The Highlands Playhouse Antique Show will once again be in Highlands.

At the January 16 Town Board meeting, commissioners agreed to let the Playhouse use the Highlands Civic Center, Sept. 22-28 for the Fourth Annual Highlands Antique Show, its premier fundraiser.

"It's a plus to have the show in Highlands," said member of the Playhouse board Dwight Bryant. "Those who attend the show also shop and dine in Highlands. The business owners benefited when the show was in Highlands."

Last year, after the town said the Playhouse couldn't use the Civic Center for the amount of time requested, the antique show was moved to the Sapphire Valley Community Center.

Because of the location, the.

**See ANTIQUE page 8**

**Landfill changes will affect Highlands**

The county and town have been discussing pending changes at the landfill on Rich Gap Road for more than a year. Now, time is of the essence and decisions must be made.

At Monday's Macon County Commission meeting, Solid Waste Director Chris Stahl said the permits aren't place to proceed but due to the lateness of "getting this off the ground" the new construction and debris (C&D) transfer station probably won't be constructed by June 30, 2007 as originally planned.

"There will probably be a disruption of service from June 30 when the C&D landfill closes and completion of the project," he said. "Given the winters in Highlands and the nature of the work, we won't finish this project by June 30th."

Stahl said until the C&D transfer station on Rich Gap Road is complete contractors in Highlands will have to haul their construction debris down to Franklin, just as Franklin contractors have been hauling their debris up to Highlands. The same will hold true for municipal solid waste (MSW).

Bids for the job have to be awarded by February 28 and financing through the Local Government Commission (LGC) needs...
There's a reason America doesn't realize there's a war going on

Dear Editor,

I am writing in response to Fred Wooldridge's column in last week's Highlands' Newspaper, "War you say? What war?"

You are right about not noticing the war in Iraq as we go about our day-to-day activities, and you are right about being led around by our noses.

To date we have spent about $576 billion dollars, lost 4,000 Americans lives and have 60,000 wounded. The current bill for each U.S. household is approximately $4,100 and counting, the sacrifice is the fact that we're passing that on to our children and grandchildren.

By the way, 4 million Iraqis are refugees and 700,000 have been killed, many innocent civilians killed by our bullets and bombs.

Every American should think about what might go through the minds of their relatives and neighbors, imagine a force of foreigners patrolling the streets of Highlands for years dressed like Darth Vader occasionally kicking doors sometimes shooting us and calling in bombing raids to kill a suspect and sometimes shooting us and calling in bombing raids to kill a suspect and anyone unfortunate enough to be too close by. How would you feel? Can you see how this might create a terrorist? You mention there aren't factories filled with hard working men and women, oops, we sent them to China. "There's no unity in this country," you say.

Many Americans vehemently opposed this war as did most of the PLANET! Why? Because they educated themselves about it. That is the shortest way I can say it and stay under 500 words. 9/11 and Iraq, where's that connection? By the way, where were all the anti-war folks when we went to Afghanistan after Al-qaeda and the Taliban? Stick to your humor, Fred. It's much better.

Bruce Dickey, Highlands

Power makes list

Rachel Power, Highlands School Class of 2007, was named to the Chancellor's List for the fall semester at Appalachian State University. A GPA of 3.85 or better is needed.

LETTERS-TO-THE EDITOR-POLICY

We reserve the right to reject or edit submissions. Views expressed are not necessarily those of Highlands' Newspaper. Please email letters by Monday at 5 p.m.

There is a 500-word limit without prior approval.

Community supports The Girls' Clubhouse

The Girls' Clubhouse says thanks to Ralph Stevens of Jolie's on Main Street, Bruce Sloan of Mountain Fresh Foods, Lela Chapman and the Highlands community as a whole in supporting its projects and fundraising efforts.

Ralph Stevens donated $300 worth of new clothes for the club to include with its Emergency Council Christmas gifts. Bruce Sloan gave the club materials to decorate the tables at the community wide Thanksgiving dinner at the Rec Park, Lela Chapman, who has supported the club with donations since its inception, donated $100 to club efforts and the Highlands' Community religiously purchased the baked goods during the club's bake sales.

Thanks for the continued support.

The Girls' Clubhouse

Highlands

Community supports La Noche Navidena

If you were at the Civic Center on the cold rainy Saturday night of this past Dec. 15 you already know and understand what an unusual Christmas party was taking place.

First, although the guest list included anyone who wanted to come, the majority of the guests were people not usually seen dressed up to come out to a party because they are almost always working, serving in the background.

In a role reversal of sorts, the "workers" at this party were restaurant owners, civic leaders, elected officials, church goers, retired professionals, doctors, "high profile" folks, and that night they performed acts of real humility, selfishness and love toward their fellow human beings which exemplify the true spirit of Christmas.

This was the fifth annual Christmas Family Night or "La Noche Navidena."

The hosts of this event were the International Friendship Center and its team of extraordinary volunteers.

In the lobby of the Civic Center name tags and raffle numbers were given out to everyone who came in. The people then waited a short time in a side room where they were served chips and salsa until the dinner was ready and they were
State commends county departments for great job

At the Jan. 14 Macon County Commission meeting, the commission presented Finance Director Evelyn Southard with an award which was given to the department by the state. “The county finance office again received the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting from the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA). The award is the highest form of recognition in the area of governmental accounting and financial reporting,” read Chairman Charlie Leatherman. Standing with Southard is Commissioner Jim Davis and members of her staff: Chuck Young, Lesa Southard and Bobbie Soleau.

Employees with county 25 and 30 years recognized

In his “State of the County” message delivered at the Jan. 14 commission meeting, Commissioner Charlie Leatherman said the county must ensure that it continues to employ and keep quality people and the board must be committed to giving employees what they need to serve the citizens of Macon County. Pictured with Commissioner Ronnie Beale are Barbara Jacobs and Kathy Rogers who have worked for Macon County for 30 years. Above: Commissioner Jim Davis presented Lightner with the award.

Also at Monday night’s meeting, Chairman Leatherman announced that on Nov. 15, 2007 the North Carolina Association of Assessing Officers (NCAAO) presented the 2007 NCAAO County Jurisdictional Award to Tax Administrator Richard Lightner at its annual conference in Greensboro. “The award is presented to recognize the county that has achieved outstanding public service and advancement in the tax assessment field. Last year, 2007, was the first year the award was given to small- or medium-size counties,” he said. Commissioner Jim Davis presented Lightner with the award.

Employees with county 25 and 30 years recognized

Jack Walker

1990 Hall of Fame Inductee

Jack Walker died January 14, 2008 in Miami, FL, after a brief illness. He is survived by his wife, Polly and two daughters, Wesley and Edie. There will be no service at this time.

Born John C. Walker in Savannah, GA, February 27, 1924, Jack (as he has been known for as long as he can remember) moved with his family to Miami, FL, where he was still in grade school. In fact, he met his wife Polly when they were in the ninth grade and, in Jack’s words, “we’ve been dating ever since.”

Jack had lived in Highlands for the last few years and had made many friends in the area. Anyone who knew Jack loved him, his quick smile and wit were his trademark. Memorial contributions can be made to the Highlands-Cashiers Animal Shelter.

Walker has left behind a record that may never be surpassed: the drive for at least 500 tournaments in the U.S. and 10 foreign countries, including 7 world championships, 19 Nationals and 21 Masters tournaments. He has been honored repeatedly with the prestigious Fred Wiley Memorial Award, named for the only other person elected to the Water Ski Hall of Fame for his boat driving contribution to the sport and presented annually to the outstanding Nationals driver by his peers. Serving at one time on the Board of Directors of the American Water Ski Association, Walker assisted in the establishment of the AWSA Boat Drivers Rating System. He was one of the initial Senior Driver approved under the program.

Obituaries

John Joseph Lyons, Jr.


Born in Anderson, S.C., Lyons was the son of the late John Joseph Lyons and Sarah Bradley Lyons. He was a member of Saint Mary of the Angels Catholic Church. Lyons attended Springhill College and Clemson University where he was a lifelong IPTAY member. He was a U.S. Marine veteran.

Lyons, called Johnny by Orr-Lyons Mill employees, was the third generation of a textile family known as textile leaders of the south. Orr-Lyons Mill, the first fully electric textile mill in the country, was run by the Lyons family for 90 years, from its inception in 1900 to its closing in 1990, when Mr. Lyons was general manager. He was known for treating mill workers, supervisors and executives as family. He enjoyed spending time with his family at his cabin in Highlands.

Survivors include his sons James Hammett Lyons and his wife Miriam and Johnny Lyons III and his wife Barbara, all of Anderson, S.C., and Marty Lyons and his wife Anne of Decatur, Ill.; his daughters Gay Lyons Haley and her husband Bill of Atlanta, GA, Lee Lyons of Highlands, N.C., Andrea Lyons Cannell of Bluffton, S.C., and his sister Anne Lyons Brissey of Anderson, S.C., and Highlands.

Seven grandchildren, John and Haley, Mary Anna Lyons, Jaime Lyons, Heidi, Wiley, Haley Lyons and Andrew Cannell, also survive.

In addition to his wife and parents, he was preceded in death by his brother Gary Lyons, his grandson Hayden Abney Fulp, and son-in-law, D.J. Cannell.

In lieu of flowers, the family respectfully requests memorials be made to St. Mary of the Angels Catholic Church, 1821 White Street, Anderson, S.C., 29624.

The McDougald Funeral Home was in charge of arrangements.

- Correction -

In the “Town wins ETJ case, again” story that ran in the Jan. 3 edition of Highlands’ Newspaper, we reported that Town Attorney Bill Coward said the county has a limited right to appeal to the Superior Court of Macon County. It should have read “the Supreme Court of North Carolina.” We regret the error and are happy to set the record straight.
ENOUGH ALREADY WITH THIS ENDLESS PHILOSOPHICAL DEBATING ABOUT GOD’S ROLL. HERE’S HOW IT REALLY IS. BUT BEFORE YOU PLUCK THE CHICKENS AND HEAT THE TAR BUCKETS, HEAR ME OUT ‘CAUSE YOU MIGHT FIND TINY SHREDs OF TRUE HIDDEN AWAY IN THIS NONSENSE.

FOR STARTERS, GET OUT YOUR HISTORY BOOKS AND READ ABOUT THE MILLIONS UPON MILLIONS OF PEOPLE THAT HAVE BEEN MURDERED IN THE NAME OF RELIGION. THIS HAS BEEN GOING ON SINCE THE BEGINNING OF RECORDED TIME AND I’M SURE BEFORE THAT. IF YOU DON’T THINK SO, YOUR HEAD IS WHERE THE SUN DOESN’T SHINE. RELIGION AND BELIEF IN GOD IS THE SINGLE HIGHEST CAUSE OF CARNAGE OVER ANY OTHER SINGLE FACTOR ON THIS PLANET. HUMANITY’S CURRENT RELIGIOUS GIG FOR KILLING IN THE NAME OF GOD IS CALLED JIHAD, BUT THERE HAVE BEEN MANY, MANY OTHERS.

HERE’S THE FUN PART. LET’S INVENT A NEW RELIGION. TO HELP FEED MY EGO, WE’LL CALL IT THE FIRST CHURCH OF FRED, A RELIGION WHERE NO ONE WANTS US KILLED. AGAIN, DON’T GET YOUR SHORTS IN A WAD BECAUSE ALL I’M DOING IS WHAT EVERYONE DOES WHEN THEY BECOME DISGRUNTLED WITH THEIR CHURCH. THEY SPLINTER AND CREATE A NEW ONE; HAPPENS ALL THE TIME.

BETTER STILL, AT MY CHURCH THERE ARE FEW RULES AND NO RITUALS TO FOLLOW. IF CATHOLICS DON’T SHOW UP ON SUNDAY, THEY WON’T GO STRAIGHT TO HELL ‘CAUSE THEY’RE ALREADY THERE. PROTESTANTS DON’T HAVE TO HOLD HANDS, CLOSE THEIR EYES AND SAY, “THANK YOU, LORD, FOR MY SMOKIN’ HOT WIFE” AND SILLY STUFF LIKE THAT. JEWISH FOLKS CAN JOIN MY CHURCH AND KNOW HALF THE WORLD IS NO LONGER TRYING TO MAKE THEM EXTINCT.

MY CHURCH THREATENS NO ONE. THERE’S NO MISSIONS TO SPREAD “THE GOOD WORD,” NO PRAYING FOR AUNT HATTIE’S CANCER TO BE HEALED AND NO COLLECTIONS FOR THE POOR AND DISADVANTAGED. THESE ARE THE KIND OF THINGS THAT MAKE OTHER RELIGIONS WANT TO KILL US.

CONSIDER THIS. BEFORE WE WERE BORN, WE EXISTED IN ANOTHER LIFE FORM AT ANOTHER PLACE MUCH Nicer THAN EARTH. DON’T CALL IT HELL BECAUSE SOME OUT THERE WILL WANT TO KILL YOU. WHILE WE WERE AT THIS WONDERFUL PLACE WE WEREN’T CALLED HEAVEN, WE MESSED UP BIG TIME AND HAD TO BE PENALIZED. THEN WE WERE SENTENCED TO A PLANET CALLED EARTH. HOW BAD WE MESS UP DETERMINES HOW LONG AND HOW SEVERE OUR SENTENCES. IN SHORT, EARTH IS A PLACE OF PUNISHMENT BUT DON’T CALL IT HELL BECAUSE, AGAIN, SOME WEIRDOS WILL WANT TO SNUFF YOU OUT.

Consider yourself a prisoner serving a term and only your creator knows when it will end. If your crime was minor, your sentence is light and you are having an easy time on the planet. You may even get lucky and croak early.

If you really messed up bad, then your punishment is more severe and long term. This explains why there’s no fairness in life. The fact is it shouldn’t be fair. Like prisoners, some have it easy and some have it hard, but they’re all serving time.

The best part about belonging to the First Church of Fred is that our preachers don’t say, “The Lord works in mysterious ways” because He doesn’t. And here’s another little item I’m sure you haven’t thought of. People can’t tell you to go to hell ‘cause you’re already there. In short, life on Earth is as bad as it’s going to get.

When you attend my church, the preacher will tell you to relax and make the best of your sentence by not harming…or helping others. More important, don’t try to change other people’s sentences because that upsets the creator. What right does anyone have to change His sentence by trying to make things better….or worse for someone?

IF YOU KILL, YOU ARE IN DEEP DOO-DOO because you have prematurely sent that person back from where he came. Better you should mind your own business, take care of yourself and let everyone else do the same. If everyone joined the Church of Fred, life on Earth would be a lot less violent. Ever wonder why no good deed goes unpunished and only the good die young. Ta da, now you know!

This part is the best. Regardless of how good or bad you are, sooner or later your sentence will be served and you can return to the blissful existence you once had. That’s my story and if you believe it, then you are like some others I know who are inhaling much too much cannabis sativa.

Read Fred online at www.highlandsinfo.com, scroll down, click on News.
Frustration at McDonalds

There are nicely paved roads in Banner Elk, N.C., cable TV, and cell phone service. If you’re lucky and have Verizon. Rural electrification, broadcasting, and an expanded highway system are generally accepted as responsible for the integration of Southern Appalachia into the United States. Inward migration has hastened the process in recent years. Banner Elk has its share of wealthy retirees and weekend residents.

It boasts attorneys who practice in Miami, and whose families live there full time. It has a Lowe’s and a Subway, expensive Italian restaurants and gated communities.

If you are ever visiting in Banner Elk, beware of McDonalds. Our friends, weekend residents of nearby Beech Mountain, warned us that the local Mickey D is the slowest in the world. I had never heard of a slow McDonalds and said so. Bull has taken up ski racing, so we’re making frequent trips to the area. We stayed with those friends last weekend. Sunday’s race was scheduled for Appalachian Ski Mountain. Our friends, whose daughter also races, suggested that we convey to the race and stop at McDonalds for breakfast. It struck me as odd that they would suggest a slow restaurant when we were running late. McDonalds is known for speed and consistency, if not for excellence or healthy fare. I suspected that our friends were exaggerating, and said as much to Lizzie.

We followed our friends to the drive-through lane, which seemed risky. We waited for what seemed eternity while they placed their order. I glanced in my rear view mirror. I didn’t want to get boxed in like Sonny at the toll booth in the Godfather. We crawled to the ordering station. “Welcome to McDonalds. May I take your order?” the faceless voice asked.

“Wait a minute,” she replied. “What was your total?” “$9.47.” I realized that, for her, multi-tasking was limited to breathing and any other single activity. She was unable, or unwilling, to take my money and give me change while saying, “Welcome to McDonalds. May I take your order?”, to the guy who had me boxed in.

After laboriously searching out each entry on her touch screen for that order, she accepted my $9.47 total and sent me the milkshake machine, but I didn’t even attempt to open it. I knew they had a lot of trouble with the milk shake machine, but I didn’t even know that orange juice came out of a machine. At Chick-fil-A, it comes in a tiny milk carton that says Tropicana on the side.

I asked for a refund, realizing as I did that this stubbornness might cause Bull to miss his race. The refund process went more smoothly than I had expected. Our order was mostly correct. They threw in an extra bacon egg and cheese biscuit, a free super size! We didn’t tell. We felt that our patience should be rewarded.


“What, what,” the faceless voice asked.

“McGriddle, bacon and cheese only, sausage biscuit, bacon egg and cheese biscuit, small coffee, orange juice and small diet coke, no ice,” I answered.

“What, what,” the faceless voice asked.

Dr. Henry Salzarulo
Feedback is encouraged.
email: hsalzarulo@aol.com
Last week I responded to a letter-to-the-editor by Waylon Chastain questioning the premises of my “Oneness” philosophy and I’m continuing the discussion this week. Mr. Chastain suggested the use of “origin,” meaning, morality, and destiny” as a tool to analyze a theology. I expanded on my philosophy and looked at “origin” last week and I’ll address the other three points now, again comparing Oneness philosophy to mainstream Christianity.

Meaning. What is the “meaning” of life? Mr. Chastain agrees with us that meaning requires purpose, so what is the purpose of life? I would think for a Christian the answer is to be “saved,” to develop a personal relationship with God/Jesus and go to heaven.

In Oneness philosophy the purpose of life is the experience of life, the experience of I AM. The purpose of life is for the Immortal and Infinite to experience what it is to be mortal and finite: to live, to face death, to know childhood energy and old-age wisdom, to love, to hate, to win, to lose, to dream, to desire, to create, to experience the underlying Unity of it all.

Morality. There are two levels of morality to discuss. First is the relationship of God and the universe. Christians believe that these two spheres are fundamentally distinct and separate in nature. They believe God created a world of creatures and set them loose with free will, but after a long time God decided the humans needed some help so he sent “His Son” to save them. I could write a whole article on this issue of morality alone, but I’ll only say this: What about all those people who have lived and died before Jesus was born, who from no fault of their own are condemned to everlasting torment? How could this be the work of a moral God, much less a God of love?

In Oneness philosophy, there is no distinction between God and the universe. They are inseparable. God is doing all of this to God’s self. The question of morality simply doesn’t apply.

The other meaning of “morality” concerns human behavior, like serial killing or pedophilia, and whether a philosophy helps inspire better behavior. Christians believe that God uses the carrot and stick of heaven and hell to enforce moral behavior (though the underlying “bad” desires are often never addressed and simmer below the surface to sometimes erupt embarrassingly, as Ted Haggard recently illustrated). Mr. Chastain seems to believe that without a divine system of deterrence no one (or at least not very many) will choose to be good.

In Oneness philosophy morality is not based on a future judgment but on the realization that Everything is interconnected and part of the One, so if I hurt anything I am really hurting myself.

There is an interesting article on morality in the Jan. 13, 2008 New York Times, “The Moral Instinct,” by Stephen Pinker, which asserts that one of the foundations of moral reasoning is the recognition that morality has to embrace a universal stance. That is, if it is bad for you to hurt me, it is also bad for me to hurt you. Mr. Pinker writes, “The core of this idea — the interchangeability of perspectives — keeps reappearing in history’s best-thought-through moral philosophies, including the Golden Rule (itself discovered many times); Spinoza’s Viewpoint of Eternity; the Social Contract of Hobbes; Rousseau and Locke’s Categorical Imperatives; and Rawls’s Veil of Ignorance. It also underlies Peter Singer’s theory of the Expanding Circle — the optimistic proposal that our moral sense, though shaped by evolution to overvalue self, kin and clan, can propel us on a path of moral progress, as our reasoning forces us to generalize it to larger and larger circles of sentient beings.” I do unto others as I would have them do unto myself because there is no other, there is only the One Self.

There is nothing in Oneness philosophy that says people who commit crimes should not be put in jail; they are just not condemned as evil. Mr. Chastain wonders how the lack of condemnation will comfort, for example, a raped woman. Personally I don’t understand how condemnation comforts. In my experience, as long as I am angry at someone who has done something “wrong” to me — as long as I am condemning them — I continue to suffer. Only when I step outside myself and find forgiveness and compassion for the one who is “wronged” can I find true relief.

From the point of view of Oneness philosophy the staggeringly vast experience of what it is to be alive encompasses the entire spectrum from utter horror and profound suffering to complete bliss. Within that spectrum some people are violently deranged and do unspeakable things but beneath the illusion there is only God doing this to God’s self. All suffering disappears in the understanding that underneath it all there is only God.

Destiny. What is the destiny of the universe?

Christians see a place of utter changelessness forever. Whether it’s heaven or hell, you’ll be the same you in the same place for all of time. Think about it — it doesn’t sound like a lot of fun to me.

Mr. Chastain misrepresented what The Game of God says about the destiny of the universe. The ultimate destiny of the universe as presented in The Game of God is complete and total reunion of All with All. However, in Oneness philosophy there is no reunion because there was never any separation. There is no destiny, there is just I AM. The whole point (see purpose, above) is experience.

Mr. Chastain seems to think the idea that the universe is for experience is a horrible concept because it means a “learning exercise without end.” I for one would rather have a perpetually growing and expanding awareness than a static eternity spent in an unchanging heaven.

Katie Brugger
k-brugger@hotmail.com

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Britney, Hillary, and redemption

Every time there’s another story about Britney Spears’ infantile, self-destructive behavior, I condemn the American press for covering that subject like a horse blanket. And I watch as the national I.Q. drops two points in a day because the Britney story is everywhere, on all channels. But the performances of Hillary Clinton on the campaign trail and in presidential “debates” in Iowa and New Hampshire demonstrate parallels between Britney and Hillary. The comparisons are in favor of the singer, not the lecturer.

The most incredible thing that Hillary has said, in front of God and everybody, is this, “I have been the most investigated, and as it turns out, the most innocent” of all the candidates. There is the little problem that innocent, like unique, is an absolute adjective. It is, or it isn’t. It does not have degrees.

But the larger point, and one I think the American people in the form of the voters of Iowa and New Hampshire understand, is that avoiding trial and conviction are NOT the same as being innocent. There is such a thing as a would-be defendant who “beats the rap.” He’s guilty, but he got away with it.

More than a majority of the voters in those first two states have concluded that Hillary Clinton is dishonest, about things both personal and political. She says she offers “experience” yet she and her husband Bill, sit on the documents that describe her wife-of-the-President years.

I go further than that, and in the movie/DVD entitled “Hillary Uncensored” I call Hillary a criminal. I’ve invited her lawyers to sue me if they think my characterization of her is wrong in any way. Be that as it may, where’s the parallel between Britney and Hillary?

Skipping the chapter and verse, suffice to say that I’ve had alcoholics in my family. One successfully fought the demon, and stayed sober for sixty years. One succumbed to the demon, and died alone of his disease.

Two things are necessary to get an alcoholic out of his pattern of destruction. One is that he has to hit bottom, and realize that he is on a suicidal path. The other, closely related necessity is that the people close to him have to band together and tell the truth, and stand ready to help the alcoholic climb out of his metaphysical grave.

Britney Spears, and the few people around her who are friends rather than cash-and-carry enablers, may have reached that point. She’s young. She hasn’t destroyed her health, yet. With some self-perception and a lot of help, Britney can turn things around, and have a decent and sober life ahead.

What about Hillary Clinton? Her prospects are not as bright.

Hillary is as addicted to money and power as Britney is to her pharmaceuticals of choice. Hillary’s attitude toward donors is, if the body’s warm and the check is good, he’s on the list. Look at the “experience” she has in this department. The difference between Moktar Riady and Norman Hsu is that the first one gave a million dollars in illegal money to Bill, whereas the second gave a million dollars in illegal money to Hillary.

There are minor differences between Riady and Hsu. For instance, it seems likely that the ill-gotten donations from Riady came in part from the Communist government of China through the Lippo Group. That adds another felony to the list of (unpunished) crimes. That wrinkle does not, apparently, apply to Hsu.

Next, look at the people around Hillary. Is there a single one who is not a pilot fish to her shark? Is there a single one who isn’t feeding off the scraps of power that fall to the side as she swims the political waters? And if not, who does she have around her who would tell her the brutal truth when it is time for her to change her course and save her life?

That’s why I conclude that there is at least a chance that Britney will be redeemed, and will have a worthy life. On the other hand, I conclude that Hillary cannot be redeemed. Therefore, for the sake of the nation, she needs to be permanently defeated. Perhaps her defeat tomorrow in New Hampshire will suffice. If not, more of the same needs to be applied in other states.

If the alcoholic cannot be saved, all that’s left is trying to save others from the effects of the alcoholic. That sad conclusion also applies in politics.

About the Author: John Armor practiced in the US Supreme Court for 33 years. John_Armor@aya.yale.edu. He lives in the 11th District of North Carolina.

Michelle Mead & John Armor
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Allegations of a dangerous and faulty electric pole plant coupled with McGavran Engineering’s refusing to stick to its contract had some commissioners rethinking their arrangement with the company. “We don’t feel there is anything dangerous in our system or any chance of a fatality as they claimed,” said Town Administrator Richard Betz at Wednesday’s Public Works Committee meeting. On top of that, Betz said McGavran doesn’t want to continue the terms of its contract — to number the poles, audit the number of attachments and precisely measure the violations. “They are only saying what’s out of compliance but without numbering or measuring just eyeballing.”

Furthermore, with a tighter pole attachment ordinance in the works, the company’s contractual expertise isn’t needed — the ordinance is all the town needs to make attachees come into compliance concerning clearance violations.

After McGavran presented its photo and verbal account of a potentially dangerous plant last week, the town’s GIS Technician, Matt Shuler, used the photo booklet McGavran provided to locate poles that supposedly pose physical threats to citizens. “I went to the spot and couldn’t find it,” said Shuler. “There’s a second line that goes through the woods, one pole to another, but the lines are so high I couldn’t touch them. If I can jump and touch a line, it’s at the minimum height and this one was so high I couldn’t jump and touch it.”

Town Engineer Lamar Nix took particular offense. “I’m not aware of anything in our system that’s hazardous,” he said. “This is the second line that goes through the woods, one pole to another, but the lines are so high I couldn’t touch them. If I can jump and touch a line, it’s at the minimum height and this one was so high I couldn’t jump and touch it.”

Town Engineer Lamar Nix took particular offense. “I’m not aware of anything in our system that’s hazardous,” he said. “Of course there is an electric hazard on every pole — there always is when you’re dealing with other attachments. We have clearance issues and that’s what we’re trying to work on but I’m dumbfounded by what McGavran’s saying. They’re just blowing smoke in my opinion.”

He said his crew has been working the town’s electric pole plant for 12-13 years and they have never encountered a potentially fatal situation anywhere.

At the Jan. 9 Town Board meeting, McGavran requested its contract be altered, but at the January 16 Town Board meeting, the board nixed the request.

“The Public Works Committee recommends that you go forward with the contract as written and there is no need to alter it,” said Commissioner Hank Ross.

Mayor Don Mullin asked Ted McGavran if he was willing to do that. McGavran said he was not.

That means instead of “eyeballing” violations, exact measurements will be taken and a complete audit will be made of each pole in the plant.

“They are obligated to capture a great deal of data on each pole,” said Betz. In a “gentleman’s agreement” Nix said McGavran agreed to tag the poles with a number. Wednesday night, McGavran said that wasn’t in the contract.

Betz said numbering is in the contract and if McGavran paints a number on the pole, the town can go back and nail a tag onto the pole.

Wednesday night, Bill Staley, of Northland Cable, told the board that the company is committed to working with the town on pole attachment and safety issues. He also suggested the town form a Utility Committee comprised of representatives from the town and all the attachees. “We need to work out the issues and consider long-term planning,” he said. “The closer we work together, the better it will be.”

The amended pole attachment ordinance will be finalized at the Feb. 6 Town Board meeting.

**... ANTIQUE continued from page 1**

show didn’t go well. “We actually lost money,” said Playhouse board member Joanna Baumrucker. Two years ago, when the show was in the Civic Center, the Playhouse pocketed a much needed $8,000–$9,000, plus the town received a donation of $3,500.

Bryant said a polling of 66 businesses in town following the show two years ago showed 83 saying the show was a boost for business; one said it didn’t help and two others said it didn’t matter.

Sabrina Hawkins, owner of the Highlands Inn and the Hampton Inn, said she provided accommodations for the antique vendors and missed out on the $12,000 she could have made.

“I sold 83 nights during the show in 2006. That was about $12,000, which is room occupancy tax money, too,” she said.

Mayor Don Mullin said there are a number of businesses in town that aren’t going to make it and the board should do all it can to make sure people come to Highlands.

We’re in an economic downtown with 10 businesses going out of business due to a poor year.”

John Shearl, who was in the audience, said it’s a “win-win” situation. “What’s the negative issue?”

Bob Kieltyka, director of the Chamber of Commerce, said having the antique show in Sapphire Valley was significant to the community. “There is strong support for this from the business community,” he said.

Commissioner Dennis DeWolf said having the show elsewhere last year provided proof of the financial impact it has on the community.

“Just another afternoon with the fans,” said John Shearl, who was in the audience. “I sold 83 nights during the show in 2006. That was about $12,000, which is room occupancy tax money, too,” he said.

Mayor Don Mullin said there are a number of businesses in town that aren’t going to make it and the board should do all it can to make sure people come to Highlands.

**... REC AGREEMENT continued from page 1**

The amended pole attachment ordinance will be finalized at the Feb. 6 Town Board meeting.

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“The fact that it’s not a commercial entity competing but rather complementing what’s going on I think it’s a good thing he said. “It’s obvious people who come here spend more than just time going to the function.”

Recreation Director Selwyn Chalker verified that nothing at the Rec Park will be disrupted.

**Coach’s Corner**

Sing with me!

One of the things that I have been doing recent is to supplement my income has been to officiate games down at the local recreation department. It’s something to do after time, and I figured it would be pretty easy since I have many fond memories of Saturday mornings down at the Rec Center in Franklin (and that horrid rubber floor, and the referee who wore blue jeans, and Lee Scougg’s eraser top haircut… but I digress).

Anyway, I discovered something I already knew, mainly from my own coaching experience. I came to the conclusion that everyone hates officials and it’s a blinding, irrational hatred (much like my own hatred for officials, but that is another story).

It is from this experience that I wrote a little song about some of my own officialing endeavors. The tune is to the Ballad of Jed Clampett.

Come and listen to a story about a man named Jed.

He was hollerin at me something really harsh and rude, “Just another afternoon with the fans hostility”

“He was hollerin at me something really harsh and rude, “Just another afternoon with the fans hostility”

Everybody hates referees, that’s what I’ve learned now, Please folks Y’all be nice now, ya hear?"
The long battle with the Riverwalk developers is over. Much to our disappointment in September Judge Beecher Gray would not support our fine of $400,000 for the worst erosion problem we have ever seen in Highlands, and the Town Board had to decide whether to appeal or not.

We had acted with small fines a little over a year ago initially but were ignored. We had a disaster on our hands in spite of attempts to remedy the situation. With the mountain washing away into the Cullasaja River and on into Mirror Lake and beyond it was necessary for the town to make a bold step and levy a very large fine. That is what got their attention. The state stepped in and demanded correction of some of the damage and outside engineers were called in to evaluate the situation and offer advice. From that point on the situation began to improve and it now looks good.

Would we do it any differently the next time? You’re darned right we would. We have learned a lot the hard way, and I can assure the public that this will never happen again. The Town Board had the choice as to whether to appeal the judge’s decision or not. In view of the fact that the town would get none of any money from this . . . it would go to the state . . . and the cost of continuing the process would not only be very expensive but the chance of winning was 50-50 at best, we decided to go no further. It would be a waste of taxpayers’ money. We could possibly have negotiated a much smaller fine but that would hardly pay for the legal fees and the time necessary to achieve this.

We achieved our goal of straightening a horrible situation out eventually and learned a great deal on how we will handle a similar situation in the future. The Riverwalk development looks good now and we can move on with appropriate building in that area with little further impact on the river or the community. We expect the Riverwalk developers to become good stewards of the land and contribute to the further development of Highlands in positive ways. One way would be a significant donation from Riverwalk to either the Land Trust or the Mirror Lake Association, both non-profits who work on preserving and protecting our mountains.

Last week at the town board meeting we also heard from McGavran Engineering on the progress of the utility pole study. This process has been much slower than we had anticipated but we are learning from it. There are some pole violations which need immediate attention. That they are “life-threatening” as reported by McGavran is questionable but they still need to be corrected and will. That is the purpose of the study and our public works and GIS departments are working very closely with the McGavran group to insure the public that we have a safe and well functioning system that is fully paid for by the users of these poles.

We were glad to see the new county manager, Mr. Jack Horton, visit Town Hall this past week to introduce himself and get to know us a little better. It appears that our recreation money will soon be forthcoming. It bodes well for future county and town relationships as we enter this new era with a new manager. We, too, look for better cooperation with the county as members of the town board will be making more trips to the County Commissioners meetings in the future. Let us hope we can begin to solve some of our mutual problems with trust and cooperation.

Mayor Don Mullen
County employees commended for years of service

At the Monday, Jan. 14, Macon County Commission meeting, the board presented employees who have worked for the county 10, 15, 20, 25 and 30 years with plaques and words of appreciation. Commended for 10 years of service were David Enloe, Stacey Jenkins, Kathy Kuhlman, Delena Ruby, Paul Ramey, Robert Randall, Robert Bruner, Todd Seagle and Michelle Tal lent. Commissioner Ronnie Beale presented the awards.

We, durned near. According to the American Thinker, California has proposed legislation that would require “every new home and every change to existing homes’ central heating and air conditioning systems to be fitted with a "programmable communicating thermostat" beginning next year following the issuance of the revision. Each PCT will be fitted with a non-removable FM receiver that will allow the power authorities to increase your air-conditioning setpoint or decrease your heater temperature setpoint to any value they choose.

In other words, the temperature of your home will no longer be yours to control. Your desires and needs can and will be overridden by the state of California through its public and private utility organizations." If they can do it there, it can be done here.

If that isn’t enough intrusion into your life to suit you, how about the Federal Government controlling your rain gutters. WHAT! Let me make you familiar with H. R. 2421. From Congresspedia, “The measure amends the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to clarify the jurisdiction to unambiguously extend all waters in the U. S., it replaces the existing term ‘navigable waters’ with ‘waters of the United States,’ which means ‘all waters subject to the ebb and flow of the tides, the territorial seas, and all interstate and intrastate waters and their tributaries, including lakes, rivers, streams (including intermittent streams), mudflats, sandflats, wetlands, sloughs, prairie potholes, wet meadows, playa lakes (?), natural ponds and all impoundments of the foregoing, to the fullest extent that these waters, or activities affecting these waters, are subject to the legislative power of Congress under the Constitution.’”

Enough of Big Brother already. Come to think of it, this is about BB in a way. Regarding President Bush’s trip to the Middle East in an effort to achieve world peace in his political lifetime, a few weeks ago we wrote that the Annapolis peace summit would unravel in short order, and it has, even sooner than we thought. I wish Bush Godspeed in his efforts but it isn’t going to happen in any lasting way.

From the beginning of recorded history to prophecy of the end times, these folks just ain’t going to get along.
NC waters threatened by move in Rabun County at old FOTL plant

By Sally Hansen
Reporter

Little Tennessee Watershed Association (LTWA) executive director Jenny Sanders spoke at January’s “Lunch with the League” meeting last Thursday about a potential problem in Rabun County, GA, that could affect the water quality of Macon County.

With the ongoing drought in the southeast, Sanders said it is extremely important that legislators move to protect North Carolina’s water resources.

There has been concern about what would become of the old Rabun Mill plant since Rabun County’s Fruit of the Loom (FOTL) plant was put up for sale in July of 2006. Gibbs International bought the facility at auction and then sold the power plant at the facility to Multitrade Rabun Gap, LLC, last fall.

The water intake and wastewater treatment capacity of the plant were subsequently purchased by the Rabun County government in December of 2007.

The FOTL plant had an industrial water intake permit of 3.1 million gallons a day and a 2.5 million gallon a day discharge permit. The difference was lost to evaporation and steam. The plant took in water from the Little Tennessee Watershed and used it in its industrial operations, and then after treatment the remaining water was returned to the river.

Now the LTWA is concerned that the existing permit will simply be transferred to the new owners, which would allow them to continue using up to 3.1 million gallons of water a day.

While it is uncertain what Rabun County will do with the plant, wastewater treatment has been discussed. Use of the FOTL plant would be good for the economy since it would create more jobs, but it is important to note that the plant was cited for violations concerning the water intake and discharge for the five of the last 12 quarters that it was in operation.

Currently, the North Carolina Division of Water Quality has listed the portion of the Little Tennessee River that is near the old FOTL plant as impaired, which means that it is not meeting its designated use as a proper habitat for several species that live there.

According to Sanders, in 2003 scientists from Virginia Tech and the University of Georgia found highly elevated levels of chlorine and sodium in the river starting just beyond plant and continuing for up to 30 km downstream.

With larger cities like Atlanta experiencing water shortages due to the drought, the concern of interbasin transfers has also prompted the LTWA to investigate proposed uses for the old FOTL plant.

According to Sanders, interbasin transfer is the “process of permanently removing water from one river basin and moving it to another river basin.” This can be problematic for both the receiving river basin and the losing river basin not only because of the volume of water being lost or increased, but also due to potential contaminants or other non-indigenous substances being introduced into a fragile habitat.

“If we move water from one area to another without monitoring it, we don’t know what effects it will have,” Sanders said. “Interbasin transfers are a problem even when they help solve potential crises like Atlanta running out of water.”

Sanders said that there are 3.5 million gallons a day available to citizens in Rabun County. The county currently uses 1.5 million gallons a day, and 50% of this total is lost to leaking distribution pipes.

The LTWA is concerned that any excess water could be sold to communities like Atlanta who are experiencing water shortages. The LTWA has requested that the Georgia Environmental Protection Division not allow interbasin transfers, but Sanders said that there is already a transfer from the city of Clayton to provide water to the people in Rabun Gap.

This water comes from the Chattooga River Basin and is treated in Dillard and discharged into the Little Tennessee River. “Interbasin transfers happen all the time, and I don’t know of any laws in Georgia that prohibit them,” Sanders said.

North Carolina does have some interbasin transfer laws, but they only regulate the transfer of large amounts of water. Smaller rivers and interbasin transfers concerning them are not protected by this legislation, and Sanders said: “It would be great if the permit system would apply to all interbasin transfers.” She said that Tennessee has a similar law, and it has proven to be successful.

As far as the FOTL plant is concerned, the LTWA has requested that a new permit be issued based on the new industry that will come into the plant, instead of simply transferring the old permits to the new owners. While this is a longer and more expensive process, it is essential in monitoring water quality, water quantity, habitat integrity, and economic development.

Sanders also said that Habersham County had been approached by Atlanta about purchasing surplus water, and a pipeline is being planned to send water south to Atlanta. “Habersham County is one county away from Rabun,” Sanders said.

To protect North Carolina’s water quality and ecosystems, the LTWA has contacted several organizations, including the US Environmental Protection Agency, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the Tennessee Valley Authority, and the NC Division of Water Quality to keep them informed and ask them to help.

“We have also sent information to our legislators,” said Sanders. “We have also sent information to our legislators,” said Sanders. “We have also sent information to our legislators.”

The Stop I-3 Coalition reaffirms position

By Sally Hansen
Reporter

The Stop I-3 Coalition today reaffirmed its firm opposition to a new interstate highway from Savannah, Georgia, to Oak Ridge, Tennessee, “or any similar highway.”

The coalition’s board reaffirmed its stand in reaction to news reports that Rep. Paul Broun was considering a technical correction to legislative language, suggesting that one possible route for the controversial highway might go through Green ville or Clinton, S.C., on its way from Augusta, Georgia, to its endpoint.

“With or without the technical correction, we are opposed to this interstate which we believe is unnecessary and unneeded,” said Holly Demuth, the coalition’s executive director.

Broun, who won a close election to replace the late Rep. Charlie Norwood, previously had promised to sponsor legislation that would fund the federal study of I-3.

“A clear majority of Georgia residents view this unnecessary highway as fiscally irresponsible, and environmentally disastrous,” concluded Lucy Bartlett, the coalition’s president. For further details, see www.stopI-3.org.
In his inaugural address, President John F. Kennedy told the nation, “Ask not what your country can do for you – ask what you can do for your country.” Nearly 50 years later, residents of the Highlands-Cashiers area still live by those words. Volunteerism continues to grow in Western North Carolina, as exemplified by the many fine organizations that lend a hand to the needy. Indeed, in small communities that receive little government help, the people have always found that they must help each other; in doing so, they help themselves.

The Community Care Clinic (CCC) provides free medical care to those who cannot otherwise afford it. Located at 52 Aunt Dora Drive in Highlands, the Clinic is open each Thursday night from 5-9 p.m. and is staffed by volunteer doctors, nurses, and support staff. Appointments can be made by calling 526-1991, but they are not required. The Clinic stays open until all patients are seen.

In addition to the doctors and nurses who staff the clinic, two volunteers per week are needed on the front desk to register patients, check eligibility, and put people at ease. Sally Blank of Sapphire, the volunteer coordinator of the non-professionals at CCC, says of this job, “These volunteers need to be people oriented. We will train them in all applicable topics affecting their volunteer work.”

Two of the special people who do this work are Don and Betty Fisher. Originally from this area, the Fishers lived elsewhere for 40 years before returning to Highlands six years ago. They now live near the Clinic on property that once belonged to Betty’s great grandfather, Lyman Zachary.

The reason for their volunteering is unique – the clinic is located on Betty’s family’s old homestead. The hours they spend there each week are in memory of her grandmother, who was known to all as “Aunt Dora.” Aunt Dora was well regarded as a “true care giver,” a compassionate soul who would walk miles to come to the aid of a sick friend. Don and Betty honor her memory by following her example. How fitting that a clinic providing medical care for those in need should be located on a street that bears the name “Aunt Dora Drive!”

The Clinic can always use more volunteers, including translators. If you are interested in volunteering for this special place or would like more information, please call Jerry Hermanson, Director, 526-1991.

CPR courses at MC Health Center

Register and pre-pay before Feb. 5

An American Red Cross Adult CPR with AED and Infant/Child CPR course will be sponsored by the Macon County Public Health Center.

The course will be held on Thursday, February 7th from 8:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. at the Macon County Public Health Center at 1830 Lakeside Drive.

Participants must pre-register and pre-pay at the Macon County Public Health Center before Tuesday, February 5.

For more information, please call Jennifer at 349-2439.
... LANDFILL continued from page 1

Tubing, sledding, skiing...it's all good

Whether man-made or nature-sent, the slopes in Highlands and Cashiers are ready for various snow sports.

Photo by Jim Lewicki

a 60-day turnaround. “The LGC meets the first Tuesday of each month, so we’re cutting it close,” said Finance Director Evelyn Southard.

The snag came when the county requested Highlands to pay for the municipal solid waste transfer station – since Highlands is the only entity who needs and uses it. Initially, the Town Board didn’t want to pay to build the transfer station, but now the board is open to negotiation and has actually budgeted $475,000.

The big question is how much it will cost the county and how much it would cost the town to haul municipal waste down the mountain to the Franklin landfill – the only place anything can now be dumped whether it’s construction debris or household garbage. That’s where the negotiation will come in.

The county has always housed household garbage from the convenience centers to the landfill in Franklin, but hauling the town’s garbage – the garbage it picks up in its garbage trucks – down the mountain is a new component to the scenario.

Transfer costs are a lot of the department’s operating costs,” said Stahl. “We pay J&B Disposal $150 a pull now, but we will be require 2 ½ times more pulls than normal.”

Stahl said it’s likely his department – a self-sufficient enterprise fund – will seek a transfer fee to cover the cost of transferring garbage down the mountain. “We’ll have to add the fee on top of the tipping fee of users,” he said. “You’ll have to pay to get waste to the disposal site, or users can take it down the mountain to Franklin. This department has no access to ad valorem tax money. Tipping fees and selling recyclables is the only way to generate revenue.”

Stahl says the county hasn’t been charging tipping fees on household waste even though it’s 60% of his department’s waste volume.

But everything is changing. The state has mandated changes at the landfill on Rich Gap at a time when development and growth in general is on the rise.

“Due to the increase in traffic in Highlands due to growth, we need a second set of scales for outbound traffic at the site and we need to improve the convenience centers,” said Stahl. “Our costs are going to go up.”

The state recently added a $2 tipping fee increase per ton which will have to be passed on to the consumer.

Stahl asked the commission to approve the project and award the contract to the lowest bidder contingent upon LGC financing and signing of the inter-local agreement between Macon County and Highlands.

“That way we can move forward without finalizing the project,” he said. Commissioners agreed.

The lowest of six bidders was Perry Bartsch Jr. Construction at $778,287.96. The highest bidder was Stillwell Enterprises of Sylva for $1,194,955.

Stahl said it may cost Highlands less than anticipated perhaps between $400,000 and $425,000.

“Constructing the MSW transfer station is beneficial to Highlands when you consider fuel costs,” said Stahl. “We will continue to pick up household waste down the mountain. The difference will be the cost of transporting the community’s waste – both the town’s and the C&S down the mountain.”

Stahl said prices will go up with tipping and transfer fee costs – which represent the department’s operating costs — divided between everyone’s tonnage.

Commission Chairman Charlie Leath- erman said if the county doesn’t move on this now, it will find itself in a bad situation. “Prices are just going to go up,” he said.

Stahl said he’s sure an agreement can be reached to satisfy both entities. “We need to decide what will satisfy both sides. The town has requested off-hour usage, and I don’t see a problem with that. We need to agree to operate the transfer stations for a number of years and the town needs to agree to bring its trash for a number of years. There are a number of items that will satisfy both parties with mutually beneficial status,” he said.

The board hopes to hammer out an inter-local agreement with Highlands at a work session January 27 at 2 p.m. in the boardroom at the county courthouse.

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The painful human condition that is ‘divorce’

You may notice that the picture included with this column is different from the norm. Incuded in the picture is my daughter, Nicole. I was granted primary custody of Nicole today. The experience is bittersweet, with joy and sorrow bumping into one another. I want to share with you a few words of advice about divorce and custody issues.

Divorce is so prevalent in our society today, but it is seldom discussed. When divorce is the topic of conversation, it is rarely discussed in a meaningful and honest way. The brunt of many jokes, not to mention great fodder for country music hits—such as Tammy Wynette’s memorable “D-I-V-O-R-C-E” and George Strait’s “All My Ex’s Live in Texas”— divorce is treated almost as a comical malady.

As someone who has gone through a divorce, I can assure you that it is no joke at all. It puts spouses through a crucible in which there are no real winners. When children are involved, it is a heart-breaking, gut-wrenching ordeal. The first time I saw the movie “Bye Bye Love,” I enjoyed it for its comedic value. Witnessing three men: Donny (Paul Reiser), Dave (Matthew Modine), and Vic (Randall Quaid) deal with the circumstances of joint custody and trying to start life over again was somewhat humorous. That was back in 1995... before my divorce. The movie was on television recently and I couldn’t watch more than thirty minutes of it. Shuttling children back-and-forth for weekend visitation is anything but funny to me.

The divorce rate for Christians is roughly the same as it is for the general population. You can do some research and find some poll that refutes this, but based on what I see and observe as a pastor, I’d have to agree that Christians divorce at about the same rate as non-Christians. And when it comes to pastors, there are even some studies floating around that state that Christian ministers experience divorce at nearly the same rate as all Christians.
Red Cross needs 3 blood types now

Two weeks into the new year, the American Red Cross faces a severe shortage of several blood types. Locally, supplies of type O negative, B negative and A negative blood are at less than a day’s supply despite repeated calls to donors to give blood over the past month.

The Red Cross is asking blood donors to donate immediately to prevent supply levels from dropping even further in the coming days and weeks.

“It is important to note that coming off of a major holiday period, the need for blood never takes a holiday,” says Robert F. Fechner, chief executive officer of the American Red Cross Carolinas Blood Services Region. “In addition to the holiday challenges, during the winter, donations drop and the supply of blood often dips to dangerously low levels.”

While all blood types are needed, the low supply of type O blood is of particular concern. Type O is the most commonly used blood type. O negative blood can be used for all patients, but it is often essential to the treatment of trauma patients, newborns and women who are pregnant.

Angel Medical Center is sponsoring an American Red Cross blood drive on Friday, January 18 from 10:30 am to 3 p.m. The hospital is located at 120 Riverview Street in Franklin, NC. Please call 369-4166 for more information or to schedule an appointment.

Donors are asked to visit www.redcrossblood.org or call 1-800-GIVE-LIFE (448-3543). The Carolinas Blood Services Region needs 1,600 blood donations a day in order to adequately supply the 103 hospitals it serves. Donors must be age 17 or older and weigh at least 110 pounds.

RBC Centura sponsors ‘Tribute to teachers’

One of the many things that are GIANT to RBC Centura is a commitment to leadership and overall excellence. That’s why it is honoring leaders in the community that do GIANT things every day. Teachers — those outstanding individuals dedicated to enriching students and supplying them with the tools to help build a better future for all of us.

Anyone can nominate a deserving teacher from the Highlands community by clicking on the “pencil” on the homepage of the RBC Centura website. Several years ago Highlands School Great Beginnings teacher Jane Chalker won $500 classroom cash for her class. “I would love to see a deserving Highlands teacher win again,” said Sue Gorski, manager of the Highlands RBC Centura bank.

Nominate an elementary or middle school teacher in your community by telling why your teacher (or your children’s teacher) is a leader in the classroom and in the community. RBC Centura wants to reward these teachers for their outstanding leadership. RBC Centura teams in the Southeast region will determine a total of 35 winners based on these nominations for community contribution with demonstrated commitment to educational excellence and enrichment.

The nomination period is Dec. 1, 2007 through March 16, 2008 and each winner will be awarded $500 “Classroom Cash” to be used on classroom needs, such as teacher programs, supplies and enrichment. At the conclusion of the program, RBC Centura’s website will salute and congratulate the winning teachers.

Click www.rcbcentura.com for more information and to make a nomination to the “Tribute To Teachers” program.

Macon County health services offered at Zachary Park on Buck Creek Road

The Macon County Public Health Center provides services for Highlands at the Buck Creek Road clinic.

Services are by appointment and include immunizations, WIC certifications, lab tests, family planning visits, and routine physicals.

Call 349-2081 for an appointment or for more information.

... WATERS continued from page 11
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**HELP WANTED**

**THE LITERACY COUNCIL OF HIGHLANDS** is seeking an Assistant Director to help with all Council activities including program direction, office management and grant writing. Applicant must have both written and oral Spanish knowledge and be available Monday-Thursday from 11 a.m. until 7 p.m. Please call Breta at 526-9938, ext 290, for more information.

**CHESTNUT HILL OF HIGHLANDS** is seeking a courtesy officer. Benefits, pre-employment drug screening required. Call Mandy Talley at 828-526-1301 or apply online at www.hchospital.org.

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**FOR RENT**


3 BEDROOM-2 BATH APARTMENT on Main Street. 526-0388.

MAIN ST APT - available now spacious 1/1 with full kitchen, furnished, central heat/air, small pets OK, $700 mo. 1st/last+ $350 deposit 
526-3383


COTTAGE FOR RENT - 1BR, 1BA in town @ Chestnut Cottages. Private, screen porch, Heat/Ac, FP, extra sleeping loft, furnished or unfurnished. 6 month lease - $800. monthly plus utilities. Call 526-1684.

**VACATION RENTAL**

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

CUTE 3 BED/2 BATH Mirror lake home $1,350-$1,500 + utilities a month, less than mile from Main Street. Call 770-577-5692.

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

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

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**REAL ESTATE FOR SALE**

LOT FOR SALE - 90 acre, drive graded, 2 bed septic approved, Shared well, off Turtle Pond and Dendy Orchard Road, 4 miles from center of town $39,000. Call Ty at 527-9261.

SCALY MOUNTAIN - Building lots, views, creeks, wooded. 2-5 acres, start at $150,000 by owner, owner financing available. (404) 851-0272 or gonzobean@aol.com.

LOTS FOR SALE IN SHELBY PLACE, $110,000 each. Call 526-286-2874.

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

TENNILLE, CENTRAL GEORGIA - 58.71 acres. 5 BR/3.5 BA, brick home, 7-board fence, barn, pecan orchard, 11 acre lake. $799,000. Call: 478-552-6677 or 678-313-5090. www.landofgeorgia.com

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

BUCK CREEK - 1600 sq ft. finished basement, creek front. Handicapped accessible wheelchair. 3 BR 2 large BA.$329,000. 828-524-6038

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BEAUTIFUL RV/PARK MODEL LOT — Falls View Resort. Dillard, GA. $72,000 706-746-0002

LOT — COWEE RIDGE ROAD, Highlands (off Hwy. 4). 6,500 ft elevation. Great views. Two acres. Southern exposure. 4 bedroom septic installed, community water, paved road, gated community. $300,000 Firm. Call 748-741-8818, FSBO.

RV LOT — North Carolina Mountains: At Lake Toxaway Lot and 1/2 Beautifully Landscaped with Stone Work and Plantings Yearly Fees $350. $120,000. 863-651-1411


CREEK IS FREE! — With the purchase of one or both of these wooded parcels, just off Highway 28 in the NE Georgia mountains within 15 minutes of Highlands. 1.09 acres and/or 1.10 acres on a county-maintained road. Serious inquiries only. Please call 864-710-4577 for information.

**IN TOWN** — 3 bedroom, 2 bath, stream, large level yard. Easy walk to Main Street. $450,000, by owner. Call 828-229-6123. 12/21

**HOUSE FOR SALE (ISLAMORADA, FLORIDA)** — Two bedroom, one and 1/2 bath, coinch house for sale at Mile Marker 86, near Founders Park on Oceanside. House sits on a 8,520 square foot lot in a great subdivision with a public boat ramp on the next street over. Founders Park, which is across the street, has a park with a boat ramp, parking, pool, tennis courts, etc. Great deal — owner moving out of state. $475,000. Call 305-852-4399 for more info.


**LAKEFRONT ACRE IN SCALY** — $25,000 OBO. Details. P.O. Box 260789, Pembroke Pines, FL. 33026.

**COMMERCIAL FOR SALE** — Log cabin at crossroads in Cashiers for sale or lease. Call 526-4154.

**COMMERCIAL FOR SALE** — 3 acres. U.S. 64 frontage, cashiers Road. 2 acres, 3 warehouses, good income. Call 526-4154.

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


**OCEANFRONT LOT KEY LARGO, FLORIDA** — Cleared, buildable, with all services. Last unimproved lot in Silver Shores subdivision. $599,900. For information and photos call Frank (954) 964-7649 or email ft442@bellsouth.net.

**NC, OTTO, 38 ACRES** 10 miles from Georgia State line, high elevation, big views, driveway and homesite cleared call owner, 770-952-9100.

**IN TOWN** — 3/2.5 log home. The cottages lakeside at Harris Lake. Less than 2 years old. $319,000. Call 704-577-9661.

**PINE GROVE TOWNHOUSE CASHIERS** Two bedrooms two and 1/2 bath. Walking distance to crossroads, restaurants and shopping. Large deck overlooking green lawn $229,000. Call Manuel de Juan 828-743-1021. Owner broker. Visual tour at www.pixelitvideos.com/townhome

**LOTS** — Exclusive RiverRock, Tuckaseegee
ITEMS FOR SALE

RAZOR DIRT ROCKET MX350 DIRT BIKE. $150.00. Call 526-9107.

THREE “Houses of Denmark” BOOKCASES - walnut, 3’ x 6’, containing TV, tape player, turn table, radio/CD. Sold as an entertainment unit including 2 Advent speakers. $550. Call 526-9273.

BUCK WOOD STOVE WITH BLOWER, pad, screen fireplace surround and insulated chimney. Can be used free standing or as fireplace insert. $290. 526-2647.

ANTIQUE FURNITURE FOR SALE
Double size spool bed $300. Queen Anne sofa, 3’ x 15. in color, very good condition! Paid $615, asking $500. 526-5558.

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

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

DELUXE VENTED GAS heater high but, slightly used. $100. 524-6038.


REDUCED! MAHOGANY CHINA CLOSET, 6-foot plus, mirror back, 4 glass shelves. $125. Must see. Call 787-2307.

ARMOIRE & DRESSER W/ 3 WARDROBES with 3 drawers and 3 doors. $625. 828-369-9614.


LATE KENMORE FLOOR MODEL VACUUM. 5.0 power with 2-motor systems. $149. Call 526-4076

MEDICAL LIFT CHAIR – Used one week. Paid $615, asking $500. 526-5558.

BRASS FAUCETS; 1 water closet - all almond finish $25.00 or 828 369-6263.

BOUCLER COAT - Blade - floral, 40” x 17”. $175. 828-369-3250.

STORAGE CABINETS - HAND HEWN BEAMS, all species, milled, milled and ready to lay w/t&g. $250. 828-526-2000.

BEAMS, FLOORING AND STRUCTURES - HAND HEWN BEAMS. Beautiful material, large faces, $3.50-$4.50 per board foot. Fly white oak flooring, (milled w/a&g), 6-12” widths, $8.00 per ft. Original, reclaimed white and yellow pine flooring, random wide widths (6-16”) $6/board ft. Wide pane siding, $3/ft. Also historic log cabins and barns ready to reassemble. 215-529-7637.

DELUXE VENTED GAS heater high but, slightly used. $100. 524-6038.

TESTERS: HAND HEWN BEAMS, FLOORING
ANTIQUE ORNATE WOOD FLOORING, random wide widths (6-16”), $6/’board ft. Also selling entire log and timber for firewood. 215-529-7637

CHINA CABINETS
DESIGNER DESK: 40” x 20” x 30”. Solid walnut, 3’ x 6’, containing TV, tape player, turntable, radio/CD. Sold as an entertainment unit including 2 Advent speakers. $550. Call 526-9273.

STAR BUCK BED SET – Very Nice Desk; One 11X15 rug, Lt. in color, very good condition; Mountain Bike w/icar carrier, helmet. Call 828-526-4046.

ANTIQUE ORNATE WALNUT Victorian gold velvet sofa and blue chair. Call 369-0498 and leave message.

BEAMS, FLOORING AND STRUCTURES - HAND HEWN BEAMS. Beautiful material, large faces, $3.50-$4.50 per board foot. Fly white oak flooring, (milled w/a&g), 6-12” widths, $8.00 per ft. Original, reclaimed white and yellow pine flooring, random wide widths (6-16”) $6/’board ft. Wide pane siding, $3/ft. Also historic log cabins and barns ready to reassemble. 215-529-7637.

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Highlands’ Newspaper - Thursday, Jan. 17, 2008 - Page 17
At the Rotary Club of Highlands Bingo night on Thursday, Jan. 10, Tony and Terri Potts and their nephew Carter Potts enjoyed the fun and family atmosphere. Terri was the SUPER JACKPOT winner and took home a cash prize of $250. The next Rotary Bingo night is Thursday, Feb. 7. Come with your family and friends, have a good time and if you are lucky take home a cash prize.

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Jan. 18-24

CLOVERFIELD rated PG-13
Fri: (4:20), 7:15, 9:20
Sat & Sun: (2:15), (4:20), 7:15, 9:20
Mon – Thurs: (4:20), 7:15

MAD MONEY rated PG-13
Fri: 7, 9:05
Sat & Sun: (4:15), 7:05, 9:05
Mon – Thurs: (4:15), 7:05

THE BUCKET LIST rated PG-13
Fri: (4:10), 7, 9:10
Sat & Sun: (2), (4:10), 7, 9:10
Mon – Thurs: (4:10), 7

P.S. I LOVE YOU rated PG-13
Fri: (4:15)
Sat & Sun: (2:05)

NATIONAL TREASURE: BOOK OF SECRETS rated PG
Fri: (4:30), 7:20, 9:30
Sat & Sun: (2:20), (4:30), 7:20, 9:30
Mon – Thurs: (4:30), 7:20

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 - The Bible Tells Me So” at 6:15 p.m. at the Highlands United Methodist Church. The study meets in the Fellowship Hall.
- Every Thursday - Study sessions at the Universal Unitarian Fellowship Hall in Franklin. A $5 soup-supper will be served at 5:30 p.m. Study sessions will begin at 6:30 p.m. For more information call 828-524-6777 or 706-746-9964.
- Every Saturday - The Highlands Memorial Post 370 of the American Legion will meet at the Highlands Civic Center. There will be a pancake breakfast at 9 a.m. followed by the meeting. All members and eligible veterans are cordially invited to come and enjoy breakfast and support the organization that supports you. For information call Ed Jones 742-0986.

UPCOMING EVENTS

• HIARTPT morning discussions are 10-11:30 a.m. at the Civic Center with lunch to follow for those interested. All are welcome to attend, although we do ask that the material to be discussed be read prior to the discussions. For more information, please contact Creighton Peden (cphi2@verizon.net) 526-4038. Once a Soldier” by David Craig, Magazine of Columbia University, Fall 2007, pp. 25-29. Will be circulated at previous meetings. Coordinator: Carole Light.

• Take Charge of Your Health” Lecture series by Cashiers-Highlands Chiropractic & Acupuncture presents a lecture series – “Your blood work - What do you need to know?” All lectures are FREE and held at Cashiers Chiropractic & Wellness in Laurel Terrace just east on U.S. 64 from the crossroads. Please call 828-743-9070 or 828-526-3709 to make a reservation.

• The Art League of Highlands’ monthly meeting noon at the Rec Park. Open forum and discussion to follow lunch. For more information, call Caroline Cook at 526-2742.

• HIARTPT morning discussions are 10-11:30 a.m. at the Civic Center with lunch to follow for those interested. All are welcome to attend. For more information, please contact Creighton Peden (cphi2@verizon.net) 526-4038. Coordinator: Martha Porter. “My plan is to give some sort of summation of...”
Theatre Company presents an all new show, ITC anywhere. Now to fill that awful void The Instant Company's Studio on Main. 2007 was a sad year be for sale home made breads, pies and cakes. Freshman class is hosting a fundraiser dinner at 5

January Adventure in Emerging Christianity.'

improv has returned to the instant Theatre Company's Studio on Main. 2007 was a sad year

fun starts at ITC Feb. 1

Jillian Burfete, director of ITC LIVE! opening Friday, February 1, will also be performing with the troupe. While completing her last year at Western Carolina University she appeared with the Instant Theatre Company throughout the 2006 season, and immediately gained an audience following for her hilarious improvisational characters in Little Entertainments and Cocktail Hour Theatre. One of the audience favorites was her creation of the recurring, quirky, "Donkey Rider." Later in the season audience members were tipping back in their chairs with laughter at her canine antics as "SyAlla," the dog who almost breaks up a marriage, in A.R. Gurney's "Monty Python and the Holy Grail." While performing, quick wit, and fluid that, to

reason by Gore. Coordinator, John Gaston

Tuesday, Feb. 12

HIARP'T morning discussions are 10-11:30 a.m. at the Civic Center with lunch to follow for those interested. All are welcome to attend, although we do ask that the material to be discussed be read prior to the discussions. For more information, please contact Creighton Peden (cph2@verizon.net) 526-4038. The Assault on Highlands' audiences who have attended the ITC's Evenings of Little Entertainments, Little Entertainments, and Cocktail Hour Theatre are familiar with "short form" improv which was performed in both 2005 and 2006 at the Studio.

The "short form" focuses on a loose system of simple rules and applies them to fun, imaginative games. There is scene work within the "short form" games but just the very basis of learning to think quickly, gain confidence and being part of a team are explored. The "long form" however is more complex.

As Jillian explains it, "While understanding the rules is very necessary the "long form" is most interested in exploring and developing the relationships of the characters within the scene to produce something beautiful and fluid that, to many, seems to have been written in advance. I usually compare it to a kind of made-up-on-the-spot three act play that develops from a simple audience suggestion. If all goes according to plan, characters are developed, explored and interwoven into a sometimes touching, often hilarious, romp of fun." ITC LIVE! will perform "long form" in Act I and "short form" in Act II. ITC LIVE! will play Friday and Saturday every weekend in February at 8 p.m. in the ITC's Studio on Main at 310 Oak Street, Main Street, Highlands. For reservations please call the box office at 828-342-9197. Eight performances only.

Following the last performance of ITC LIVE! on February 23 Jillian returns to the Windy City to continue her improvisation studies and graduate to become a member of a performance troupe. ITC LIVE! will not be held over.

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**... SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING continued from page 14**

The phrase “divorced pastor” is an oxymoron to most people. Pastors are expected to lead by example and being divorced does not set a good example in the minds of most people, especially Christians. This line of thinking is not without warrant. In a letter written by Paul to a young, aspiring pastor named Timothy, the apostle says that bishops and deacons should be “the husband of one wife” (1 Timothy 3:2,12). Paul writes that leaders of a congregation must manage their own households well. Why? Paul answers with a rhetorical question: “If a man does not know how to manage his own household, how can he care for God’s church?” (v.5).

Ouch! That’s a tough verse for me to handle. I do not know of a single denomination or church that does not interpret verse with the utmost respect and sincerity. A number of denominations do not make provisions for divorced pastors; meaning, a divorced person cannot serve as a pastor, preacher, or priest. The United Methodist Church does allow for a called, approved, and tested candidate for ordained ministry to begin or continue his or her ordained ministry if divorced, but not without proper and strenuous counsel. In the Western North Carolina Conference (in which I serve), there is a lengthy book with very detailed procedures, which a pastor contemplating divorce must follow. It might interest you to know that the Greek Orthodox Church does have a... See SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING page 23
HFCC celebrates New Year's Eve

Highlands Country Club recognized for ‘Environmental Excellence’

Highlands Country Club has retained its designation as a “Certified Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary” through the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program for Golf Courses, an Audubon International program. Brian J. Stiehler, Superintendent, and Rickey Holland, Wildlife Manager, led the effort to maintain sanctuary status on this course and are being recognized for Environmental Stewardship by Audubon International. Highlands Country Club was designated as a Certified Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary in 2003 and is one of 624 courses in the world to receive this honor.

The Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program for Golf Courses, endorsed by the United States Golf Association, provides information and guidance to help golf courses preserve and enhance wildlife habitat, and protect natural resources. Golf courses from the United States, Africa, Australia, Canada, Central America, Europe, Mexico, and Southeast Asia have achieved certifications in the program.

“Highlands Country Club has shown a strong commitment to its environmental program. They are to be commended for their efforts to provide a sanctuary for wildlife on the golf course property,” said Jim Sluiter, Staff Ecologist for the Audubon Sanctuary Programs.

“To reach certification, a course must demonstrate that they are maintaining a high degree of environmental quality in a number of areas,” explained Sluiter. These categories include: Environmental Planning, Wildlife & Habitat Management, Outreach and Education, Chemical Use Reduction and Safety, Water Conservation, and Water Quality Management. Courses go through a recertification process every two years. For more information on golf and the environment, visit www.golfandenvironment.org.

Audubon International is a not-for-profit, environmental education organization dedicated to educating, assisting, and inspiring millions of people from all walks of life to protect and sustain the land, water, wildlife, and natural resources around them. Its award-winning education and certification programs, has helped more than 5,600 businesses, golf courses, schools, communities, and new developments improve environmental performance and manage natural resources responsibly on more than one million acres of land.

“Highlands Country Club has shown a strong commitment to its environmental program. They are to be commended for their efforts to provide a sanctuary for wildlife on the golf course property,” said Jim Sluiter, Staff Ecologist for the Audubon Sanctuary Programs.

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While Bull and I were waiting for Lizzie, a tour bus pulled into the lot. Ski-dressed Japanese tourists disembarked. Lizzie said that they didn’t speak English. There were at least 50 of them, 50, non-English foreign tourists entering the slowest McDonalds in America.

We didn’t have time to hang around and enjoy the scene, but the Japanese must have spent most of the morning in McDonalds, and left frustrated, but smugly confident that America poses no threat to the goal of Japanese world domination.

Highlands Falls Country Club rang in the New Year with over 130 of their local and seasonal members at the Club on New Year’s Eve. More than half of those in attendance drove up from their winter locations just to attend what has been deemed the “First Annual HFCC New Year’s Eve Celebration”!

Plans are already in place for next year’s event which will be catered by the Club’s own Chef Potter. Food for this year’s festivities was provided by Debbie Grossman and her staff at Fressers.

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... THANKS continued from page 2

ushered to a table in the gym. Debbie Grossman of Fressers coordinated all the food preparation.

The transformation of the physical space inside the walls of the gymnasium for this night is nothing short of inspiring. Long tables with enough chairs to seat 300 people are set with white cloths, flatware, napkins, shiny festive centerpieces and favors. But perhaps another kind of transformation takes place inside the hearts of the dozens of helpers as they watch entire families with members of all ages file in to be welcomed and seated and served. Perhaps that transformation involves seeing, really seeing, maybe for the first time, these mothers, fathers and children as individuals and not merely as a group of outsiders.

After a beautiful bi-lingual blessing by our Mayor “El Reverendo” Don Mullen, these guests go through the buffet line to fill their plates with spicy chicken, ala Manuela, rice, beans, two salads, and tortillas. Hotdogs are there aplenty for the innumerable children. Volunteers serve everyone with soft drinks, home-made sugar cookies and Jackie Hill’s chocolate brownies for dessert. Throughout the dinner raffle numbers are drawn for the amazing array of donated gifts filling two long tables. Two surprise features of the entertainment of the evening, after Don Long’s delightful piano, were an enchanting dance group and a choir with guitar accompanying them, both from Franklin.

Of course, anytime you have lots of children together near Christmas, Santa Claus is always forefront in their thoughts. And sure enough, our ever-faithful, ever patient “Santa Buck” did not let the 90 or so children down. He held each one on his knee and gave each one a present. An anonymous “true” local “real” Santa donates the funds to buy toys for every child up to age 16.

The thank you list begins with the co-chairs of the “Noche” Angels Patsy Mullen and Betty Fisher, who teamed up for the second year to create this highlight-of-the-year event in many people’s lives. Other angels for this evening were Chris Alley, Isabel Allen, Dixie Barton, Wilda Boyette, Kitty Byers, Jeanne Christie, Bruce Colville, Jackie Cravin, Mary Ann Creswel, Marie and Dennise Davis, Joy Dooley, Robert Durance, Mozelle Edwards, Don Fisher, Tim Gibson, Carol and Traw’s Goodloe, Rosa Garcia, Debbie Grossman, Ann and Duncan Greenelee, Mary Guy Gunn, Russell and Jo Harris, Peter and Ellen Hartwege, Luis Ramirez Hernandez, Jackie Hills, Paula and Barry Jones, Ginger Kennedy, Rebecca and David Landis, Barbara and Doug Landwehr, Don Long, Sara Mason, Jill Montana, David Moore, Faviola Olvera, Bobby O’Dell, Dorothy Porter, Joel Porter, Bev and Hillrie Quin, Rene and Jim Ramsdell, Darlene Scott, Dolly Swanson, Bob Tidze, Manuela Fraz Tosca, “Buck” Trott, Highlands Lawn and Garden, Jolie’s, Furniture South, Summer House, Sysco Foods, Highlands Country Club, Mountain Garden Club. God bless all of you.

If we have left out your name and you helped in any way, we apologize and want you to know we appreciate you.

Thank you for another memorable Family Night.

International Friendship Center
Highlands

Christmas dinner huge success

Thank you Highlands! The 6th Annual Highlands Christmas Dinner was a huge success! Over 375 of Highlanders and Visitors joined in the holiday festivities, raising over $14,000 for Big Brothers Big Sisters of Highlands and The Literacy Council of Highlands. Thank you!

A special thanks to the Log Cabin for generously offering their beautiful restaurant as a venue for this great event. We could not have done it without the help and support of Margaret and Charlie.

Many thanks also go to JT, Glen, and Bruce of Mountain Fresh Grocery; Steve Tippett of US Foods; Jackie Craven of Sysco Foods; and Dan and Lisa of August Produce for their generous donations of food and supplies. The fine wines were a contribution from Wolfgang’s Restaurant and Wine Bistro. Also contributing labor and food were Bobby of Blackberry Hill Bakery and Dell; and Lakeside Restaurant. Thank you National Linen Service for help with the table linens and Let Holly do the Cooking for the use of her kitchen. The

Little Flower Shoppe decorated the tables with fabulous flower arrangements and many thanks to Citizens Bank for their help with our banking needs. Thank you to all!

This event would never have been the success it was without the support of The Highlander; Highlands’ Newspaper; The Laurel Magazine and WHLC. Thank you for the GREAT publicity.

Helping to serve and seat were Lee Hodges, Gary Miller, Diane Barta, Donna Woods, Lisa Wilker, Farrel and Jan Zehr, Nancy and Bob Mills, Chris and Mark Flashner, Dawn Owens, Richard Taylor, Rick and Helene Segel. Chefs were Debbie Grossman, Marty Rosenfield, Donna Woods, and Rene Ramsdell. Thank you!

Committee Members include Jan and Farrel Zehr; Marty Rosenfield and Donna Woods; Debbie Grossman; Nancy and Bob Mills; Chris and Mark Flashner; Jim and Rene Ramsdell; Richard Taylor; and Rick and Helene Segel.

Thank you everyone!
I am not proud of being a divorced pastor. The whole process of separation and divorce and custody issues is a humbling experience. Some people “celebrate” the court’s decree of a divorce with a party. I even know of a pastor who hosted such a party, even invited church members to attend (he is no longer the pastor of a church). There are situations of abuse or infidelity, which may result in a celebratory sigh of relief, but, for the most part, divorce is painful and rarely cause for commemoration.

Though I am not proud of being divorced, I am more intentional about how I deal with couples going through struggles in the marriages. The ordeal I have gone through these past ten years has, if anything, made me more aware of the fragile nature of so many marriages. The majority of the time I spend in daily prayer is focused on intercessions for marriages. I am not proud of being a divorced pastor. The provision for their priests to divorce, but they cannot remarry. That gets us into a whole other argument about remarriage as a form of perpetual adultery (Mark 10:11-12).

I am thankful that I was able to find a wonderful life-partner and wife, Diane. We make a good team in being the parents of eight children. And I must admit that there is a slight lift in my step these days since my daughter, Nicole, is now living with us. I do not take those steps for granted. I am going to treasure each day I have with my children.

Maybe that is the point I am trying to make in my ramblings here about divorce and custody issues: enjoy every moment you have with your children. Do not ever take them for granted. And if you and your spouse are going through a rough spot in your marriage, never underestimate the quick and easy slide our culture allows for being married one day and divorced the next. Seek the counsel of a pastor or qualified therapist. And, by all means, pray and have trusted friends and family pray with you and for you. God is there to help us in good times and bad. God loves us “for better, for worse.” If only we could do the same.