Highlands agrees to pay EPA $20,000

Like Elton, N.C., Highlands has agreed to pay the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) $20,000 for its “presumed” share of contamination at a disposal site in Fayetteville, NC. The Jan. 16 Town Board meeting, Town Attorney Bill Coward advised the board to agree to the settlement which he had negotiated down from $40,000.

“We could fight this and make them prove we are liable, but the way the law is written, we may end up owing more than what they are willing to settle,” he said.

It all revolves around a company the town did business with in the mid-70s. Around 1977 Highlands employed the Carolina Transformer Company – an electrical rebuild.

Chairman Leatherman delivers ‘address’

At the Jan. 14, Macon County Commission meeting, Chairman Charlie Leatherman acted on Communication Director for the N.C. Association of County Commissioners’ request that county commissioners deliver a “State of the County” address the first meeting of the new year.

He said the address should highlight the accomplishments and challenges facing counties and said it would be a good way to educate citizens as to the services provided by their county property tax dollars.

The following is Chairman Leatherman’s address:

“With the change of county managers that has just recently taken place in the retirement of Sam Greenwood and hiring of Jack Horton, Macon County will have changes in management procedures, organization and style. And with this major change, it is an opportune time for the county commissioners to change, put in place or modify policies and practices that will improve effectiveness of our local government and the delivery of services to our citizens.

“Change is indefinable. Some changes, like the seasons and weather are uncontrollable. Other changes are manageable and controllable even if difficult to adjust to in implementation and.

Town ready to fund stormwater upgrades

With a plan outlining specific stormwater projects and their price tag in hand, the town is ready to get started on three of the 30 projects outlined by McGill Associates in its stormwater proposal.

As the Jan. 16 Town Board meeting, commissioners agreed to ask McGill to conduct a stormwater utility/impact fee analysis for $8,100; complete a hydraulic modeling of Harris Lake and the Biological Station lake for $15,800; and decided to form a committee to determine which streams in the area need debris removed.

McGill would charge $60,000 for the debris removal/stream enhancement study and design and another $250,000 for the work. But Town Engineer Lamar Nix said he thought the town crews could perform both duties after a committee decides what has to be done. Since the town doesn’t own the streams, property owners must give permission for the town to investigate them and clean them out, he said.

The stormwater impact fee analysis project will determine stormwater capital improvement funding requirements which could be funded by a stormwater utility or stormwater impact fee.

This would be a like a tax to build up capital reserve for storm. See STORMWATER page 22
Dear Editor,

Over the last two weeks there have been a few letters by Mr. Arthur Hancock and Ms. Kathleen Brugger in response to a letter I submitted. I am writing to reply and hope to leave the last word with them.

I had wished to address everything in one letter but I am afraid I will have to split it into two.

The first will be objections to the letters and the second will be a defense of the Christian faith.

Before I begin I would like to thank Mrs. Lewicki for her patience and graciousness.

Mr. Hancock says in his letter that, “no one knows the absolute truth.” It would appear he has made a self-defeating statement because he is saying that he knows the absolute truth that absolute truth is not knowable. If so, then he disproved his own argument. Also, if absolute truth is not knowable then all truth descends into relativism, and any attempt to establish an objective standard of morality will die the death of a thousand qualifications.

Mr. Hancock goes on to say, “that a great many thinking people underrate the idea of a separate ‘God’ lounging comfortably in heaven while his anti-like creations are busily putting one another in gas chambers and threatening to extirpate themselves with hydrogen bombs.” I too am a thinking person, and I too find that idea repugnant. I suppose that is why I am not a Deist.

So why would a good God create a universe capable of such atrocities? Well, philosophers give us four possible universe models that could have been created. One, God could have chosen to create nothing at all. Two, God could have created a world where people could only choose good. Three, God could have created an amoral world where there is no good or bad. Four, God did create the universe that we now inhabit where we can choose good or bad. Out of these four, the latter is the only one where love is permitted to exist. Why? Because love is only possible where the opposite is also possible. If love is not a choice then it is not genuine because love cannot be coerced. This is where the gift of free-will comes into play.

In The Game of God the authors say that God is love. I agree with that by the way. But if God is love and everything is God, then who is God loving?

Mr. Hancock seemingly challenges the law of non-contradiction when he says “the nature of Grand Overall Design (G.O.D.) to be infinite and finite, unlimited and limited, conscious and unconscious, simultaneously and forever” just to say four paragraphs later that “awakening is guaranteed.” How is it that God could be unconscious forever and yet be guaranteed to awaken? Either God wakes up or God doesn’t.

Mr. Hancock goes on to say, “the mafia hit-man may sleep soundly every night and never suffer a moment’s conscious remorse but he is insane nevertheless and his experience of life is completely truncated compared to the man with a compassionate heart.” Since good and evil both flow from God and, therefore, equally valid, how are we to know that the hit-man doesn’t deserve a medal and the compassionate man isn’t the one who should be shunned by society? For that matter, who are we to rob God of any experience especially since they are pivotal to God’s awakening? After all, shouldn’t we encourage the expression of all aspects of God, both good and evil?

Ms. Brugger says, “In Oneness philosophy morality is not based on 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.” Be that as it may, the question is who defines “hurt?” The government? Our parents? Ourselves? She goes on to write, “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.” Why not? What is so bad about being labeled as evil if it is also a part of God? When one believes that good and evil are equally valid, the line between the two is not only blurred but disappears altogether and everyone becomes a law unto themselves. It is an inescapable consequence. As G.K. Chesterton once said, “What we need is a religion that is not only right where we are right, but right where we are wrong.”

Ms. Brugger misrepresented my point when she says that I wondered, “how the lack of condemnation will comfort, for example a raped woman.” I didn’t suggest that in the least. Here is what I wrote in context, “She (Ms. Brugger) ended the article by assuring us that there was no need to worry because everything was ‘perfect the way it is’”

MLK’s dream speaks to all of us

Dear Editor,

“I have a dream” and “Where do we go from here?” These are two very important speeches given in Dr. Martin Luther King’s lifetime. The first, in 1963 was before the passage of the Civil Rights act, the second in 1967 after Pres. Johnson signed the act and

Dr. King had to review what would happen next for American society as he stood at a crossroad. The second speech is not well known but it provides what I believe a compass for all society and is very appropriate for today as we enter a new political challenge and a crossroad:

An “out of the darkness” moment.

America needs to get the message that “we must assert our dignity and worth” (MLK, 1967) and “stand up amid a system that oppresses” (MLK, 1967) not just the middle and working classes but more importantly the American “can do” spirit.

I encourage everyone to take a few minutes and make a list during this election year. Ask yourself what would I do if I were President today? Write it down, (seriously), sleep on it, and revise the next day. Shut off the TV and do some research on the candidates that support what you would do. In other words, THINK for yourself and see if anyone running matches your views.

Include the minor candidates, like Dennis Kucinich and Ron Paul, not just the major ones the mass media tout in your search.

You might be amazed or you might be disappointed, but this is what America used to be: Individuals acting in good conscious not fear.

Always remember, “Power without love is reckless” (MLK, 1967). You have a dream so make it happen and vote your heart not what others or your party tries to tell you. If you want change then you must act differently; be the change you wish to see.

Martin Luther King said, “Let us not wallow in despair” (MLK, 1963). For better understanding of that phrase look up the word wallow. Don’t be lazy look it up! Let’s honor those who took action in the face of adversity and celebrate our individualism and diversity! Do your research; then vote YOUR mind, dreams and heart!”

Lee Hodges
Highlands
With business up at the Highlands Fire & Rescue Department, some things had to change.

Namely, the hiring of two part-time employees who each can work up to 24 hours per week. Jodie Zachary does mostly building, grounds, vehicles and hydrant maintenance and Robbie Forrester works mainly in the office updating computer fire programs, writing reports and maintaining department records.

Both members give fire and safety presentations at Highlands School and other locations and respond to fire, rescue and first-responder calls.

This year Jackson County paid Highlands Fire & Rescue $6,713 for servicing Jackson County property owners inside the Highlands town limits. In addition, Highlands Falls Country Club paid $4,900 and Cullasaja Club paid $3,616, Cullasaja Club paid $4,900 and Wildcat Cliffs Country Club paid $1,000 for their Jackson County property owners who receive service from Highlands.

The department is down to 28 members – two members retired, one member resigned and two members were elected. The department is two short of its 30-member roster with no applications on file. Calls were up across the board in 2007. There were a total of 453 calls – up 57 calls from 2006.

Fire and Related class amounted to 293 calls – up 30 from 2006. There were 104 calls (36%) inside the town limits and 189 (64%) outside the town limits.

False fire alarms continue to be a problem,” said Administrative Assistant Bobby Houston. “This year we responded to 85 fire alarms, the majority of which were false. This amounts to almost one-third of our fire-related calls.

As authorized by the town in August 1994, the department charges $250 per false alarm after the first false alarm in a year.

In other fire and related calls, the department made 73 mutual aid calls to other departments including Cashiers, Scaly and Satolah; responded to 55 wrecks with hazardous conditions; 42 calls involved investigations involving smoke; 19 brush and woods fires; 12 structure and chimney fires; and 7 vehicle fires.

There were 160 Rescue and First-Responder calls, an increase of 27 calls from 2006. The majority were first-responder calls to assist EMS – 139; followed by 12 wrecks, 5 falls or injuries; 3 standby calls; and 1 call involving a missing person.

The majority of these calls were inside the town limits – 83 (52%) and 77 (48%) outside the town limits.

In addition to responding to calls, 24 firemen completed 407 hours of training at eight area fire and rescue schools. Local training and meeting manhours amounted to 1,454; with 2,460 manhours spent on fire, rescue and first-responder calls. Those manhours don’t include travel time to calls, meetings or schools.

The Highlands Fire & Rescue Department also held an open house serving hot dogs, drink and giving fire truck rides; assisted with the town’s annual Halloween trick-or-treating; assisted with the town’s fireworks display; participated in the Christmas Parade and assisted with traffic; assisted with the Special Operations Warrior Race; assisted with the town’s Christmas Tree lighting ceremony; participated in the disaster drill at the Highlands-Cashiers Hospital; conducted several tours of the fire station including safety demonstrations; and conducted several fire safety classes at Highlands School.

- Kim Lewicki
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  • Our Real Estate webpage had 5,729 Visitors
  • Our Shopping webpage had 17,759 Visitors
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**Laughing at Life**

Police send in ‘crack’ team

As a writer for Highlands’ Newspaper, part of my job is keeping Highlands informed of important events occurring around the world. Since 90% of all part-time Highlands are now wimping out in South Florida, I felt it my duty to tell you what’s happening. After all, I am part of that 90%.

Recently, a young Haitian boy decided to dress up and head down to the Palm Beach mall to hang out with friends. This happens in malls around America all the time. Oh, I almost forgot; being from Highlands you may not know what a Haitian is. These happy-go-lucky people look much like Afro-Americans except Haitians don’t have a basketball growing out of their hands. Then again, you may not know what an Afro-American looks like.

Anyway, this kid goes to the mall but only in Palm Beach would the police dispatch a helicopter and 20 squad cars, along with their “crack” SWAT teams because of his visit.

What could cause such a stir, you ask? Bank robbery, a shootout or hostage taking would be my guess. Nope, it was saggy britches. Yep, this college student went to the mall with his britches sagging (Praise God) but world famous personalities, like me, could entertain this cultural practice if I wanted. I have a continuously shrinking fanny and if I live much longer, I won’t even have a fanny, just the crack.

Moving on to other important news, a small group of Russian scientists led by Oleg Sorokhtin, for the RIA Novosti, has determined that global warming has officially ended and global cooling will soon start. Hey, don’t believe me Go look it up ‘cause I’m not kidding. According to these vodka-drinking goose-steppers, the earth will start to cool on November 6th of this year and it turns out that humans never had anything to do with this phenomenon in the first place. Mark your calendar. I am sure Al Gore was pleased to get this news as he can now leave his 5,000 outside lights and pool heaters on all year. If you have stock in fluorescent lighting, sell now.

I’m bummed out over this news because I live very close to the ocean in South Florida and if global warming continued, I would eventually have waterfront property. Dam! The sad part about their report is that they based their predictions on scientific study and not fantasy, actually proving the earth has stopped warming. Isn’t that ridiculous?

Also, in a couple of months I will make my annual pilgrimage to the Middle East and will give them the good news on global cooling. Last time I checked it was 124 degrees in the desert. While there, I will zip over to Saudi Arabia and attend several Saturday morning beatings for display of crack….oops, I mean possession of crack.

said, “I would like to be able to go to the mall and not have to look at someone’s fanny crack. This mall is not what it’s cracked up to be anyway.”

Puleeese, where has this woman been living in Highlands? Doesn’t she know fanny cracks are the “in” thing with the bros? It’s a cultural thingy.

Also, this trend can only be practiced by folks with tiny fannies. You will never see personalities like Oprah Whinfrey or Hillary Clinton wearing saggy britches with their cracks showing (Praise God) but world famous personalities, like me, could entertain this cultural practice if I wanted. I have a continuously shrinking fanny and if I live much longer, I won’t even have a fanny, just the crack.

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Monday was Martin Luther King Day. Our office and surgery center were open. It was business as usual. I want to write about that, but my mind keeps drifting back to April 1968 a few days after Dr. King’s murder. Sandra Bartels, a young beautiful registered nurse, and second lieutenant in the United States Army, wore a black band on the sleeve of her crisply starched, immaculately white uniform. I, an intern, asked Sandra if she was mourning the death of Jimmy Clark, a wonderfully talented Formula One racing champion who had died in a racing accident. It was a clumsy attempt to attract the lieutenant’s attention, doomed to failure, as were most of my efforts. Then, as now, I wanted to be loved, but preferred being despised to being ignored.

A few weeks later Sandra lost her mind. I saw her feeding the ducks in Golden Gate Park. Her expression was vacant, tragic. She was still beautiful in the way of a wax statue, rather than a person. She told me that the psychiatrist had given her medicine that the medicine had made her stop hallucinating. She added numbly, while dropping bits of bread into the pond, that when she was hallucinating she could say, “I’m Sandra Bartels, and I hallucinate. When they give me medicine, the hallucinations stop and I don’t know who I am.”

A lot of us were confused in the spring of 1968, not like Sandra, not crazy, but just about as lost. Unlike the national grief that followed the assassination of President Kennedy in the fall of 1963, or the murder of Bobby Kennedy a few weeks after the murder of Dr. King, in June of 1968, reaction was mixed. Many Americans weren’t sure that the civil rights movement was a good thing. Many more were certain that it was not. A few, like me, were more concerned with auto racing. There was widespread feeling that Dr. King asked for what he got. I’m sure that he didn’t ask for a bullet from a high powered rifle to blow his neck away, but he knew that the possibility existed. He went on with his work, despite the risk. People thought he was reckless, that he was pushing too hard, trying to bring change too rapidly. They didn’t admit it, but they were happy with things just as they were. It wasn’t the pace of change that disturbed them. It was change.

It shouldn’t be surprising that early attempts to establish a day to honor Dr. King failed, or that observance remains limited today. Ronald Reagan signed legislation in 1983, creating a national holiday to honor Dr. King. Three years later, in 1986, national observance began. Legislation established the third Monday of January, rather than King’s birthday, Jan. 15. Legislators argued that Jan. 15 was too close to Christmas. I suspect that what they really wanted was a three-day weekend. The American people were far more likely to accept a day honoring a fallen civil rights leader if it were part of an extended weekend.

When Evan Mecham was elected governor of Arizona, his first act, upon taking office in 1987, was to eliminate Martin Luther King Day from the state calendar. Until 2000, state employees in South Carolina could opt to celebrate MLK Day or choose instead from among three Confederate holidays. When I came to South Carolina in 1988, Memorial Day was not widely observed. It was a normal work day at Oconee Memorial Hospital in Seneca. It was, I was told, a “Yankee holiday.” The head nurse in the operating room and I were both from Indiana, famous for its Memorial Day Indianapolis 500 Mile Race. We managed to close the operating room to all but emergency surgery, and pretty soon employees forgot the Yankee stigma of the day and began to enjoy the three day weekend. Our interest had nothing to do with honoring war dead. We wanted picnics, swimming, and speed.

Monday passed without mention of the holiday until, after the last case, I asked our young nurses how they felt about the day. Their answers were the same as those heard 20 years ago. Dr. King does not deserve a day. There were many heroes of the civil rights movement. I asked the nurse who made this point to name another person. She answered that there were many, but couldn’t think of any names on the spur of the moment. Another remembered her Southern training just in time to coo that she didn’t know enough about it to argue with me. I’ve heard that neither President Washington nor President Lincoln has his own day, that days honoring them have been condensed into a single Presidents’ Day.

The argument continues that each is more deserving of this honor than Dr. King. The answer, I think, is that neither Washington nor Lincoln needs a Day.

... PAY continued from page 13
Dueling economists

nation's economy by raising and lowering interest rates? Wouldn't a free-market purist abhor such manipulation?

Greenspan's memoir is a surprisingly pleasant read considering the reputation he has for convoluted speech (what he calls Fed-speak). It is an interesting journey through the last 50 years of American history through the eyes of an economist.

Of course I think he is wrong in many of his most basic assumptions. For example, as I read his book I got the strong impression that for Greenspan there is one only good: money. Family, leisure, art, spirituality: all are unimportant considerations when it comes to making economic decisions. He sadly recounts how European nations have created "socialistic" welfare states with universal health care and generous vacations and retirement benefits: their economies do not grow as fast as they could under free-market conditions. But he never stops to consider that perhaps the people of these nations are happy to make that trade-off because they believe that quality of life is as important as money (if not more important once you have achieved a certain level of comfort).

Michael Moore's film "Sicko" addresses this point in interviews with professional patients in England and France who perhaps do not earn quite as much as their counterparts in this country but have very nice lifestyles nonetheless.

Greenspan also bemoans the sad state of Japan's economy due to Japanese reluctance to apply strict free-market principles and instead allow companies to "save face." Every time I see a photograph of bustling Tokyo I feel very sorry for those poor people stagnating in a bad economy. Here's my favorite example of their suffering: Internet connection. The median U.S. download speed is 1.97 megabits per second — a fraction of the 61 megabits per second enjoyed by Japanese.

Interesting bit of trivia about Greenspan: he served under every President since 1975 except Carter and he loved Ford, seemed neutral towards Reagan (particularly contrasted to the current canonization), hated both Bushes, and really liked Clinton.

I also read Paul Krugman's new book, The Conscience of a Liberal, [339.2K] last fall. Krugman is a professor of economics at Princeton University and a columnist for the New York Times. The two books created a fascinating contrast because Krugman and Greenspan describe the same events of the last century from completely opposing points of view.

Greenspan waxes nostalgic about the Gilded Age before WWI, when capitalism was truly unregulated, taxes were nonexistent, and life was good. There was a rough spell when the New Deal came through and the federal government was taken over by people who thought it was good to manage the economy, but thankfully in the 1970s the tide turned and the economy was deregulated and privatized and taxes were slashed and the good times were back. Income inequality may be increasing but that's just a byproduct of market forces.

Krugman describes the time before the First World War as a time of Robber Barons when the division between rich and poor had grown so severe the Progressive movement arose and began putting in place regulations on capitalism. The New Deal brought about a golden era; the two decades after WWII were the age of the middle-class American, the time of the greatest income equality ever in this country. This was the era of high taxes on the wealthy and corporations. The conservative movement began its rise in the 1970s advocating deregulation and lower taxation. The middle class has been declining ever since. The peak income year for the bottom 90 percent of Americans was back in 1973 when the average income per taxpayer (adjusted for inflation) was $33,001. That is nearly $4,000 higher than the average in 2005. Today the wealthy are doing very well while the middle class and poor stagnate. The bad times are back.

One of Krugman's main points is that rising income inequality is not a passive result of the invisible hand of the market; it is the result of politics and policy...International comparisons provide a sort of controlled test. The sharp rightward shift in U.S. politics is unique among advanced countries...The forces of technological change and globalization, by contrast, affect everyone. If the rise in inequality has political roots, the United States should stand out; if it's mainly due to impersonal market forces, trends in inequality should have been similar across the advanced world. And the fact is that the increase in U.S. inequality has no counterpart anywhere else in the advanced world.

Then: Gilded Age or Robber Barons? Now: Good times or bad times?

Read these books for yourself and decide who has the best take on the fundamental points of economics and the true state of America today.
John and I had a wonderful Christmas and New Year’s. To our delight, we once again heard the pitter patter of little feet in the house. Yes, Maman came to visit. There are things you realize about your home by having to share it with guests. I’ve gotten used to not having central heating, and we do a good job with our fireplaces, Franklin stoves, and cat power. If you are sneezing at the latter, you need only watch a film on TV with a well-fed housecat on your lap to see the advantages of electric space heaters.

I worried about Maman, however. John and I are extremely well-insulated, but my mother is so slight that someone actually suggested that she fill her pockets with rocks to keep from blowing away. These days, we walk arm and arm. Don’t think of me as a daughter. Think of me as a ballast.

The first night at our house was a toughie for Maman. She froze. We felt awful. Fortunately, we got our acts together, and started hauling logs in from the woodpile with regularity. The house became toasty and inviting. It even reminded my mother of her childhood home in Les Bordes, a small village not far from Rambouillet, just south of Paris. (Check out http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rambouillet, if you’re new to this world.) For me, the hard part now is driving Maman back to her home, wondering how she’s going to get along. It’s difficult to take her back to that silent house, seeing the sights. It’s funny how we grow up on articles about raising our own kids, but so few stories mention what it’s like to have aging parents. We spend our childhoods looking up to our parents as superheroes, only to have them asking for our help, our opinions. At first, this was really scary. My first reaction was, “She’s asking me?? Things must really be bad!!!!” Now, it’s rather comforting and flattering, but it does take getting used to.

One conversation I always dreaded was the “what are you going to do when living here gets to be too much for you?” Fortunately, that discussion was handled with grace and dignity, the way Maman handles just about everything. She fell down in the house, then later in the street, going to a concert. My father died almost 10 years ago, and it’s been hard for her, living on her own. Mind you, she plays bridge, volunteers at the local art center, is a member of a book club and a wine tasting group, along with a social group of French speakers. Still, it’s not the same as having someone around who can change a light bulb for you, a major problem for a lady of moderate altitude. There is an assisted living facility in the middle of town; it was the original local home in Rambouillet just south of Paris. (Check out http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rambouillet, if you’re new to this world.)

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On a whim, we decided to go to Stuart Hall, to see if we could visit my mother’s old classroom. What a good idea! We were very warmly received by the folks there, and provided with a charming lady to show us around. Not only did we get to see Maman’s old classroom, but we got to meet the marvelous young woman who now teaches French to the Middle School students. Also, J.E.B. Stuart’s old battle flag is no longer there (lovingly sewn by his wife, Flora, a former headmistress of the school), but the place retains so much old charm, blended skillfully with the newer parts of the school. They have done a super job, and it’s wonderful to have a connection to this fine institution of learning. If ever a tenuous one tub, Oh, and did I have the good fortune to go to Stuart Hall? No, I’m still kicking myself.
Highland Boys beat Hiwasee Dam at Friday night’s home game, 72-56.
High scorer was Jake Heffington with 26 points followed by Michael Shearl with 14 and Ezra Herz with 13.
Next up was Andrew Billingsley with 10 points, followed by Luke McClellan with 3, and 2 each for Mikey Lica and Austin Brooks. Michael Baty and Casey Molinary each scored 1 point.
Highlanders’ scoring pattern was pretty consistent throughout the game – 17 points for both the first and last quarter.
Girls’ Basketball
The girls’ team lost 27 to 53 against Hiwasee Dam at Friday’s home game.
High scorer was Courtney Rogers with 10 points followed by Sarah Power with 6, Taylor Buras with 4 Brie Schmitt with 3 and 2 each for Marlee McCall and Kate-Marie Parks.
“For the first half, we played a great game against the #5 team in the state,” said Coach Brett Lamb. “We are coming together on many of the fundamentals of the game and we are continuing to improve as a team.”
The team had 28 rebounds.

Come support the Highlands School freshman class at PTO dinner fundraiser Thursday, Jan. 31

On Thursday, Jan. 31, there is a PTO meeting at the Highlands School. The freshman class is hosting a fundraiser dinner at 5 p.m. before the meeting which begins at 6 p.m. Featured will be spaghetti, chicken fingers, salad, drinks and dessert. Home made breads, pies and cakes will also be for sale. The price for dinner is: $6 for adults and $4 for children. Members of the freshman class are already working hard preparing the meal and goodies for next week.

Super Bowl or Stupor Bowl?
Perhaps the biggest sporting event of the year (I prefer March Madness) is upon us with Super Bowl XLII coming up next Sunday. It’s amazing to think that what was once just a championship football game has evolved into the massive media conglomerate that it is today.
For many people, the Super Bowl isn’t about the football game itself but about the spectacle, the pageantry…the commercials.
That’s right folks—the Super Bowl is home to the best commercial opportunity on the planet in terms of both quantity and quality. Throughout the years we’ve seen the best that advertising executives throughout the country have to offer—so without further ado, here are my top five Super Bowl commercials of all time.
5. Michael Jordan vs. Larry Bird in HORSE
This is one of my first memories of the Super Bowl, as I don’t even remember who was playing, but I do remember this commercial. Larry vs. Michael was an intriguing concept to begin with, but the people who came up with this idea took it to new levels with both players taking the game to impossible levels. What really made the commercial was that even though it was supposed to be over the top there was a level of believability to it that is possible that Bird and Magic really could bank shots off of the rafters and from impossible angles.
4. The Nissan Pigeons
I loved this commercial because of the Top Gun theme and the cheesy 80’s music that accompanied it. What makes the commercial though is the fact that most of us have actually pondered whether or not pigeons mean to drop “bombs” on our freshly washed cars or if we are just imagining things.
3. The E-Trade Monkey
I remember this ad was for because the monkey was wearing the E-Trade shirt and dancing in La Cucaracha. The punchline of “we just wasted 2 million dollars” was not only the perfect wrap up to what was happening in the commercial, but it was also refreshingly honest. How many of us have seen a bad commercial and thought to ourselves...wow-they just wasted a lot of money.
2. The E-Trade Monkey
I remember what this ad was for because the monkey was wearing the E-Trade shirt and dancing in La Cucaracha. The punchline of “we just wasted 2 million dollars” was not only the perfect wrap up to what was happening in the commercial, but it was also refreshingly honest. How many of us have seen a bad commercial and thought to ourselves...wow-they just wasted a lot of money.
1. Terry Tate: Office Linebacker
While my brother blatantly stole this premise for his newspaper column—at least he had the good sense to take from a great idea. The premise of a person brutalizing annoying people in the office is one that I wholeheartedly endorse. The best ideas come from real life, and I can’t tell you the number of times I wanted to tackle a co-worker for stealing my food or refusing to stop telling me about his personal life. The only thing that would be better than me tackling Captain Annoyance...a 6’3 250 lbs. linebacker doing the job for me. “You kill the joe...you make some mo’ Mitch!”
In closing—all of these commercials are available for viewing on the internet in case you want to reminisce or you missed them the first time around.

Highlands School make-up days
Highlands School is making up the two recent snow days on June 9 and June 10.
From now on it will be a creative use of 2- or 3-hour delays, Saturday school or the use of Spring Break days.
- Principal Brian Jetter
Applications for serving on town committees now available

Every Spring, the Town Board appoints citizens to serve on its various boards and committees, from the Zoning Board to the Cemetery Committee. Because service on most boards is limited to two terms, there may be as many as 15 openings to fill in some years.

To improve the appointment process, the board has developed an application form, which asks those who are interested in serving to provide some basic information and to answer questions about their experience.

Town Administrator Richard Betz says the new procedure will help the Town Board, which makes all appointments, better fill these vacancies. “Members of the Appearance Commission, for example, should be drawn from folks who have some kind of design experience — architecture, landscape architecture, horticulture and the like. The board would like to know a little more about the qualifications of the many volunteers who come by the town office and express an interest in serving in some way.”

The Town Board has always valued the participation of its citizens, especially on controversial Planning and Zoning boards. “Some might consider the Zoning Board, for example, to be a thankless job. But these board members are conscientious and fair, and they enjoy the opportunity of making a real difference in shaping new development,” Betz said. “It helps to know their willingness to serve.”

Boards like the Advisory Committee for the Scholarship Endowment Fund help make a difference by organizing the annual Scholarship Golf Tournament. The committee is responsible for raising over $75,000 over the years, funding scholarships that we can talk locally about.

For those interested in public service, the new application forms are available at the town office, and may also be downloaded from the town’s website, www.highlandscn.org.

Local Affiliate of NAMI Forming

NAMI Appalachian South — “Who We Are and What We Do”

If you or a loved one suffers from a mental illness, you are not alone. Mental illness is an illness of the brain like any other illness and treatment works. These are two of the basic messages of NAMI. NAMI is a grassroots organization providing support, education and advocacy for families and for persons with mental illness, such as clinical depression, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, bi-polar disorder, obsessive compulsive disorder, anxiety disorder, post-traumatic stress and others. Membership consists primarily of family members and friends of people who have mental illness, mental health care consumers, and mental health care professionals. Our financial support comes from member donations, corporate and other philanthropic grants and state grants.

NAMI was established in 1970 in Wisconsin by parents of adults with severe and persistent mental illness who saw a need for peer support. NAMI now has approximately 220,000 members in affiliates across the country.

Along with regular support group meetings, NAMI sponsors a free, 12-week Family-to-Family course that is a tsunami of information covering the nature and treatment of mental illnesses, coping skills, available services and resources. There is also a Peer-to-Peer course for consumers. All leaders are trained by NAMI and have had experiences as consumers or family members.

For more information go to the National NAMI www.nami.org, NAMI North Carolina www.naminc.org, or, for information about our local affiliate, NAMI Appalachian South, contact Ann Nandrea 369-7385, Carol Light 526-9769, or Mary Ann Widenhouse 524-1355.

Debunking the stigma of mental illness

By Ann Nandrea

Great progress has been made in our understanding and acceptance of mental illnesses. More is needed. The fact that mental illnesses have now been recognized as medical conditions that can be diagnosed and treated has helped with the acceptance of individuals with these diagnoses. Movies such as Stateide: A Beautiful Mind, and As Good as it Gets have had a positive impact. Yet stigma remains and will continue until we openly discuss mental illness just as we do about other devastating illnesses like cancer, diabetes, Parkinson’s, or Alzheimer’s.

Here are some important facts about mental illness and recovery:

• Mental illnesses are biologically based brain disorders. They cannot be overcome through “will power” and are not related to a person’s character, intelligence or upbringing.

• Mental illnesses frequently strike in… See MENTAL ILLNESS page 21

House works over legislation

By Representative Heath Shuler

The House returned for the Second Session of the 110th Congress last week and immediately began debate on several important pieces of legislation.

The first action the House needed to undertake was to dispose of the President’s “pocket veto” of the 2008 National Defense Authorization Act, H.R. 1585. This bill had been an example of bipartisan cooperation as both parties had worked together, and with the President, to craft a good bill that strengthened our military and protected our nation. It had passed the House with overwhelming support. 370-49. It saw similar bipartisan support in the Senate, passing there by a vote of 90-3. The bill contained several important measures including a pay raise for our brave troops and strong improvements to the military’s health care system.

It also contained a section that strengthened the ability of victims of state-sponsored terrorism to seek compensation. This section had never been objected to by Democrats or Republicans in Congress, or by the President. However, the Iraqi government raised objections to President Bush about the National Defense Authorization Act, before he signed it into law.

The Iraqi government claimed that plaintiffs, including former U.S. POWs who had been held captive during the first Gulf War in the 1990s, could cite this section while seeking compensation assets currently in U.S. banks. President Bush then refused to sign the Defense Authorization Act into law, delaying the pay raise for our troops and the other critical initiatives in the bill.

Therefore, the House sent the first Defense Authorization bill back to its committee, made technical corrections that included making the troop pay raise retroactive to January 1, and passed the new bill. The Senate is expected to act on the new legislation quickly.

The House also passed H.R. 4253, the Military Reserve and Veterans Small Business Reauthorization and Opportunity Act of 2007 this week. This legislation takes important steps to make certain that small businesses owned and operated by veterans and reservists remain viable and continue operating, especially during a time when many reservists are deployed overseas.

H.R. 4253 allowed for the increase of military deployment disaster loans from $5,000 to up to $50,000. It also improved Military Reserve Economic Injury Disaster Loan program, which provides funding to businesses so they can meet necessary expenses that they could have made, if not for the deployment of a reservist who is one of their essential employees.

H.R. 4253 also increased the funding authorized for the Office of Veteran Business Development, which helps veterans, service disabled veterans, reservists, and their dependents or Survivors open, expand, and maintain small businesses.

Finally, the House passed H.R. 2768 the Supplementary Mine Improvement and New Emergency Response Act (SMINER), this legislation addresses serious gaps in minesafety and health standards. While we do not have many mines in Western North Carolina, mining is a significant part of the economy throughout the Appalachian Mountains and we must protect those who are working underground.

The SMINER Act adds new safeguards to protect against dangerous mining techniques, strengthened standards to contain explosives and fires inside mines, and included a number of common-sense proposals for better equipping MSHA to respond to emergencies. This legislation updates standards to combat black lung disease and to reduce miners’ exposure to other deadly health risks, such as asbestoses.

The House is in session every week for the remainder of January.

Author of ‘Tragedy in Tin Can’ to speak

Rozetta Mowery, author of Tragedy in Tin Can Holler, will be featured at R.E.A.C.H. Macon County’s Sweetheart Luncheon and book signing on Feb. 5, from 12 to 2 p.m. at the Frog and Owl Restaurant on Main Street.

Mowery is a well-known speaker on the destructive effects of domestic violence.

Tragedy in Tin Can Holler is the true story of Mowery’s tragic family history which was hidden from public view over a span of 150 years. The story is of a family history of vicious domestic and sexual violence. Mowery’s story revolves around deceit, adultery, blackmail, murder and a life of poverty in southeast Tennessee.

Mowery spent years researching the murder of her 37-year-old mother and the lives of her five poor stricken brothers and sisters who were shuttled to and from orphanages and foster homes. Mowery’s mother was “stumped to death” by Mowery’s father.

The luncheon is a fundraiser for R.E.A.C.H., Macon County’s non-profit agency which serves victims of domestic violence and sexual assault.

Tickets are $50 each and may be purchased at the R.E.A.C.H. Bargain Store in Heritage Hollow, the Chamber of Commerce and by calling 828-369-5544.
Winter fun in Highlands

Despite frosty temperatures in the low teens, the slopes at Scaly Mountain were full of snow-tubers and sled riders, Sunday, Jan. 20.

Photos by Jim Lewicki

... HIS & HERS continued from page 7

over that one. My best friend at the time, Ruth Wylie, swore she’d never, ever speak to me again if I deserted Waynesboro High School for Stuart Hall. This is the same Ruth Wylie whom I’ve never spoken to since graduating from high school. High school girls. Go figure.

We had another Stuart Hall-connected experience, too. In the mail, we received an invitation to the 90th birthday celebration of Betty Vigour, a former neighbor, who once taught science at Stuart Hall. I’d grown up with the Vigour kids – Tommy, Johnny, Pete and Barbie. Not only had I babysat for Barbie – now in her 40s, but I’d cat sat them when they were younger. Unfortunately, John and I were going back to Highlands, and would miss Betty’s party, but in speaking with Barbie on the phone, we found out they were having a celebration lunch at Barracks Road Shopping Center in Charlottesville that very day. We jumped in the car, and headed over the mountain, arriving at the restaurant just as they were ending their meal. What a delight to see old friends and neighbors! Johnny and Pete are now bearded gentlemen of talent and substance. Barbie married an Englishman, and is living in Yorkshire. Betty, for all of her years, still has her wits about her, and is as smart and eloquent as ever.

Visits to Virginia are so often just excuses to go to the Red Lobster, Bek’s and T.J. Maxx. I’m so grateful that this time was different. Oh, and Maman and I had that other tough discussion, too, the one about funerals and cremation and such. She said I don’t have to take her ashes back to France, if I don’t want to. Upon reflection, perhaps I should divide the ashes into two parts, so that she can be where her heart desires – the Eiffel Tower and the petites section of Talbots.

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About the Author: Michelle A. Mead is a writer and translator who grew up in Waynesboro, VA, before westing her youth and good looks in Baltimore, Sydney, Paris, and New York. She lives on top of a mountain near Highlands. Michelle is a member of the Highlands Writers Group. She cannot be found in the petites section of Talbots, due to a 63” figure, and a lifetime career as a dedicated foodie.

CONSERVATIVE POV

Just when you thought Speaker Pelosi had learned to quit embarrassing herself and Congress, she hasn’t. Caught up in the campaign mantra of CHANGE, she couldn’t restrain herself from getting in the act. While there is no end of real needs in the country, needs that she has ignored of late, she saw fit to upgrade the menus of the Capital Hill eateries. Velveteen, Jello, meatloaf and buns have been replaced by brie, raspberry kiwi tarts, mahi mahi and baguettes. Thank God that important issue has been addressed. Of course staffers won’t be able to afford the price increases, but Nancy is taking lunch subsidies to avert the crisis.

In the interest of being fair and balanced, I feel the need to lay off the female birdbrains of the celebrity world and take the opportunity to castigate what must be the dumbest male human being that ever beat a murder rap. One would think that, after being out loose after killing his wife and her friend, he’d crawl under a rock and lay low. Not O.J. He and his cronies were arrested for multiple felonies for busting into a Vegas hotel room for the purpose of stealing back “his sports memorabilia.” Brilliant move. After being told specifically not to, he called one of his codefendants to discuss their stories in preparation for their trial in April.

A Nevada judge gave him a severe tongue-lashing and doubled his bail. He’s too dumb to lie.

On the political front, a new and softer Hillary beat out Uncommitted in the Michigan Democratic primary. Since the State party screwed up in moving the primary ahead of February 5th, they were stripped of their delegation so it was a non-event. She did manage to lose 70% of the black vote, and if that trend continues, she will have lost a valuable voting block.

A big story is that Mitt Romney won the Michigan Republican primary and put himself in the race. McCain could have gone into a serious lead by winning but it didn’t happen. At the risk of being disrespectful, I’m afraid he’s too little too late (he’s short and he’s old). Generally, the successful candidate is tall and McCain would be the oldest person elected to the presidency.

Prior to the Nevada Democrat contest, a judge ruled that some caucuses should be held in casinos since so many voters work on Saturdays, largely in casinos. Since Obama had the endorsement of the casino workers union, the Clinton camp took great exception to the ruling and lost a challenge, much to the dismay of the state NEA chapter who backed Hill. Hubby Bill, looking frazzled and acting snarky, verbally beat up a reporter after the ruling went against them and accomplished nothing but bad PR for the Clinton campaign. With friends like him… It turns out Hill wins Nevada anyway, garnering a large chunk of the Latino vote.

Romney swept Nevada, getting more than 50% of the Republican vote. Only he and Ron Paul spent any time there and it showed. One of the surprises to me is that with his name recognition and national stature, Guiliani only got 4% of the vote.

Moving right along to South Carolina, the Republicans had the stage all to themselves with the Dem’s having their primary on Jan. 26th. Huckabee was considered the favorite up until a few days before the primary. As it turns out, McCain wins 33% over Huckabee’s 30%. McCain’s strength was the large number of military, both active and retired, who vote in South Carolina.

Huckabee depended upon the evangelical Christian vote, which was somewhat muted by bad weather in the area he is strongest.

The Dem’s race has been reduced to women vs. blacks. Both cards have been played and that will continue. Edwards is done but will stay in to try and get a second place finish. Obama has won more than 50% of the Republican vote.

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practice.

"It is the responsible role of county commissioners to carefully influence and cautiously implement the change necessary to better provide for our citizens now and for that of the future.

"But before plans and procedures are addressed in 2008, I will, in no particular order, appraise some of the highlights, challenges, disappointments and accomplishments of 2007. To end on a more positive note, I want to first look at some disappointments.

"One of the most recent occurrences was the failure of the bond referendum for certain building projects within the county. All measures of the referendum were defeated, I, as chairman of the board of commissioners, accept the responsibility for the failure.

"There have been many theories as to why the measure failed — the price was too big, the bond was too confusing, the timing wasn’t right, the project details were incomplete, and the Land Transfer Tax topic was an emotional issue. All put together it was just too much to be presented to Macon County citizens.

"Perhaps there is some truth in all those reasons. Were there things that could have been done differently? For sure, hindsight is always wiser and there were some things we could have done in a different way.

"Educating the public about the real content of the issues should have been more aggressive. Challenging the distortion of identifying the Land Transfer Tax as the Home Tax should have been done.

"Nowhere in the official legal presentation of that revenue option was it ever referred to as the Home Tax. That was an action taken by those who opposed the option and were willing to do anything to misrepresent the facts to advance their cause in defeating the option. Would the results have been different? Trying to answer that question is time wasted in speculation.

"One thing I want to be clear about is that the vote on the referendum was only for the purpose of a financing package to pay for projects that the board felt was necessary for the continued improvement of local services to our citizens. The vote was not a decision concerning if the project objectives would be ruled defunct. The needs addressed in the referendum still exist and will merely become more expensive when they are finally dealt with at some later date.

"There are those who continually come before this board with their self-appointed representation speaking about the will of the people. They maintain they know what the people want, what the people need, what the people don’t want and what the people don’t need and why — and have all kinds of solutions for the people.

"But whether you like it or not, whether you want to accept it or not, the factual and official will of the people is represented by the make-up of this board. Those who voted put their confidence in those of us who were elected by them to perform with their best interests in mind, to make the best decisions out of the options available, to look at the requirements of our county now and try to meet them, to try to look to the future of the coming needs that will impact Macon County and its citizens. The Macon County Board of Commissioners, those of the past, this present board and those yet to be formed, represent the will of people.

"Another item that was recently in the news again, was the nativity display on the corner of Main Street in Franklin on property owned by the county. WLOS TV did contact me on Dec. 26 concerning a letter the county received from United Americans for the Separation of Church and State.

"I explained that Macon County had articulated that particular portion of property as a public forum area and any group or individual could make application to use the area to promote feelings they were inclined to support.

"Since the county offices were closed Dec. 26, I invited WLOS-TV representative on 11 a.m. on Thursday the 27. That option was not open for consideration, so I didn’t meet with WLOS to simply make a comment, as I felt the real news issue regarding the facts involved Macon County had done to prepare a public forum area which was being disregarded by both the television station and the UA organization.

"It troubles me when news media of any form only wants to present one dimension of an issue that they feel necessary to promote.

"As far as the complaint filed by the individual to the United Americans organization, I believe Macon County has taken the proper action to allow for displays of any kind to be placed in the forum area. If we are in the wrong, prove where we are in violation. Do not make a long distance summary judgment telling Macon County we are wrong and to remove any display from the public forum area.

"It is annoying that we have received a letter from Washington, DC based group stating we are in violation of a federal law concerning the nativity display based on an unidentified individual’s complaint.

"There has been no contact with Macon County to gain knowledge of the action taken to declare that portion of property a public forum.

"The county’s allowing the nativity display to be erected in an area designated for such purposes is not for the purpose of endorsing a religion. It does, however, allow for the freedom of expression of one’s convictions.

"I may disconnect myself from my other board members by my personal attitude concerning this issue, but this is still America in places and by common English Law we have a right to know who our accusers are and to defend ourselves by the actions we have taken to preserve freedom. While this position may lead to a lawsuit, so be it.

Personally, I am someone who would prefer to be taken by another’s sword, rather than to fall on my own.

"Will this board cave into pressure to not allow for the freedom of expression to display Christian values and tradition so important and valuable to so many of our citizens? Not on my watch.

"We are already on the attention screen, we have been put there before and the nativity has remained. And I for one will resist the removal of the display even if it ends up in a lawsuit. The freedom to express values and appreciations of Christian principles is a right that many have laid down their lives for – freedom – and it is something that should not be simply given up.

"This consciousness of strong core values leads well into the New Year we have just now entered.

"What many notice about Macon County is the unusual combination of the old and the new, the traditional and the present, the simplicity of our rich cultural heritage is being merged into the development of the 21st century. Roughly half our county is in long-term preservation held in public trust. The other half of the county is open to development and change.

"It is in understanding this fusion of the traditional and modern that beg those who are so inclined to provide for Macon County.

See ADDRESS page 15
Southwestern Community College winter graduates recognized

The 68 graduates in Southwestern Community College's winter commencement ceremony were the first class to have graduated from Southwestern since it was rated fourth in the nation in a listing of America's best community colleges, according to Washington Monthly. The 68 graduates include 35 in career technologies, 20 in arts and sciences and 13 in health sciences.

Macon County graduates included:
- Highlands
  - Sarah Marie Hanson, Certificate, Medical Transcription; Justin G. Taylor, AA, College Transfer.
- Scaly Mountain
  - Pablo Escandon, AAS, Culinary Technology.
- Franklin
  - Genevieve W. Bingham, AAS, Human Services Technology and Certificate, Human Services Technology - Substance Abuse Concentration; Martin A. Brink, Certificate, Welding Technology; Melissa Colbert, Diploma, Medical Sonography; James Frederick Collins, AA, College Transfer; Renee K. Cooney, AAS, Surveying Technology; Virginia L. Cranfield, AAS, Cosmetology; Jeffrey Andrew Morgan, AA, College Transfer; Patricia B. Rowland, Certificate, Infant/Toddler Care; Tyson Brooks Stager, AAS, Outdoor Leadership; Megan Magdalene Stamey, AA, College Transfer; Jessica Nicole Teem, AA, College Transfer; Tammi Thuy Tran, Diploma, Cosmetology.
- Otto
  - Judi W. Gagliolo, Diploma, Medical Sonography; Jason Paul Hatch, AA, College Transfer; Ray W. Richmond, AA, College Transfer; Wylene Elizabeth Wall, Certificate, Cosmetology.
- Topton
  - Kim Renae Wagner, Diploma, Networking Technology.

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.
And the walls go up

There's something going on all over the Fine Art Center site on Oak Street. The barn is weathered in, bridge work over the creek continues and the walls are rising for the center itself.

Photo by Pat Taylor

... PAYS continued from page 1

ing, repair and storage operation — to dispose of town electrical transformers at its five-acre site in Fayetteville.

Transformers are the trash-can size objects attached to telephone poles with power lines running in and out of them. Since transformers get hot due to electrical activity, oil-like coolants inside keep them cool. For years, the coolant used inside was Polychlorinated Biphenyls — PCBs.

In the 1970s, the federal government banned the use of PCBs because of their toxicity and tendency to accumulate in human tissue.

Carolina Transformer Company had a storage facility for transformers and other equipment containing transformer oil contaminated with PCBs. In 1982, after 15 years in operation, Carolina Transformer Company closed and the site was abandoned. However, in 1989, EPA inspected the abandoned site. It established that the oil had not been properly managed, stored or disposed of, and as a result, PCBs made their way into the surrounding acreage and ground water. The land was designated an EPA Superfund site under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act known as CERCLA or Superfund.

To reduce and eliminate threats to human health and the environment posed by contaminants at uncontrolled hazardous waste sites, the CERCLA response program was created as was a comprehensive liability scheme that authorizes the government to hold persons associated with the contamination problem liable for the cost or performance of cleanups.

To pay for this, Congress created a revolving trust fund — the Hazardous Substance Superfund — from which the President can draw funds to respond to releases and threatened releases of hazardous substances, pollutants, and contaminants from CERCLA-defined facilities.

Since the EPA couldn't sue a company that had gone out of business to clean up a site, it has filed a suit in North Carolina and named 300 governmental and private power distributors, including eight agencies of the federal government, liable for the cleanup.

A Potentially Responsible Party (PRP) Group has been formed to negotiate with the EPA to settle its $33 million claim for past and future costs for cleanup at the site. The PRP Group has invited the 300 PRPs in the southeast to join its efforts or risk further action by the EPA.

The EPA can either clean up the site using Superfund money and later recover cleanup costs from PRPs; ask a court to order PRPs to clean up the site; or the EPA can enter into settlement agreements with PRPs that can either require PRPs to clean up the site or pay for a cleanup.

Highlands and many of the other 300 PRPs in the Southeast fall under the de minimis waste contributor settlement category which allows them to pay a discrete amount of response costs to avoid future legal costs.

Highlands can prove through old invoices with Carolina Transformer Company that the hazardous substances it contributed to the site were minimal in amount and toxicity.

The need for de minimis settlements arose because small parities — those who contributed minimally or unknowingly — entered into an arrangement with a contributing company — can become overwhelmed with resulting litigation and

<table>
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<th>Providers</th>
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<tr>
<td>Carolina Transformer Company</td>
<td>Transformers and other equipment containing transformer oil contaminated with PCBs.</td>
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<td>North Carolina</td>
<td>Sued Carolina Transformer Company for releasing hazardous substances.</td>
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<td>EPA</td>
<td>Named over 300 governmental and private power distributors liable for the cleanup.</td>
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The need for de minimis settlements arose because small parities — those who contributed minimally or unknowingly entered into an arrangement with a contributing company — can become overwhelmed with resulting litigation and
SPRITITUALLY SPEAKING

“How can I keep from singing?”

Chaplain Margaret Howell
Holy Family Lutheran Church

E
er since I was a little girl, I had had music in my
head. My mom said I could sing before I could
talk, and I embarrassed her on more than one
occasion by belting out some jingle for Jell-O or Nestlé’s
Quick at the top of my lungs from my perch in the cart
at the grocery store.

It’s not surprising that I became a musician. It
seemed like the most natural thing in the world. The
music was always with me. We joined the Lutheran
church when I was 11-years-old and the hymns, psalms
and the lovely liturgies of our faith flowed on through
my mind day and night and have been there ever since.
I’ve discovered that my experience is not unique. Why
does music “stick with us” so?

Music is said to be the universal language, that
miraculous form of communication and expression that
transcends human speech and is part of humankind’s
history from the most primitive times. Virtually every
culture on earth, from the most modern praise band to
the most ancient aboriginal ritual, uses music as a vital
part of the expression of the sacred and relationship with
the Creator.

Is it any wonder that songs of faith are remembered
for generations even when the spoken word is long
forgotten? Such music is hard-wired into our psyche and
is a part of us even if we are unaware of it. Because of
that primal connection, music has a tremendous power
to touch the body, mind and spirit.

I am a Music Practitioner. When I can, I play the
harp and sing and pray at the bedside of the ill and
dying. It is a ministry given to me in the days when I
myself was bedridden. It is in the places of pain and
sorrow that God’s presence can be most keenly felt.

I remember playing at the bedside of an elderly lady
not long ago. She had Alzheimer’s, that dreadful disease
that robs you of the essence of the ones you love, even as
their bodies live on. Her husband and little grandson
were present at the vigil.

When I entered the room, she looked at me with
bright bird-like eyes, but said nothing. I introduced
myself and then played for her for about 40 minutes.
Her husband said she liked “the old hymns” so I played
all the ones I knew. At the end of our time together, I
thanked her for allowing me to come. She replied, “Oh,
my dear, I enjoyed it very much!” We chatted for a few
moments, and then I retired to the hallway to put away
my harp and music.

As I was about to leave, her husband came out of
her room, tears streaming down his face. Alarmed, I
instantly thought that she was in distress. Her husband
embraced me crying. Through his tears, he told me that
her conversation with me were the first words she had
spoken in three months. Something in the music had
stirred something in her heart.

See SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING page 20

BARBARA SCHULTZ
Rev. Clifford Willis
Scaly Mountain Baptist Church

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: 706-746-8770

CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER DAY SAINTS
28 N. and Pine Ridge Rd., (828) 369-8329
Rai Cammack, 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
Prayer – 6:30 p.m.

COMMUNITY BIBLE CHURCH
www.cbchighlands.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.

EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF THE INCARNATION
The Rev. Brian Sullivan  Rector - 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 RM. Women’s Cursillo Group
Tuesday: 8 A.M. Men’s Cursillo Group
4:30 RM. Education for Ministry
Wednesday: 6:30 RM. 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 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 BAPTIST CHURCH
Dr. Daniel D. Robinson, 526-4153
Sun.: Worship 10:45 a.m.; 6:30 p.m.; School - 9:30
a.m.; Youth - 6:30 p.m.; Choir - 7:15
Wednedays: Dinner - 5:30 p.m.; Team Kids - 6 p.m.;
Prayer - 6:15 p.m., Choir - 7:30 p.m.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Rev. Mark Kayser, Interim Pastor
Dr. Don Kullen, Parish Associate  526-3175
Mondays: 8 a.m. - Men’s Bible Discussion & Breakfast
Tuesdays: 10 a.m. - Seekers
Kiddir – 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 sunday of the month.
LITTLE CHURCH OF THE WILDWOOD
Services at the Church in the Wildwood in Horse
Cove. Sundays at 7 p.m. through Labor Day. Dress is
usual. Old fashioned hymn-sing.

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

MOUNTAIN SYNAGOGUE
St. Cyprian’s Episcopal Church, Franklin 369-6871
Friday: Sabbath Eve Services at 7 p.m.
For more information, call (706) 744-9842.

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

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

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP
828-369-3633
Lay Led Sunday School 10:15 a.m.
Sundays: Worship - 11 a.m.

WHITESIDE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Rev. Sam Forrester, 743-2122
Sundays: School - 10 a.m.; Worship - 11
County in the preservation of heritage and tradition that have been valued for 150 plus years. That is one reason that county leaders are working together on a long term project to dedicate an area near the Southwestern Community College and the Macon County Public Library to insure a rich symbolically living memorial to the rich cultural heritage we enjoy will be preserved for future generations.

While the project is still in the development process, I believe there will be a groundswell of support and interest for the project. There are many dimensions this project will serve and its development has almost too many opportunities to mention. And it is important for all levels of society to always preserve something of value and importance from its past.

Now for the New Year we are entering, 2008 will have unique opportunities and challenges for Macon County. Some of the many we are aware of and others will present themselves as completely original and we will approach them as needs and law require.

Again, in no particular order, some of the many projects we know will be addressed in 2008 for both initial work and completion include things that are both benefits and burdens to Macon County.

The road project will have a revised standard of operation and will have a meeting format including the implementation of a consent agenda. Doing this will speed up the meeting process and allow more time for commissioners to consider issues that need discussion.

This board will have increased meetings and work sessions. As our county grows and continues to develop there will be increased complex issues we will need to consider. We will need to become more knowledgeable and a better informed board to be able to make better informed decisions for our citizens and for the county.

Animal control and continued development of a shelter and an organizational plan to address animal control issues in Macon County will become more important as the population of the county, both human and animal, continues to grow.

The extension of our airport runway is an item in which we may want to investigate for alternatives other than what we have tried in the past. We have been very patient in the development of our memorandums of understandings but nothing has worked thus far.

For years the county has tried to work with the Cherokee to accommodate the extension of the airport runway. To date, we have had no success in reaching an agreement for something that could prove to be a true economic engine for Macon County.

I think that time is at hand to consider other options to complete the project of the runway extension.

The mental health system in North Carolina is broken; the state took a system that was working in our area and broke it and doesn’t seem to be able to fix it. Macon County will take the lead role in trying to address the problems created by the state in the dismantling of the mental health system that had a good foundation and service delivery system in our region. I think our area on the end of the state will have to work regionally and in a collaborative effort to rebuild a program that as doing a decent job for our citizens before the state intervened.

We will better communicate with the citizens of Macon County in the near future. I have spoken with the manager and the county will soon begin a program of educating our citizens as to the factual position of the county.

The county will release official press releases to the media. Whether the information is used or not will be up to the media, but doing this will hopefully do away with some of the confusion that makes it into the public under the present system now in place. The official information and positions of county activities will also be used on the radio and our website. I would like to see a broadcast email system where interested persons can get the information released upon request.

We should consider having our board meetings broadcast in real time for those citizens who can’t attend our meetings whether they are in the day or evening times. I think it would be important to have anyone who is interested to be able to hear what is said, and not only what is said but how it is said. We have the technology, the video down-streaming is a very real option that could be used. A better informed public about what we as commissioners are doing and why we are doing it the way we are could only prove to be beneficial to us and the public we serve.

The subdivision ordinance’s review and implementation should be completed soon. Much effort has gone into the development of that project. And when it is put in, will well serve this county just as the high-impact ordinance has done.

The personnel policy manual is being updated and revised and should soon be ready for final review and put in service.

We need to have better training for our employees who are held to standards that require renewal credits and certification. It is critical that our employees are up to date on regulatory requirements and have the necessary training to keep their education levels at that which is required by any reviewing agency.

To provide the official press releases, we need to have a public information officer to maintain our public information releases. We need to continually make the effort to keep our citizens abreast of the happenings within our county.

We need to improve our Economic Development Staff effort. We need to develop.

See ADDRESS page 22
Rain, Sleet or Snow...Ice Cream is still GOOD!

Kilwin's
Chocolates Ice Cream Fudge

Now taking orders for Chocolate Dipped Strawberries for Valentine's Day!
Nationwide Shipping

WINTER SPECIALS!

Buy One Get One FREE Fudge Slice Expires 2/29/08 Equal or Lesser Value
Buy One Get One FREE Ice Cream Expires 2/29/08 Equal or Lesser Value
Buy One Get One FREE Caramel Apple Expires 2/29/08 Equal or Lesser Value
Buy One Get One FREE Caramel Corn or Brittle Expires 2/29/08 Equal or Lesser Value

Kilwin's
Chocolates Ice Cream Fudge

Hours:
Monday – Saturday
11 a.m. until 5 p.m.
Closed Sundays
(828) 526-3788

370 Main Street
ITC LIVE! to open Feb. 8 NOT Feb. 1

ITC LIVE! slated to open February 1 has moved its opening date to February 8 because of lost rehearsals during the recent snowy weather. Subsequent performances are the 9th, 15th, 16th, 22nd and 23rd. All shows are at 8 p.m. The ITC's Studio on Main is located at 310 Oak Square, Main Street, Highlands. ITC LIVE! contains some mature content. Tickets are $20. For reservations call the ITC box office at 828-342-9197. For a mind-tune up make a reservation to attend the 2008 Improv Comedy Show, ITC LIVE!, opening at the Instant Theatre Company's Studio on Main on February 8th. Two of the players featured in the show are Daniel Osborne and Kaley McCormack. Daniel has appeared in the ITC Improv shows, Little Entertainments and Cocktail Hour Theatre. He will be happily remembered by improv-going audiences for the numerous, flexible and outrageous characters he created during the runs of those two shows, most particularly his creation of "Pedro," side-kick to the Donkey Rider portrayed by Jillian Burfoot.

Daniel Osborne

ITC LIVE! presented an all new show, ITC LIVE!, and playing every Friday and Saturday night at 8 p.m. in February. For tickets and further information please call the ITC box office at 828-342-9197.

Saturday, Feb. 9

Improv has returned to the Instant Theatre Company's Studio on Main. 2007 was a sad year for our little village, not an improv game to be played anywhere. Now to fill that awful void The Instant Theatre Company presents an all new show, ITC LIVE!, and playing every Friday and Saturday night at 8 p.m. in February. For tickets and further information please call the ITC box office at 828-342-9197.

Tuesday, Feb. 12

HARPT 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 Reason by Gore. Coordinator, John Gaston

Friday, Feb. 8

Improv has returned to The Instant Theatre Company's Studio on Main. 2007 was a sad year for our little village, not an improv game to be played anywhere. Now to fill that awful void The Instant Theatre Company presents an all new show, ITC LIVE!, and playing every Friday and Saturday night at 8 p.m. in February. For tickets and further information please call the ITC box office at 828-342-9197.

Friday, Feb. 15

Improv has returned to the Instant Theatre Company's Studio on Main. 2007 was a sad year for our little village, not an improv game to be played anywhere. Now to fill that awful void The Instant Theatre Company presents an all new show, ITC LIVE!, and playing every Friday and Saturday night at 8 p.m. in February. For tickets and further information please call the ITC box office at 828-342-9197.

Saturday, Feb. 16

Improv has returned to the Instant Theatre Company's Studio on Main. 2007 was a sad year for our little village, not an improv game to be played anywhere. Now to fill that awful void The Instant Theatre Company presents an all new show, ITC LIVE!, and playing every Friday and Saturday night at 8 p.m. in February. For tickets and further information please call the ITC box office at 828-342-9197.

Tuesday, Feb. 19

HARPT 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 Reason by Gore. Coordinator, John Gaston

Friday, Feb. 22

Impro has returned to the Instant Theatre Company’s Studio on Main. 2007 was a sad year for our little village, not an improv game to be played anywhere. Now to fill that awful void The Instant Theatre Company presents an all new show, ITC LIVE!, and playing every Friday and Saturday night at 8 p.m. in February. For tickets and further information please call the ITC box office at 828-342-9197.

Saturday, Feb. 23

Improv has returned to the Instant Theatre Company’s Studio on Main. 2007 was a sad year for our little village, not an improv game to be played anywhere. Now to fill that awful void The Instant Theatre Company presents an all new show, ITC LIVE!, and playing every Friday and Saturday night at 8 p.m. in February. For tickets and further information please call the ITC box office at 828-342-9197.
... LETTERS continued from page 2

problem of pain? Ms. Brugger says that, “all suffering disappears in the understanding that underneath it all there is only God.” I beg to differ. Recently, the evening news told the story of a young mother who was arrested for slapping, choking, and stomping her infant to death while her other child looked on. The human heart is desperately wicked and in need of redemption, not a higher level of consciousness.

Waylon Chastain
Highlands, NC

... ANOTHER VIEW continued from page 5

More importantly, our nation does not need a Day to honor them. We do need a Day to honor Dr. King, to be reminded of his dream, to recognize him, those who preceded him, and those who will follow him, a Day to reflect on the fact that less than 150 years ago, we were buying and selling human beings in this country, that less than 50 years ago, a black American couldn’t use the same rest room or drink out of the same fountain as I.

I remember traveling in the South as a boy and seeing crudely painted signs above the drinking fountains at a Dairy Queen in Georgia, “Colored” and “White.” I remember fire hoses and German shepherds. I remember literacy tests and freedom riders, bombings and outrages. I remember feeling detached, of standing that underneath it all there is ‘perfect way it is,’ doesn’t correspond to reality, and if true, is utterly unlivable. Why attempt to change public policy, or worry about pollution?

Man’s depravity is manifested on a daily basis. How are we to deal with the
... SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING continued from page 14... touched her, connected with her, even though all other efforts and medication had failed to do so. Somewhere deep in her person, the music had harmonized her mind, and reawakened the woman she once was.

That visit convinced me beyond any doubt that music has the ability to reach people when nothing else can. I have been privileged to play many vigils over the years. I have witnessed people in comas start to exhibit increased brain activity, and silent Alzheimer patients sing the words of an old familiar hymn, becoming more responsive after a vigil. Music touched their very souls.

This “music of the soul” is not about entertainment. It is music of the heart and touches us more deeply than any spoken or written word ever could. Music of the soul has the power to soothe a baby to sleep or to calm the fears of someone at the end of life.

Music to the glory of God has inspired millions of people to greater faith. Many great composers have written masterpieces to the glory of God that have been heard by millions of people. Martin Luther himself considered music, after to the gospel, to be a most glorious way to worship God. Whether in the cathedral or at the bedside, “music of the soul” is a gift of God’s love in purest form.

“Through all the tumult and the strife, I hear that music ringing. It finds an echo in my soul. How can I keep from singing?”

(How Can I Keep from Singing? – Robert Lowery 1826-1899)
Old Edwards Hospitality Group announces 2007 Service Champions of the Year Awards

Old Edwards Hospitality Group is pleased to announce Service Champions of the Year for 2007. The Service Champion Program is utilized to reward and recognize associates who go “above and beyond” the call of duty to meet and exceed the resort guest’s expectations.

Throughout the year, associates are nominated for the Service Champion Program. Each month, associates are recognized at an appreciation gathering and Associates with the most qualifying nominations are awarded gold, silver and bronze awards. The year end winners are chosen from this exemplary group of people.

For 2007:
Gold: Dave Linn, Fitness Center Supervisor (resides in Franklin, NC)
Silver: Cori Wooten, Night Auditor for the Inn and Lodge (resides in Tiger, GA)
Bronze: Dayana Rodriguez, Madison’s server (resides in Highlands, NC)

“By setting goals and rewarding the staff members regularly, we encourage positive motivation and set a standard for excellence that is not only attainable, it becomes second nature. This level of service is what sets us apart as the award-winning property that we have become,” said Mario Gomes, Old Edwards Hospitality Group Chief Executive Officer and General Manager.

SCC Foundation Golf Tournament rewards winner

“I think this driver will work really good,” said Gary Peek, who won the Nike Sasquatch driver at Southwestern Community College Foundation golf tournament at Highlands Cove Resort. Peek won the driver and a GMAC service package from Allison’s Chevrolet Jeep dealership in Sylva by making a hole-in-one during the tournament. Although he did not win the difficult first tee hole-in-one and the grand prize of a 2008 Chevrolet Colorado truck donated by Allison’s, Peek and other participants helped raise scholarships for students and educational mini-grants for SCC faculty and staff.

SCC Foundation director Sonja Haynes, right, delivered the driver to Peek at work on Monday, Jan. 14, and Peek immediately rushed outside to try it out.

For more information about the foundation, contact Haynes at 800.447.4091 or 828.586.4091, ext. 218.

Winner Gary Peek with SCC’s Sonja Haynes.

... MENTAL ILLNESS continued from page 9

... MENTAL ILLNESS continued from page 9

higher proportion —about 6% of Americans suffer from a serious mental illness. This significantly impacts 3 in 5 families in America. (source NAMI)

NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) is dedicated to the elimination of ignorance, prejudice and discrimination against people with mental illness by changing the public attitudes from fear and rejection to one of community understanding, acceptance and support. An attitude is critical if people with mental illnesses are to go forward with their lives.

The newly formed local support group NAMI Appalachian South, an affiliate of NAMI NC, offers a program, “In Our Own Voice: Living with Mental Illness.”

To arrange for this program for your civic club or other association, or for more information about NAMI Appalachian South, call Ann Nandrea 369-7385, Carole Light 526-8769 or Mary Ann Widenhouse 524-1355.
... STORMWATER continued from page 1

water projects,” said Town Administrator Richard Betz.

Calculations could be based on either non-residential and residential impervious areas or a gross area/land use intensity method.

The idea is that new development increases the demand for health and safety services provided by the town, affects the quality of the town’s infrastructure and increases the need for public facilities. Stormwater impact fees can help pay for the cumulative impact of new development through infrastructure improvements, thus contributing to the town’s economic development.

The hydraulic modeling analysis will determine how to create extra space in the lakes and possibly modify the discharge outlet. “In the case of a rain event, the lakes might be able to hold an extra amount of water,” said Nix. “That’s what the analysis will tell us. How much it could hold without causing problems elsewhere and how much of a benefit it would be.”

During the analysis, McGill would locate the existing water surface elevation of each lake to determine the normal pool water surface elevation; determine the exact elevations and dimensions of each outlet control structure for water retention and controlled discharge; and determine specific flood elevations within the banks of each lake as they relate to retention. An extra $10,000 to $20,000 would be needed to construct modifications.

With stormwater regulation mandates expected from the state soon, in 2006, the Town Board enlisted McGill & Associates to prepare a Stormwater Master Plan whose construction could be partially funded with a Clean Water Management Trust Fund (CWMTF) grant money.

Unfortunately, the town will miss the Feb. 1 cut-off for CWMTF grant applications for 2008 projects.

“The point is we have a lot of planning to do before construction of these projects,” said Commissioner Amy Patterson. “We’re too late for construction funding through grant money this year, but we do have money for planning.”

The town budgeted $100,000 for stormwater projects for fiscal year 2007-2008 and will budget more in anticipation of construction in 2008-2009.

The overall plan was presented about a year ago, and included 30 likely projects at a cost of between $10 million and $20 million. The projects mainly focused on restoring streams and buffers that would impact the 303(d) status of Mill Creek. Mill Creek is considered impaired due to the lack of certain aquatic species.

McGill’s overall stormwater plan could be used to seek funds from CWMTF on an ongoing basis as well as initiate a funding source through a stormwater utility/impact fee.

The backbone of the stormwater plan is an ordinance to which the town’s existing and recruit jobs for residents. Good jobs with benefits, health insurance and retirement. What NAFTA, CAFTA have done in the Nantahala area and especially in the south is now reaching Macon County and we need to do something at the local level to ensure that after our children get educated there are jobs for them so they don’t have to leave the area if they don’t want to, and want to live here for the same reasons we do.

“I have been faulted for saying so, but Macon County has to continue to support our local fire departments. These firemen are people with a deep devotion and commitment to the volunteer departments they work for while putting themselves in danger to serve their fellow man. Their deep sense of service causes them to train and learn extra skills to give the victims so they can and do save lives. They also spend untold hours keeping the departments they are in certified and their rating up to standards. They do all these things to serve their fellowman. All this is done for service – they are volunteers – and it should not be forgotten that the residents of the districts they serve receive reduced insurance costs.

“Our law enforcement that serves and protects our citizens is another program we will continue to support and fund as needed. Many times taken for granted, the services given, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year, by those men and women is important for all our residents’ security.

“Emergency Services is another area where I have been criticized for speaking up. But emergency services have to do with the lives of our citizens. What can be more important than protected and saving the lives of the citizens of Macon County? While the costs for these services will increase as time goes by, it remains incumbent for this board and the boards to come to ensure all adequate funding is provided so the care of our citizens can be properly handled.

“This board needs to come to some definite decisions and plans for the old library building. I hope it will be possible during this next year to resolve what will be done with that asset.

“We will need to address the Senior Services, the old department on aging, and find ways to serve those who have needs that can’t be met by their families. These are those in our population who don’t have long-care insurance plans, or have the resources to have in-home care. We should provide a place where there can be caregiving relief. A form of day care where people have adequate care for families with ones who have differing forms of dementia that need supervision.”

“We need to continue with our school construction needs and continued expansion of the Southwestern Community College campus. The county needs to support the education development for training, and retraining, for our young and adult education. The needs that are here now will not go away, they will not disappear – they will. However, continue to exist and worsen as time goes on.

“A long-term project I feel we need to look at is that of providing water to our future citizens. I don’t know if the trend will continue, but this year has had the lowest water levels in 70 years. Franklin has no impoundment of water. It is dependent upon the flow of the Cartoogehatchee. I think it would be worthwhile to investigate the possibility of drafting water form Nantahala Lake and bring it into the Franklin area. This would be a long-term study, it may not happen in my lifetime, but I think it is time to start looking into the future and look for ways to be prepared for the future needs of our county.

“Another lesser publicized effort was to have a re-established post office in the Nantahala Community. I received letters of support from Senators Burr and Dole. But the individual, whose name I can’t remember, from the postal service said there was no need for a post office in that area because there has been no growth and there were three businesses in Franklin that sold stamps that the people from Nantahala area could purchase. I don’t think the person who wrote the letter has ever been to Nantahala. I think it is an issue that should get more attention.

“I believe we should continue county support of the Veterans Memorial that was begun last year. The sacrifices made and the lives given by those individuals are what allow us to meet tonight. The freedom we enjoy today has come at the high costs of many veterans and the cost of the freedoms we enjoy will continue to be high.

“And lastly, we as a board need to insure we provide whatever is necessary for our employees to continue to do the job they do to serve the citizens of Macon County.”

These things I have mentioned will be accomplished as will other various and unknown issues that will come before us, but we as a board have the responsibility to meet them and deal with them as best we can for those who have put their trust in us to act.”

- Kim Lewicki

... ADDRESS continued from page 15
The following is the Highlands Police Dept. log entries for the week of Jan. 12-23. Only the names of persons arrested, issued a Class-3 misdemeanor, or public officials have been used.

Jan. 12
- At 9:20 a.m., a motorist on N.C. 106 was cited for speeding 53 mph in a 35 zone.
- At 10 a.m., a motorist was reported at a home on N. 44th Street. About $3,500 worth of tools were taken as well as 13 fir trees from the front yard. Paint was also poured all over the back deck onto the walls of the house. The case is under investigation.
- At 10:50 p.m., a motorist at Webbmont and U.S. 64 west was cited for speeding 55 mph in a 35 zone.
- A motorist on U.S. 64 was cited for unlawfully operating a vehicle and for speeding 50 mph in a 35 zone.

Jan. 14
- At 8:10 p.m., officers responded to a call of a simple assault at a residence on Saw Mill Road.
- During the week officers issued seven warning tickets and responded to 8 alarms.

Jan. 15
- The dept. responded to two separate wrecks on N.C. 106 near Dry Falls. No one was injured. The driver was assisted out of the vehicle.
- The dept. responded to a call of a vehicle accident on U.S. 54 east, but it was in Jackson County.
- The dept. responded to a two-vehicle accident on Billy Cabin Road. There were no injuries.
- The dept. responded to two separate wrecks on N.C. 106 near Dry Falls. No one was injured in either accident, which was due to slick roads.

Jan. 16
- The dept. was first-responders to assist EMS with a medical call at a residence on Club House Trail. The victim was transported to the hospital.
- The dept. responded to a vehicle accident on N.C. 106. No one was injured, but the driver was assisted out of the vehicle.

Jan. 17
- The dept. responded to a call of a vehicle accident on U.S. 54 east, but it was in Jackson County.
- The dept. responded to a vehicle accident on N.C. 106 near Dry Falls. No one was hurt in either accident, which was due to slick roads.

Jan. 18
- During the week officers responded to 15 alarms, including a medical call at a residence on Club House Trail. The victim was transported to the hospital.
- During the week officers responded to 10 calls for service.

Jan. 19
- During the week officers responded to 12 calls for service.

Jan. 20
- During the week officers responded to 9 calls for service.

Jan. 21
- During the week officers responded to 7 calls for service.

Jan. 22
- During the week officers responded to 10 calls for service.

Jan. 23
- During the week officers responded to 9 calls for service.

PseudoCube©

#AN2E - Level of Difficulty - Hard

THE SETUP:
The cube has 27 consecutive numbers in it, arranged in three layers with 9 numbers each. These numbers are arranged in a special pattern: For each layer, the sum of the three numbers in each row, column or diagonal is 3 times its center number. Eight diagonals connect all 3 layers by running through the center number of the middle layer. Each diagonal contains 3 numbers equal to 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. Using your powers of induction, inference and insight, place the numbers 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
"Sliced Meat"

Across
1. Have (past tense) (3)
2. Unhappy (3)
3. Small mites (4)
4. Young men (4)
5. Sixth music note (2)
6. Similar (4)
7. Hello! (2)
8. Personal pronoun (2)
9. Princess ___ (2)
10. Mother (slang) (2)

Down
1. Name of the manager (5)
2. The general public (9)
3. Lend me a Tenor world famous tenor Tito Merelli (played by Wayne Coleman) belts out an aria while three adoring females (Breta Stroud, Carla Gates, Jody Read) and not-so-amused wife (Diane Rosazza) look on. On left, singing singer (Stuart Armor) tries to keep his fiancé in line, while opera manager (Bob Tietze) contends with a pesky bellhop (Dean Zuch). The hilarious comedy by Ken Ludlow is scheduled for performances Feb. 28, 29, March 1,2,7,8,9 at PAC in Highlands. The play is directed by Annette Coleman with Carol Lucas assisting. Tickets go on sale for season subscribers on Thursday, Feb. 21, and the general public on Saturday, Feb. 23.

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
"Sliced Meat"

Across
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