, or better yet, several tickets, makes you eligible for a beautiful certified diamond.

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Saturday, March 8
- Tennessee Jed and his band will play one performance in “the best little concert hall in western North Carolina” the Instant Theatre Company’s Studio on Main at 310 Main Street Oak Square in Highlands, at 8 p.m. All tickets are $15. For reservations, which are strongly suggested, call 828-342-9197.

- The Nantahala Hiking Club will take a moderate 6 mile hike in Oconee State Park and on the SC Foothills Trail to Long Mtn. Fire Tower, Tamaskan Knob, and the old water wheel in the park. Meet at the Highlands Bank of America at 9 a.m. Drive 45 miles round trip. If coming from Franklin, call leader for alternate car pool meeting place. Bring a drink, lunch, and wear sturdy comfortable shoes. Hikes are limited to 20. Call leader Doug Deane, 864-718-9265, for reservations. Visitors are welcome but no pets please.

Sunday, March 9
- Sing in the “Spring” concert at First Presbyterian Church in collaboration with the WCU music department faculty showcase at 4 p.m. Star vocal students will perform. It’s free with a reception to follow.

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.”

Tuesday, March 11
- Free lectures at Cashiers Chiropractic and Wellness Center. “Eating Out: Making the right decisions.” To register, call either the Highlands office at 526-3709 or the Cashiers office at 743-9070.

Thursday, March 13
- Call at his convenience to make reservations. We look forward to a wonderful season and truly hope you will be a part of our celebration.

For further information or reservations please call 828-526-2695 or write P. O. Box 896 in Highlands.
UPCOMING EVENTS

Saturday, March 15
• The Nantahala Hiking Club will take an easy-to-moderate 4.5 mile hike from Sloan Bridge to Upper Whitewater Falls with beautiful wintertime views along the way. Meet at the Cashiers Wachovia Bank (in back) at 10 a.m. Drive 14 miles round trip. Bring a drink, lunch, and wear sturdy comfortable shoes. Hikes are limited to 20. Call leaders Mike and Susan Kettle, 743-1079, for reservations or more information. Visitors are welcome but no pets please.

Sunday, March 16
• The Nantahala Hiking Club will take an easy 1.5-mile hike around the historic Tessentee Farm, preserved by the Little Tennessee Land Trust. Meet at the Smoky Mtn. Visitors’ Center on Hwy. 441 near Otto. Drive 6 miles round trip. Bring a drink, a snack if you wish, and wear sturdy comfortable shoes. Hikes are limited to 20 people. Call leader Kay Coriell, 369-6820, for reservations or more information. Visitors are welcome, but no pets please.

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. Tickets are $55 and help support wildlife management on public,

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Email: JJlawn1663@verizon.net
John Shearl, Owner
1663 S. 4th St. Highlands

Kenneth M. Crowe
RESIDENTIAL CONTRACTOR
Repair & Maintenance
(828) 526-5943  HIGHLANDS, NC
he thanked Leatherman for his continued support for education in Macon County.

The first speaker was Western Carolina University Professor Dr. Mary Jean Herzog. Herzog teaches both undergraduate and graduate classes in education through the Department of Educational Leadership. One of her areas of interest is rural education.

Herzog presented summaries of research that claim smaller schools are safer, have lower incidences of violence and vandalism, and that students in these schools have a higher sense of belonging than those in larger schools.

The graduation rates are higher in smaller schools, and there is also an increase in the percentage of students that go on to post-secondary education. Herzog said that better grades are seen in smaller schools, and there is also an increase in the number of parents that are involved in extra-curricular activities, and more community involvement seen in smaller schools according to Herzog's sources.

But what is a "small" school? Herzog cited a publication by the Department of Public Instruction that stated that while there is no ideal number of students to designate a small school, there are some guidelines on the ideal size for safety, climate, and order in schools.

For elementary schools, 300-400 students is a good number. In middle schools the number is from 300-600 students, while high schools should have from 400-800 students to be a small school.

Herzog said that these numbers come from research that looked at the number of students who entered each type of school and compared this figure with the number of students who graduated. The percentage of graduates was much higher in smaller schools.

Robert Swank brought data that listed the current number of students at a few of the county's schools, as well as the projected number when the new 5-6 middle school and North Macon Elementary School are in operation. "Right now there are 413 students at East Franklin," Swank said. After the fifth grade is moved to the new school there will only be 342 students there.

According to Swank, at Macon Middle there are currently 904 students, and that number will be reduced to 608 after the sixth grade goes to the new middle school. North Macon School would have 384 students, just slightly more than the combined total of students at both Cowee and Iotla today which is 326.

Swank also said that when fifth graders are moved from Cartoogehaye their numbers will decrease from 398 students to 326, and South Macon will go from 562 students down to 491. "These will still be small schools," she said.

Recently Superintendent of Schools Dan Brignam explained that the closing of Cullasaja Elementary, and Cowee Elementary and the redistricting will allow for Cullasaja students to attend the newly updated East Franklin Elementary. "Seating capacity gained at each of the K-4 schools following construction of the new school at Iotla would also allow greater choice to parents within the Franklin area," he said.

Commissioner Davis said that Herzog's data concerning performance was mostly irrelevant because it was heavily based on statistics from high schools alone, while what is being discussed in Macon County mostly pertains to elementary schools and their consolidation.

Macon Middle teacher Darlene McDowell talked about how students who go to classes in trailers and mobile classrooms feel segregated from the rest of the students. "They don't have an intercom to these classrooms, and students can't hear the fire drills," McDowell said.

Macon Middle Principal Todd Gibbs added that schools with mobile classrooms lack security. Students also have to walk through rain and mud to get to these classrooms. Additionally, there is a security problem. "When I was at South Macon, there was a murder on North Sweeney Road. We were able to look down the school and make sure that no one could get in," he said.

Members of the community had many questions about why the existing elementary schools of Cullasaja and Cowee couldn't be renovated and brought up to modern standards. Commissioner Davis said that the cost to renovate is prohibitive not only because of the need for updated water, sewer and other infrastructure, but also because the federal government requires that 25% of the money being spent on renovations has to go to updating the older buildings to meet the standards of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

When asked why East Franklin was renovated, Commissioner Beale said that the infrastructure was already in place, which saved a lot of money on renovations. East Franklin is connected to city water and sewer in Franklin while Cullasaja and Cowee are not.

Beale said that these two schools are landlocked and there is no additional land near them that could be purchased to expand the schools. "The septic tank at Cowee is under the playground," Beale said, and Cullasaja School has an older facility on site to process the waste. It was built in the 1940s it is extremely outdated. "If Cullasaja was inspected today it would be shut down yesterday because of its water and sewage issues," said Commission Davis. Cullasaja is also very close to the Cullasaja River, which is another issue with its sewage.

Commissioner Davis reminded the public that the bond referendum wasn't to decide whether or not the new schools would be built, but instead to determine where the funding would come from.

"Frankly, the School Board had 10 public meetings about the bond referendum that were not very well-attended. Some don't want these smaller schools to be consolidated, but that horse has already left the barn; we have to do that," Davis said.

Franklin High School teacher John deville asked if bussing fifth graders was the wisest decision when it had the potential to replicate the current situation at Macon Middle. "We live in a different society and a different culture, and it's irresponsible not to take that into account when it could augment the already deteriorating households these kids are coming from."

Beale said that he had come up with the idea of a 5-6 middle school after a three-day stint eating lunch in the Macon Middle cafeteria. "I was trying to figure out how to fix that," he said. Swank added that fifth and sixth graders gel much better than eighth graders and sixth graders.

Other concerns that deville expressed were the possibility that the new 5-6 school could become a "miniature version of Macon Middle," and the fact that parents are not as involved. Gibbs maintained that the education is the same whether it's at a smaller school or a bigger school, citing his own children as examples. "The one that went to Union Elementary got the same education as the one that attended South Macon," he said.

Cabe added that years ago no one wanted to close Pine Grove School and move those students to the "big school" at Cullasaja, but "It had to be done."

... SPIRITUALLY

Correspondingly, there is something else that Jesus says each day has enough of: trouble. Like Worley, I have tried to carry burdens, worries and concerns that were not meant to be part of today's load. I have crumbled under the weight of trying to bear another day's burdens along with the current day's troubles which are enough to handle by themselves.

Recently, I experienced one such melting moment. When I cried out to Jesus, He gently reminded me that I was trying to bear more than I had really given me for the day. I thought of His life here on earth and realized that even though Jesus was aware of the cross He didn't not bear that day's anguish and the pain everyday up to that moment. Not until the Garden of Gethsemane did He carry that day's trouble. Matthew 6:3

Let's follow His example and His instruction. Let's take each day, (our bread and our burdens) one at a time.
... PLANNING continued from page 15

too many people on the streets and sidewalks. We have to improve the ways to access the retail shops. That and real estate are the engines that drive the economy. We have to improve pedestrian ways around town and that will help the town,” he said.

Craig said part of that problem has to do with the width of Highlands’ sidewalks and the fact that there aren’t ways to “journey” from parking areas to the downtown area in a comfortable fashion. He said if it can’t be done comfortably, people won’t do it. He also said the merchants on the 4th Street hill are considering a trolley that could make a loop through town and drop people off in various places.

The displaying of outdoor merchandise will be discussed at the March 12 Town Board meeting because so many merchants are dissatisfied with the board’s recent decision to nix all but four categories of outdoor merchandise.

“I like a little color on Main Street,” said Ricky Bryson.

The board also agreed that it wanted to amend the Time Limit for Review of Plans in the ordinance which currently limits the Planning Board time to 32 days as well as impose impact fees on developers. The board will continue discussing its priorities at its March 10 meeting.

Commissioner Leatherman closed the meeting by talking about how the number one concern of the commissioners and the Board of Education is for the students. “The job of a teacher is to prepare a student for life; it’s more than just multiplication tables and conjugating verbs,” he said.

“Teachers deal with issues that most others wouldn’t want to touch, and they do it with caring and compassion. The bond referendum was for funding only; the decision had already been made,” he said.

Leatherman added that he had filed for reelection, and that if voters weren’t happy with him and the decisions he had made, they were welcome to vote against him.

The next meeting will be in March.

... PLANNING continued from page 15

routes aren’t really going to change; the students will just be dropped off at different schools. She also encouraged the caring parents and community members to volunteer at schools and to become active in their schools’ PTOS. Swank also mentioned that at every Board of Education there is time set aside for public comment, and anyone is welcome to come and voice opinions.

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The next meeting will be in March.

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... THANK YOUS continued from page 2

Emergency Council is thankful

Highlands Emergency Council attempts to say “Thank You” to all the generous people of Highlands. The outpouring of care and assistance from the year round and seasonal residents has been fantastic in 2007-2008.

The Christmas program was most successful due to the contributions of the spiritual groups and clubs, the sponsorship of church circles and the press coverage by both newspapers. WHLC radio coverage as well kept everyone reminded of our needs. The responses to the bank giving trees were wonderful as usual.

The Men of First Presbyterian Church and the Hispanic painters gave our building a much needed face-lift this fall. The town crew provides much needed muscle at the warehouse.

We were fortunate to receive a grant from the Western North Carolina Foundation earmarked for fuel assistance.

The Season alternative gift fair 2007 resulted in many fuel assistance donations as did the letter written on our behalf by Scott Paxton. Many churches and individuals support us on a regular basis. We depend greatly on these dear ones. Each of us knows how the cost of fuel has increased this year. Because you care, we have served 27 clients with fuel assistance, 18 senior citizens households and 9 households with young children.

The tireless volunteers who serve day after day and week after week deserve heartfelt appreciations. Their dedication to our mission is quite obvious.

Aren’t we fortunate to live in this special community consisting of so many with generous hearts for their fellow man and who care deeply for each other?

May God bless each of you and your precious spirit of giving.

The Emergency Council Board of Directors

PO Box 974
Highlands, NC 28741

Mary Anne Creswell, Secretary

From HS students

Highlands School Class of 2009 would like to thank all the students, parents, faculty and staff at Highlands School for making the Valentine’s Day Flower and Candy sale so successful. Your kindness and generosity are a testament to the holiday and greatly appreciated!

The funds raised will be used for the Junior/Senior Prom being held April 12th.

We want to send a special thank you to the Little Flower Shoppe in Highlands for getting our flowers at such a great price and donating the paper to wrap the flowers to Mountain Fresh Grocer for donating candy at the last minute when we ran out on the evening before Valentine’s Day, and Adrian Holt and Chris Green for their time and efforts.

... ANOTHER VIEW continued from page 5

coalition which he has forged, to weigh the risks of fiscal extravagance against the benefit of government spending, to consider the risk of Iraq in flames even as he bemoans the risk to American lives and resources with a continued presence. I would tell him that it is alright to be wrong and it is fine to change one’s mind. The problem is allowing one’s opponent to point out his imperfections or changing one’s mind, not because of new information, but to satisfy new donors. I would say, “Senator, don’t try to be all things to all people. Be one thing to all of us, Be our President.” I would offer that same advice to all candidates, but believe that only he, among them, might listen.
**Highlands Police, Fire & Macon County Sheriff Reports**

The following is the Highlands Police Dept. log entries for the
weeks of Feb. 20-27. Only the names of persons arrested, issued a
Class-3 misdemeanor, or public officials have been used.

- **Feb. 20**
  - At 10 a.m., a resident on Harris Drive reported a window shot out
    with a BB gun. Damage was estimated to be $100.
  - At 7:18 p.m., a motorist at Poplar and N. 4th streets was cited for
    speeding 40 mph in a 25 zone.
  - At 11:35 a.m., a motorist at Arnold Road and N.C. 106 was cited for
    speeding 49 mph in a 35 zone.

- **Feb. 21**
  - At 1:05 p.m., officers found a 61-year-old male dead in his home on
    Upper Lake Road. Preliminary reports from the medical examiner say he
    died of natural causes.
  - At 4:15 p.m., a motorist at Oak and Second streets was cited for
    speeding 49 mph in a 20 zone.
  - At 10:30 p.m., vandalism to the EMS building on Maple Street was
    reported. Someone spray painted a symbol on a garage door.

- **Feb. 22**
  - At 12:05 p.m., a motorist at S. Main and N.C. 106 was cited for
    speeding 40 mph in a 25 zone.
  - At 1:50 p.m., a motorist at Dog Mountain Road reported a breaking and
    entering. Nothing was reported missing.

- **Feb. 23**
  - At 7:30 p.m., a residence on Joe-Pye Trail. The victim was transported to the hospital.

- **Feb. 24**
  - At 4 p.m., a resident on Dog Mountain Road reported a breaking and
    entering. Nothing was reported missing.

- **Feb. 25**
  - At 8 p.m., a motorist at Dog Mountain Road was cited for
    speeding 49 mph in a 35 zone.

- **Feb. 26**
  - At 1:05 p.m., officers found a 61-year-old male dead in his home on
    Upper Lake Road. Preliminary reports from the medical examiner say he
    died of natural causes.

- **Feb. 27**
  - At 7:18 p.m., a motorist at S. Main and N.C. 106 was cited for
    speeding 40 mph in a 25 zone.

**Middle-school girl dies by hanging**

On Sunday February 25, officers with the Macon County Sheriff’s Office
responded to a residence where a mother found her daughter Sarah
Leann Beck, 13, deceased. Detectives, as well as the medical examiner
were called to the home where they initiated an investigation. During the
process of the next 24 hours, detectives conducted numerous interviews
with friends, students and staff with the Macon County School system.

During the investigation the following findings were determined:
- At approximately 11:30 p.m., the mother found her daughter located
  in the child’s bedroom closet.
- The Medical Examiner’s Office has determined that the child’s death
  was caused by “asphyxiation due to accidental hanging”.
- During the past couple of weeks the deceased child had knowledge and
  spoken with friends about an activity that is known as “the choking
game”.
- Students learned about the “Choking Game” from other students and
  were informed on how to play it.

According to some of the interviews conducted, the deceased admitted
that she had participated in what is being called the “choking game” and
had done so as recently as in the past couple of weeks.

“While this activity has been routinely called the choking game, we
want to stress that this is NO game. If you play it, Death is a real possibility,”
said Holland. “We pray that presenting the facts publicly may prevent anoth-
er family from dealing with a tragedy such as this.”

---

**PseudoCube©**

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. Each diagonal contains 3 numbers equal-
ing 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.

**Solution to #BZ1D in Feb. 21 issue**

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**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**
“Cover (furniture)"

Across
1. Edgar Allen ___ (3)
2. Soak (3)
3. Creative work (Latin) (4)
4. Pistol holder (7)
5. Freight truck make (3)
6. Legal proceedings (3)
7. Exclamation! (2)
8. Ripped (4)
9. Conjunction (2)
10. ___art (2)

Down
1. ___DZ2D – Level of Difficulty – Moderate

**Solution to Feb. 21 puzzle**

```
EAO WWRIC M V
VM WECARIO O
RCIVMOEWA
O EVAIM WRC
MICROWAVE
WRACVEMOI
C WROAVIEM
AVMIEROCW
I0E MWCVAR
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