Board amends ‘boiler plate’ ordinance

At its last meeting, the Planning Board adopted the “boiler plate” version of the flood damage prevention ordinance supplied by the state, but Wednesday night the Town Board changed/added four elements of the ordinance.

Commissioners voted 3-2 to change the daily fine for failure to comply with the ordinance from $50 to $5,000 a day, which corresponds with Macon County’s fine.

They said $50 a day wouldn’t deter violations.

Since Commissioner Dennis DeWolf was absent, Mayor Don Mullen broke the tie. Commissioners Amy Patterson and Hank Ross voted for the change. Commissioners Buzz Dotson and Larry Rogers voted against it.

The board voted 3-1, with Commissioner Dotson dissenting, to add a two-foot Free Board standard to the Base Flood Elevation. Again, this corresponds with Macon County’s ordinance as well as the recommendation from FEMA.

Free Board is extra footage added to the Base Flood Elevation (BFE) set by the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). The addition of Freeboard footage accounts for unknown factors that could add to flood heights.

On Saturday, Aug. 8, the Highlands Fire and Rescue Dept. will hold its annual Open House featuring firetruck rides and a free hot dog lunch from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Donations accepted.

MC Schools make use of stimulus money

Macon County Schools is using federal stimulus money and funding programs to upgrade and reform its curriculum and school facilities.

This summer several presenters were paid a total of $6,800 to conduct curriculum reform workshops and teachers attending the workshops received $100 a day from Title 1 and Title 2 money, as required by law, for a total of $25,200. The total spent on curriculum reform was $32,000.

Except for one workshop which was held at the Fun Factory in Franklin, all workshops were held at a school in the county so there were no costs associated with facilities.

Building trends may be on the upswing

According to the Regional Building Trend Report put out by The Market Edge, a company that tracks the issuance of building permits in the country, a positive trend emerged during the first half of 2009 for Western North Carolina.

With the exception of upstate South Carolina, markets had a significant increase in building permits from the first quarter of 2009 (Q1) to the second quarter of 2009 (Q2), reads the report.

“While an increase from Q1 to Q2 each year is not uncommon because of the spring building season, the Q2 totals this year are the first upward trend in many markets since 2006, said Dale Akins of The Market Edge.

“While when comparing the first six months of 2009, the trend numbers are disappointing, the...”
The real facts and figures about U.S. health care

Dear Editor,

Good health is a desire of all people. Access to preventive and promotive health care modalities is needed to maintain good health. Health Care in the US seems to be treated as a commodity to be exchanged for profit. The competitive need to make money should not apply to an individual’s health. Insurance companies have grown fat by the mechanisms set in place to deny health care dollars to individuals who have illnesses. This should not be happening.

The US spends 15.3 percent of its gross national product on health. That is $6,719 per capita. Our population is 299 million. The US government spends $3,076 dollars for health care for each man, woman and child in the US. That is $919,724,000,000 or just under a trillion dollars. Despite these high expenditures the US ranks poorly in individual health outcomes.

Data from the World Health Organization 2009 statistics compares countries that participate in WHO collection data. The US mortality rate for adults 15 - 60 years (108/1000) is poorer than 26 other countries. I chose to reflect on adult mortality because is readily indicates long term health access and health behaviors. Infant and maternal mortality outcomes also are lower than many developed nations. World Health Organization statistics can be found on-line.

The dollars spent are not improving health in the U.S. The reason for this is health care access is unequal within the US. Geography, education, socioeconomic status, uninsurability, and health insurance coverage affects the individual’s ability to access and pay for health care. If the US actually spent $3,076 on each person to prevent illnesses and promote healthy lifestyles we would have a much healthier nation. But we do not. Some of US have health insurance and are able to carry out the preventative maintenances and be instructed by health care providers on how to maintain good health. Others of US cannot afford to pay for health care individually, or our employer does not provide health insurance for a variety of reasons, and thus we are unable to access the care that we need.

The US needs to assure each individual is able to access health care providers to have health screenings related to their age group and risk factors for disease. Health screenings that detect disease in its early stages enables the disease to be cured or well managed to prevent irreparable damage to an individual’s body. Individuals who do have chronic illness, whose disease is well managed, are able to contribute to society within their roles while maintaining healthy body systems. Several sound bites of late are concerning. “I do not want the experiment of government run health care to occur in this country.” Effectiveness of an intervention is best supported by longitudinal studies. Government run health care access is an ‘experiment’ that has been run in many of the developed nations of the world since the end of WWII. Again refer to the WHO 2009 statistics. The US ranked 27 in countries whose data was listed. San Marino ranked number 1 in adult mortality rates at 53/1000.

Several sound bites have stated, I don’t want health care like France (22), Canada (10) or The United Kingdom (16). OK, maybe the US should ask (1) San Marino, (2 @ 58/1000) Iceland, (3 @61/1000) Malta, (4 @62/1000) Italy, (5 @63/1000) Australia, Cyprus, Kuwait, Sweden, (6 @ 64/1000) Singapore, (7 @66/1000) Japan, Israel, Ireland, (8 @ 68/1000) Netherlands, (9 @69/1000) Norway, Qatar, and (10 @72/1000) Andorra what it is that they are doing to keep their citizen so much more healthy and alive than we are keeping ours. Would it surprise you that individuals in these countries have access to health care? Eleven are government-run from conception to the grave. The rest have programs that offer both private and public health care access. So this experiment of government participation in health care access for all people seems to actually be good for US, if the evidence of nearly 60 years of the particular intervention health care access for all would convince you.

I am asking you to do the right thing. Let your congressmen and women know that the US wants what is best for the country as a whole. You want good health care access for all individual in the US.

Delia E. Frederick, RN, MSN-ed.
Highlands

How will we be judged?

Dear Editor,

The average American, one person, pays between $5,000 and $6,500 each year for health care. Canada loves its health care. So do England, France, and Germany. I have military friends that can attest to these facts. Average cost for these countries is $3,000 each year.

How can we in America refuse the poor and disinfancfranced health care? What anyone would call Christian charity demands we comfort the down trodden. The Blacks, Hispanics, and the WhitePoor — those who work and work just to keep the basics of life available for themselves and children.

Wewill be judged not only by the bad we have done, but also by the good we refused to accomplish in this life. There should be no hunger, and no individual suffering or illness without recourse other then the emergency room. Emergency costs are extreme.

Joseph J. Mathers, Jr.
Ottos, N C

from the history guy....

On the day in Aug. 6

At Auburn Prison in New York murderer William Kemmler was the first person to be executed by electric chair. Aug. 6, 1890

William Kemmler offered his gal so his charge was capital. Because of his choice in ending domesticity he got a good dose of electricity. They might have punished him more lax. If he'd use something other than an ax.

He was the first, the technology was current, but a trouble free process it sure weren't. It seems that is is problematic to kill some one with charges, moving or static.

If it wasn't for the honor, he might not have been willing to go for this new method of killing
WSJ gives nod to new photography book about Joe Webb cabins in Highlands


During the 1920s and 1930s, builder Joe Webb constructed nearly 36 log homes in Highlands. The cabins were built without the aid of power tools or architectural plans, and all of these structures are located within a five-mile radius.

Wall Street Journal reviewer Stuart Ferguson calls the photographs “rich” and “atmospheric.” “Though Mr. Cox’s images in ‘The Work of Joe Webb’ were made in the 21st century, they resemble the book’s historic photos of Webb and his projects under construction,” the review states. “The images’ timeless quality stems partly from the older, large-format camera used by Mr. Cox.”

Cox also includes an essay that places the work within a regional and historical context. Less an analytical taxonomy of Webb’s cabins than an expansive meditation, Cox employs his own art to understand another man’s life work and the extraordinary qualities of the handmade and unique.

Cox’s work has appeared in several one-man shows and is represented by Bespoke Garden. His photographs have also appeared in Blind Spot, Aperture, Doubletake, the New York Times Magazine, the New Yorker, Newsweek, Rolling Stone and House and Garden, among other publications.

The Bascom, a nonprofit center for the visual arts in Highlands, made possible the publication of Cox’s book through its Emerging Artists Grant. Books are available for sale at The Bascom and elsewhere. To order, call (828) 526-4949 or email lgiffith@thebascom.org.

To see the Wall Street Journal review, visit http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052970204271104574290432045279294.html.

Work continues on county’s Steep Slope Ordinance

Besides an updated flood hazard map and subsequent ordinance, disasters spurred by back-to-back hurricanes Frances and Ivan have Macon County and other counties in Western North Carolina, considering a Steep Slope building ordinance.

On July 15, the Committee for Slope Development Strategies met at the Macon County Agricultural Resource Center with Al Slagle, Derek Roland, Jack Morgan, Stacy Guffey, John Becker, Reggie Holland, and Josh Pope.

First off, the committee realized that its concept for slope development strategies is different than issues addressed in ordinances in White, Jackson and Haywood counties.

“We should take other counties’ concepts and recommendations as well as those from the Macon County Watershed Council into account to see if we need to incorporate any of it in our concept,” said Al Slagle.

In addition, the committee discussed the slope stability map which combines slope and soils to produce slope hazard based on a water discharge event. Josh Pope spoke to the committee about the slope stability map which combines slope and soils. “These maps are based on generalities and one must be very careful when applying these to specific parcels in the county,” he said. “But the maps could be used as a ‘trigger’ for a site visit prior to building.”

NC DENR has produced three maps — the SIN map, (which refers to the angle it applies to the rise and run of a slope), a down slope hazard map, and a historic slides map which Rick Wooten from the NC Geological Survey department will explain at the committee’s next meeting this month.

Initially, the committee discussed making the county liable for slope assessments but County Planner Jack Morgan said given the current economic situation it would be hard to persuade the commissioners to accept liability.

“Building and Environmental Health inspectors have the liability to do their jobs,” he said. “That’s what they’re there for.”

The committee agreed to discuss the liability issue with the commissioners, the Planning Board and the county attorney before designating the county with any liability concerning the safety of slopes.

The next meeting of the Committee for Slope Development is on Aug. 12 at 8 a.m. in the Agricultural Service Center in Franklin.

God – the Bible – Jesus – Truth

Are you kind of fuzzy on WHAT you believe ... even more so on WHY you believe what you believe?

Is Christianity a reasonable faith or some kind of crutch for the weak?

Is the Bible the Word of God or just some old Jewish fables?

W ho was Jesus ... W hat did he do, and ... W hy did he do it?

W here did I come from ... What is my purpose ...

Will I face judgement?

W ill I have eternal life somewhere ... Is there a heaven, a hell?

Are there intelligent reasonable arguments to defend Christianity?

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If you're a regular reader, you know I like referring back to my days on the cliffs of Highlands when I taught rappelling. I jogged most every day it wasn't raining and was a regular at Highlands Rec. Park basement gym. Between hanging out on the cliffs, running and pumping iron, I always had a stiff joint somewhere on my body. I would like to say I didn't mind the pain, but I did. I just figured the agony was worth keeping fit. After I sold my rappel business six years ago, one of the great pleasures I experienced was waking each morning with no stiff joints or pain. The first morning that happened, I panicked because I thought I had died. Pinching myself, I realized how wonderful it was to wake without the pain of a stiff joint or muscle somewhere on my body. So I allowed myself to get soft. It was fun, fun, fun. My joints and muscles loved it. I had not experienced that wonderful feeling since before I was a rookie cop.

I'm not kidding when I say something was always hurting somewhere on my body. I once slammed my thumb against a rock while rappelling. It got infected, the pain was horrid, and it didn't heal for six months. I didn't realize how important my thumb was until I couldn't use it.

Getting mushy gave me a whole different perspective on life. I used to pride myself on being able to touch my toes. Now I realize if God wanted me to do that, he would have placed them on my knees. Repeat after me, "Mushy is good." And don't believe that old diction "No pain, no gain." My new dichtés is "No gain, great gain."

But getting old and mushy is not 100% what it's cracked up to be. After six straight years of waking up with no pain, last week I woke with a stiff joint. The pain in my shoulder was brutal. My mind raced. What had I done to deserve this? Maybe I pulled something when I reached to the top shelf in the kitchen for a box of fudge bars? Or was it when the lil’ missus had me carry a package of 26 rolls of toilet paper and put them high on a shelf in the utility room? (If you’re ever out of toilet paper, call me.) By the way, we have both Bush and Obama papers with their pictures on each sheet. At our house, we alternate rolls.

Anyway, I raced to the Internet for research. I typed “stiff joint + geezer + mushy” on my browser. After eliminating several Cialis ads, I found what I wanted. Are you sitting down? Vodka and raisins are a great cure for a stiff joint. Look it up.

You simply pour a box of raisins into a jug of vodka and let it sit until the raisins are extremely intoxicated. No, no, you don’t rub this concoction on your stiff joint; you strain the raisins from the vodka and throw them away…or, for added enjoyment, put them in your next salad. Then pour this medicinal solution into a glass with ice. Yummy for my tummy! After I drank four of those babies, the pain in my stiff joint was gone. It must have been the raisins.

And now I’m on a preventive program to head off further stiff joints. For example, last week my neighbor called to ask if I could help him carry a table from his truck to his porch. He neglected to tell me the dad gum thing weighed nine thousand pounds. Taking baby steps and resting often, we finally managed to get the monster onto his porch. I immediately raced home for my medicine. After slugging down four joint vodkas, (that's what I call them) I waited. Then I fell asleep. Oh, I should warn you, this medication induces sleep so don’t operate heavy machinery, like lawn mowers or garbage cans, after downing this wonderful solution. Anyway, when I woke, I experienced no pain or stiff joint.

Also, it’s not necessary to slug down four of Doctor Fred’s stiff joint solutions each day if you did was bick around the house. I have learned that one dose just before dinner each evening will keep you void of a stiff joint until bedtime. Are you writing this down? Vodka and raisins are a great cure for a stiff joint. Look it up.
I recently learned that a $10,000 investment, which I declined in 1981, would have a value today slightly in excess of $17 million. The return may not be comparable to winning the lottery, but it's not exactly chump change, either. I kicked myself around the block several times. And shuddered as I remembered stupidity. I invested some half million in Caribbean restaurant deep fryers, but I believed enough to put $25,000 in that one. The return was an audit and penalty from the Internal Revenue Service. They called it an “abusive tax shelter.” I just call it a third in Denver, was really worth $40 million. By the time I figured it out, the bubble had burst and I unloaded my shares at a penny each. We bought Dominican cigars with the idea of quickly reselling them. Steve, my partner, converted his basement to a giant humidor. The cigars are still there, perfectly preserved in case any of my readers wants a stick, a box, or 400,000 fine smokes.

I came close to breaking out of my slump when I bought into a partnership that purchased 100 acres in Northern Virginia. Walt Disney announced plans to build a theme park, “Disney America,” right across the street from our property. Everything was in place. The governor and senator approved the plan. The State agreed to tax relief and infrastructure improvement. Then Robert Duvall, the actor, and his horsey neighbors launched a campaign against the park. They claimed that popularizing and commercializing American history would compromise it, and the Historic Highlands Inn and the Fraser Park improvement. Then Robert Duvall, the actor, and his horsey neighbors launched a campaign against the park. They claimed that popularizing and commercializing American history would compromise it.

The 1981 investment opportunity? That money, plus $10,000 more went to Lanham Lumber and Kiln Dry. The idea was to make a million drying hardwood for the furniture industry. My money, along with that of several other suckers, bought an old whiskey barrel plant. The first big mistake was to break up the oak aging kegs and use them to fire the furnace used in the drying process. I’d guess we got about a nickel worth of heat from a barrel that we could have cut in two sold for $10 or $20. After a few years investors were left with nothing but a tax writeoff.

I don’t know why I thought there was money to be made in recycling cooking oil from restaurant deep fryers, but I believed enough to put $25,000 in that one. The return was an audit and penalty from the Internal Revenue Service. They called it an “abusive tax shelter.” I just call it a tax write off. I invested some half million in a bubble that purchased 100 acres in Northern Virginia. Walt Disney announced plans to build a theme park, “Disney America,” right across the street from our property. Everything was in place. The governor and senator approved the plan. The State agreed to tax relief and infrastructure improvement. Then Robert Duvall, the actor, and his horsey neighbors launched a campaign against the park. They claimed that popularizing and commercializing American history would compromise it.

How I became ‘investment savvy’
... MC SCHOOLS continued from page 1

Workshop titles included School Improvement Planning; Unpacking the Standards; and Identifying Essential Standards/ Writing Predictive Assessments for all 6-12 teachers.

“One of the primary outcomes of this summer’s planning was the district alignment of instructional goals and objectives, including the development of predictive benchmark assessments to give teachers and principals access to more accurate, timely data,” said Superintendent Dan Brigman.

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... SWANSON continued from page 13

over? Insanity. If the most powerful man on Earth has nothing better to do than to refer to a neighborhood dispute, he needs to hang up the old teleprompters.

Meanwhile, the lunatic Speaker of the House accused insurance companies of “unethical behavior.” “They are the villains. They have been part of the problem in a major way. They are doing everything in their power to stop a public-option from happening.” Well, since passage of the public-option (government controlled healthcare) would put the insurance companies out of business, I would imagine they’d fight it. That they are demonizing Nancy is a public service.

Not to be outdone, the lunatic Senate Majority Leader, Harry Reid pronounced that insurance companies are the most profitable of all industries. Morningstar, the authority on such matters, says that he is off the mark by about 300%, which, for Harry, isn’t all that bad. In his delirious continuum, Reid blames the media for setting the deadline for passage of health care legislation. Seems to me that I heard several top members of the liberal contingent, including Harry himself, publicly announcing that commitment several weeks ago.

If you haven’t had enough lunacy, try this. Allow me to introduce John Holdren, Obama’s “science czar.”

Quoting CNS News: Giving natural objects – like trees – standing to sue in a court of law would have a “most salubrious” effect on the environment, Holdren wrote in the 1970s.

“One of the elements that would have a most salubrious effect on the quality of the environment has been proposed by law professor Christopher D. Stone in his celebrated monograph “Should Trees have standing?” Holdren said in a 1977 book that he co-wrote with Paul & Anne Ehrlich. He’d give trees, rocks and other inanimate objects the right to sue. And did I mention he is our “science czar?”

And you think I’m crazy.
Health Care Reform II: Can we afford to do nothing?

It's still too early to tell whether health care reform will happen this year. But I ask, is doing nothing preferable or even viable?

When Social Security reform was being discussed during George W. Bush's second term, we heard a lot about how it was the looming cost of Medicare—not Social Security—that was going to break the federal budget. Medicare had to be reformed.

On the website of the conservative Heritage Foundation (heritage.org) I found an article from 2003 arguing against the Medicare Drug Bill because it was like adding gasoline to the fire of entitlement spending. The author, Daniel Mitchell, gave these figures. "According to government data, the Social Security cash-flow deficit through 2075 is $25.3 trillion in today's dollars. But there is a spare change comparison to the Medicare cash-flow deficit, which is a staggering $6.8 trillion over the same period."

He estimated that the Medicare deficit would consume 20 percent of federal income taxes in 2026 and 33 percent in 2042. He went on to warn how much worse it would be with a drug bill added to Medicare.

And it's not just Medicare costs that are threatening our economy. In 2008, total national health expenditures increased at twice the rate of inflation. And health insurance premiums and health care expenses have been rising much faster than wages for many years. That means a greater and greater percentage of every family's income is going out of their bank account straight to the medical-industrial complex.

Many people hang on to jobs they hate because they are afraid to lose their health insurance. They may have a dream of starting their own business or going back to school but if that means their kids would have to go without insurance it's too big a risk to consider. What is the cost both economically and to the dynamics of our society when people are stuck in dead-end jobs?

What is the cost to society when people are bankrupted by health problems? Half of all bankruptcies in this country are caused by medical bills. What is the cost of these people being distracted by worry, their finances drained so they can't spend money on a child's education or a better home?

The cost of doing nothing about health care would be enormous, probably much greater than the $1 trillion cost for reform (over the next 10 years period) everyone is so excited about.

Let's put that $100 billion dollars a year into perspective. The Iraq war has cost about $100 billion a year for six years now. Bush's tax cuts cost about $130 billion a year for 10 years they were in force ($1.3 trillion total). The increase in the military budget since 2001 has been an average of $140 billion going from $307.8 billion in 2001 to $437.8 billion in 2009 (which doesn't include the cost of the wars).

People against reform claim that we have the best medical system in the world, that "socialization" would destroy the incentive for medical improvements and we would lose our edge.

But is it true? Is our system the best? Then why does the U.S. rank low on many world health indicators of health? For example, I found an AP wire story from August 2007 on the FOX News website called "Study: U.S. Slipping Down Life Expectancy Rankings." Using 2004 numbers, a baby born in the U.S. would live an average of 77.9 years. That put our country at number 42 among the nations of the world, down from 11 twenty years before. The researchers' opinion was that one of the major reasons for the slippage was the large number of Americans without health insurance.

The article quoted Dr. Christopher Murray, head of the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation at the University of Washington, "Something's wrong here when one of the richest countries in the world, the one that spends the most on health care, is not able to keep up with other countries...The starting point [for change] is the recognition that the U.S. does not have the best health care system."

From the website of the National Coalition on Health Care (nchc.org), a group advocating reform: "According to a recent report, the United States has $480 billion in excess spending each year in comparison to Western European nations that have universal health insurance coverage. The costs are mainly associated with excess administrative costs and lower quality of care...In 2008, the United States will spend 17 percent of its gross domestic product (GDP) on health care. Although nearly 46 million Americans are uninsured, the United States spends more on health care than other industrialized nations, and those countries provide health insurance to all their citizens. Health care spending accounts for 17 percent of GDP in the United States and 9 percent of GDP in other industrialized nations."

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• COOKING ON THE PLATEAU •

Grilling Steak: Beef 101

There’s nothing better than a sizzling steak hot off the grill. If you’re the grill master, you may be looking to brush up on the right techniques to make sure you have a great beef meal every time.

The Featured Cut

“Boneless top sirloin is perfect for the grill. It’s versatile, tender and flavorful,” says Chef Dave Zino, executive director of the Culinary Center for the National Cattlemen’s Beef Association. “Top sirloin partners well with rubs, marinades and sauces that add complementary accents—and it’s perfect for cutting into pieces for kabobs, a great way to stretch your grilling budget. Although it seems so decadently delicious, top sirloin is one of the 29 cuts of beef that meet the government guidelines for lean, providing 156 calories and 4.6 grams of fat—plus as 10 essential nutrients—per 3-ounce cooked serving.”

Three Easy Steps

Hoisin Beef Kabobs with Pineapple Salsa
Total Recipe Time: 25 to 30 minutes
Makes 4 servings

1-1/4 pounds boneless beef top sirloin steak, cut 1 inch thick
1/3 cup ketchup
2 tablespoons hoisin sauce
1/2 teaspoon black pepper

Pineapple Salsa:
1 cup diced fresh pineapple
1/2 cup diced red bell pepper
1/2 cup diced cucumber
2 tablespoons rice vinegar
Combine Pineapple Salsa ingredients in small bowl; set aside.

Cut beef steak into 1 inch pieces. Thread beef pieces evenly onto four 10 to 12 inch metal skewers. Season kabobs evenly with pepper.

Place kabobs on grid over medium, ash-covered coals. Brush beef generously with some of reserved sauce mixture. Grill kabobs, covered, 6 to 8 minutes (over medium heat on preheated gas grill), covered, 7 to 9 minutes) for medium rare (145°F) to medium (160°F) doneness, turning occasionally and brushing with remaining sauce mixture. Season beef with salt, as desired. Serve kabobs topped with Pineapple Salsa.

Courtesy of Family Features

Step 1: Prepare gas or charcoal grill according to manufacturer’s directions for medium heat.

Step 2: Remove beef from refrigerator and season with a spice blend or marinade as desired. Place on preheated cooking grid.

Step 3: Cook boneless top sirloin steak (1 inch thick) 17 to 21 minutes uncovered (charcoal grill) or 13 to 16 minutes covered (gas grill), turning occasionally. To determine doneness, insert an instant-read thermometer horizontally from the side, penetrating the thickest part or center of the steak. Allow 10 to 15 seconds for the thermometer to register the internal temperature. Steaks should be cooked to 145°F (medium rare) or 160°F (medium). After cooking, season with salt, as desired.

BeefItsWhatsForDinner.com is the one-stop resource for tips and recipes that will help you make the most of your time at the grill.
Cash for Clunkers, Gatesgate, plus a special treat

By John Armor

Let's begin with the easiest subject to understand – economics. Last week two important events happened. The Cash for Clunkers program shut down when it burned through money planned for four months, in four days. And based on a previously passed federal law, the minimum wage went up again.

Now, the two programs are different in size. The minimum wage only increased by 70 cents an hour; whereas, the Clunker program is/was giving away up to $4,500 per transaction. So, the change was both larger and faster in the latter instance. I was on the road on family business and saw a hand-lettered sign in a Tennessee Tastee-Freeze that said, “Prices have increased due to wage increases.”

The bottom line is simple, and every student who was awake during the first day of Economics 101 knows it. When the price of anything goes up, people buy less of it. For sure, assorted studies by economists hired by labor unions have produced “academic” studies showing that raising the minimum wage does not cost anyone their jobs. But no honest studies support that conclusion.

A big jump, rather than a gradual change, is easier to see and impossible to paper over. The experts in D.C. expected that $1 billion for Clunkers would last four months. How ignorant do professors, Congressmen, Presidents have to be to think when you give away anything for free (try health care for example) that you won’t have lines around the block. Then total costs will go through the roof until rationing is imposed.

Another story from the last week was the brouhaha concerning the “distinguished” Harvard professor, Henry Gates. This was not about race. This was about Harvard. Seldom do I recommend other people’s columns in full and provide a link. But my friend Iowahawk has written a screamingly funny and spot on analysis of Gatesgate under the title, “Cambridge Police Profiling Still A Grim Reality for Harvard Faculty A**holes.”

Here’s the link. Don’t follow it if you are offended by that last word. http://iowahawk.typepad.com/iowahawk/2009/07/cambridge-police-profiling-still-a-grim-reality-for-harvard-faculty-assholes.html

By the way, I’ve seen Ivy arrogance up close and personal at Yale. It is even found at Princeton, though I’m not sure why. (Hold that tiger.)

And now for dessert. For almost a decade I’ve been working on a book on Tom Paine. It’s researched and finished. I got a stack of rejection letters, some saying that it was an excellent book, but there was no market for it. My initial reaction was that Glenn Beck’s book Common Sense had smothered the market for mine. Now, I offer a thank-you for Glenn and his book. Mine is much heavier in history, uses much more of Paine’s original work, and mostly, demonstrates how the ideas that Paine wrote down two centuries ago remain true concerning American domestic and foreign policies and challenges today. The success of Glenn’s book convinced at least one publisher that there is room for the success of mine.

I call Tom Paine the “forgotten” Framer. Without his works, the United States would not have come into existence. Yet very few people are familiar with his writings, and the reasons for their effectiveness.

There is one aspect of Paine’s work which no one else has discovered in 227 years of reading and research. The power of Paine’s words come from the same style that can be traced in American historical documents, Presidential speeches, but also in popular writing, songs, movies, etc. That chapter is for writers who want to write better than they do now, who want to learn why Paine was so successful.

My book will be published, with original artwork done by Olga Calco, a Russian-born and -trained artist. There is a chance, just a chance, that it will be ready for the Rally on the Mall in Washington, D.C., on 12 September. The title is “These Are The Times that Try Men’s Souls.”

That is Paine’s most memorable sentence. It begins the first chapter of The American Crisis which was read to General Washington’s troops, before they crossed the Delaware at night in a snowstorm.
Revisions to county’s soil and erosion control ordinance in the works

All ordinances evolve and the county’s Soil Erosion and Sedimentation ordinance is no different.

At the Macon County Watershed Council’s July meeting, members discussed using the 10-year or 25-year storm as a performance standard to protect against peak storm water runoff.

But county commission liaison, Commissioner Bobby Kuppers said the county might not want to use the voluntary 25-year storm when the state only mandates the 10-year storm standard for protection from storm water runoff.

The group also discussed compaction, calling it “one of the biggest things to be included in the revised ordinance.”

The group agreed that pictures of situations resulting from bad compaction need to be compiled because the watershed council must be ready to sell the compaction standard as a good idea that promotes safety when it presents the revisions to the public.

Vegetative cover was also discussed and Matt Mason and Kim Hedden, both with the county planning department, said it was paramount to include regulations that work and are enforceable when dealing with vegetative cover.

The group agreed that seven days may be too stringent a requirement for the establishment of ground cover when the state allows for 21 days.

Commissioner Kuppers reminded the group that the county attorney is the last stop in the review process but said it would be OK to send the revised ordinance to Clark first.

Meanwhile, the council agreed to contact building and development associations, such as The Homebuilders Association, to let them know that the watershed council is nearing revisions on the ordinance and to encourage a meeting with them prior to presentation to the Macon County Commission.

The next Macon County Watershed Council meeting is Wednesday, Aug. 12 at 10 a.m. at the Agricultural Service Center in Franklin.

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... ORDINANCE continued from page 1

in the floodway greater than the height calculated for a selected size flood. Floodway conditions include wave action, blockage of bridge openings, and the hydrological effect of urbanization of a watershed.

The BFE plus the Freeboard then establishes the Regulatory Flood Protection Elevation which is regulated by the ordinance. This ordinance concerns itself with land use regulations for development beyond the standard building code and regular zoning ordinances in an area.

NFIP and FEMA suggest a two-foot Freeboard for extra safety reasons but also because insurance costs decrease the higher a building is above the BFE. One foot above the BFE reduces insurance by 40%; two feet above BFE reduces it by 68%.

However, even if Freeboard isn’t in the ordinance, property owners can still opt to build higher to get reduced insurance.

But Commissioners Ross and Patterson said unless it’s in the ordinance, developers aren’t likely to increase the foundation of a building to obtain height because it costs extra money.

Mayor Mullen agreed saying that sometimes that extra two feet can make all the difference when in danger of flooding.

Commissioners voted 3-1, with Commissioner Rogers dissenting, to change the encroachment point from 20 feet to 30 feet as suggested by FEMA. This is 20 feet less than the standard set by Macon County which is 50 feet.

That means there can be no encroachment within 30 feet of the top of the stream bank or five times the width of the stream, whichever is greater.

Town Planner Joe Cooley said the 30-foot standard matches what’s already in place in the watershed ordinance. “Whichever is greater applies anyway,” he said.

Encroachment means the advance or infringement of uses, fill, excavation, buildings, structures or development into a floodplain, which may impede or alter the flow capacity of the floodplain.

Finally, the board voted unanimously to allow municipal exemptions in the floodway and floodplain for public transportation such as roads; infrastructure — gas, water, electricity and wastewater mains; stream enhancement projects; and parks and greenway work.

Cooley said FEMA already approved such exemptions in the ordinance for the town of Blowing Rock so with precedent set, it’s likely it will adopt the exemptions for Highlands.

According to the new map, there are three structures in the floodway — one on Laurel Street and two on Spruce Street — and 72 structures in the floodplain. He said there are lots of undeveloped lots that are also affected but didn’t have a figure.

If Highlands doesn’t have a flood prevention ordinance, it can be held liable for denying its citizens the ability to purchase FEMA flood insurance, and because it didn’t take steps to reduce the exposure of life and property to flood damage in the face of authoritative scientific and technical data that shows permitting unwise development can aggravate flooding.

Without the ordinance, Highlands won’t be eligible for state public assistance grants to recover from flood damage following a state declared disaster or federal disaster assistance be allocated for the permanent repair or reconstruction of insurable buildings in SFHAs following a Presidential disaster declaration resulting from flooding.

Following a public hearing Aug. 12 at 7 p.m., the Town Board will pass some version of the ordinance which will apply to the Town of Highlands and the ETJ areas.

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Town Of Highlands Scholarship Fund Golf Classic
Monday, August 17, 2009
at the Cullasaja Club of Highlands

I/we ___________________________ would like to make a donation and become a sponsor of this exciting event in the following manner:

$5,000.00 Diamond Sponsor — (Tee Sign, Program Recognition and 8 Dinner Tickets)
$1,000.00 Platinum Sponsor — (Tee Sign, Program Recognition and 6 Dinner Tickets)
$500.00 Gold Sponsor — (Program Recognition and 4 Dinner Tickets)
$300.00 Patron Sponsor — (Program Recognition and 2 Dinner Tickets)
$150.00 per Golf Contestant
$50.00 per ticket for the Awards Party

There will be ______ Golfers in our group and their names are:

1. ___________________________
2. ___________________________
3. ___________________________
4. ___________________________

Due to an overwhelming response to last year’s event, payment for golf must be made to guarantee your registration to play. The first 128 “PAID” contestants will participate in the event! Golf Contestant donations must be mailed or delivered to David Cull or Connie Smith at: Cullasaja Club, 1371 Cullasaja Club Drive, Highlands, NC 28741 or you may drop your entry and check to the Town Hall. Please make your checks payable to Town of Highlands Scholarship Fund.

Diamond, Platinum, Gold and Patron Sponsor Donations can be mailed or delivered to the Town of Highlands, P. O. Box 466, Highlands, NC 28741 or to David Cull or Connie Smith. For further details to become a sponsor or make a gracious donation of any kind you may contact David Cull at 526-3531. Please make your checks payable to Town of Highlands Scholarship Fund.

All Donations are Tax Deductible

Golf Contestants may bring guests to the Awards Party by purchasing a ticket at the cost of $50.00.

Event Agenda
11:00am – Registration & Lunch Buffet in Clubhouse, Practice Range Open, Tee Gift Distribution, Complimentary Beverages on Course
12:30pm – Shotgun Start – Scramble
1:00pm – 7:20pm – Cocktails, Dinner Buffet and Awards Party

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third and fourth quarters of 2008 and the
1st quarter of 2009 were terrible in most

permits issued in Macon County represent
from 32 in the first quarter to 39 in the
Second quarter.

However, the 70 residential building
permitted in Macon County repre-
number of residential building permits
In each county in the Asheville dis-
numbered Cleveland, Alexander, Burke,
transylvania, as well as those with the
same period in 2008.
The Market Edge company tracks the
number of residential building permits
issued in each county in the Asheville dis-
second quarter.

Jackson County – which mirrors Ma-
works for 2009, Macon and Jackson counties out-
first and second quarters of 2008 which

Henderson – the more populated coun-
five counties in the Asheville dis-
transylvania, Madison, Polk, Ruther-
the most building permits
issued the first two quarters of 2009.

In fact, for the first two quarters of
residential permits not multi-family structures.

Residential alterations and addition permits
new construction. Since January, the county has issued 146 permits for renovations versus
residential.

In addition, Dakin tracks statistics in
eastern Tennessee.

The report is produced each calendar
quarter.

Transylvania and Madison counties
had 31 building permits issued during
the first and second quarters of 2009.

The subtitle of my book is, “America
- Then and Now, In the Words of Tho-
America – 19 in Q1 and 12 in Q2 and 13 in Q1
and 18 in Q2, respectively. Transylvania
had 107 issued the first and second quar-
time of 2008 and Madison had 56.

Except for Buncombe, Haywood and
Jackson and Macon counties beat
the Hickory-area districts — Jackson and Macon counties beat
the Hickory-area districts.
Since January 2009, the Macon County
Planning Department has issued 72 resi-
dential, single-family/multi-family build-
ing permits.

Dakin’s report only reflects single-fam-
ily, residential permits not multi-family structures.

Commercial and six residential.

In addition, Dakin tracks statistics in
eastern Kentucky, upstate South Carolina
and eastern Tennessee.

The report is produced each calendar
quarter.

storm to attack the Hessians at Trenton.
Washington gambled the whole fate of
the American Revolution on that single
battle. His troops marched into that bat-
tle with Paine’s words fresh in their ears.
The subtitle of my book is, “America
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eastern Kentucky, upstate South Carolina
and eastern Tennessee.

The report is produced each calendar
quarter.

Army. He is semi-retired and now lives in
the Blue Ridges.

John_Armor@aya.yale.edu

Sapphire Valley
Art and Crafts Festival
Saturday, August 8
&
Sunday, August 9
10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

More than 90 artists and crafters displaying
and demonstrating their original works
Live Music • Food • Drinks
Cashiers- Highlands Humane Society Stop n’ A dopt
FREE ADMISSION AND PARKING
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Health care reform?  
I don’t think so.

Before we get to the really serious stuff, let me mention my weekly climatological observation. According to CBS 2 Chicago, “Chicago sees coldest July in 67 years.”

Another scientific building block in the “climate change” argument just for grins, I googled in Phoenix’ weather and found it was a toasty 112 headed to 115.

Now, if the nuts had stuck with “global warming,” they might have had something to talk about, except they’d still have to explain how the “global” stopped somewhere in mid-continent and became “climate change,” what with Nashville, Chicago and New York enjoying record cold summers. It’s all so confusing.

Very few of you have experienced what I am about to describe for you, so I’ll do my best to be graphic. In exiting our property, we drive down a road through the woods. There are a lot of overhanging oaks and chestnut trees, which seasonally produce a lot of nuts (speaking of nuts). These acorns and nuts attract a bunch of squirrels, no, not them, the furry little buggers. These long-tailed rodents scurry the roads, collecting next winter’s dinner. As you approach them, they get a frantic look on their face, eyes bulging, and hightail it down the road in a schizophrenic panic, zigging and zagging from one side of the road to the other.

Just about the time you expect to feel a slight bump in the road, you see the little dodger fling himself off the road and up a tree.

Somehow, I envision Nancy Pelosi, in trying to get the votes together to send the Health Care reform legislation up the hill to the Senate, scrambling, eyes bulging, flitting from one side of the aisle to the other like the plastic squirrels on our road. I don’t know if she’ll get it done by the summer recess or not, but I dread the thought of what the crazies might come up with.

Nancy is catching some heat from her fellow libs. They say she should have put health care on the schedule before cap and trade. Take our very own ex-quarter-back and current Representative, Heath Schuler, who stuck his neck on the block in supporting the cap and tax bill. I personally think that move may cost him his job. He deserves it for being a deceptive hypocrite.

Meanwhile, in my search of interesting stories to bring you all I ran across this gem in the Carroll, IA Daily Times Herald. “A 78 year-old Carroll woman says she’s so tired of seeing President Barack Obama on the airwaves that she’s selling her television sets (I wish I’d thought of that before I pitched mine off the deck).”  

‘I just got tired of watching him on every channel,’ she said. ‘I thought, my gosh, does he ever stay at the White House?’” Well said.

My next mistake was to not to chuck all of our TVs over the edge. Had I done so, I would have been spared the agony of the several days of news coverage of the lead up to Obama’s happy hour beer party. Have we not sunk to new lows when the president makes stupid inflammatory statements with world watching, then makes stupid, public non-apologetic apologies and then invites the boys in for a beer to talk it.

*See SWANSON page 6
... SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING continued from page 28

and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart (Heb. 4:12). Remember the narrative of the hungry Israelites in the desert? They must have had all kinds of needs. In as many as two million people there had to be some food allergies, some diabetics and some sensitive eaters. Yet they all ate something that met their specific need. They all ate bread from the heavens. Jesus said He is the Bread of Life (Jn. 6:48), Christ is the Word that became flesh (Jn.1:14). When we receive the Scripture we receive exactly what it is we need. As a community we need to trust in the Lord and pray that the primary source of strength for the families and businesses of this town originates in the Truth of Scripture. We must always check ourselves to make sure that we do not compromise our success and prosperity because we stray away from the Bible. Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful (Joshua 1:8). We also need to be in prayer that our church leaders serve us as God would have us serve.

Pray for our spiritual leaders to be sensitive to people and to the Word. The clergy in Highlands, like any other town, have a God mandated responsibility to preach and teach nothing but the Word of God (Rev 22:18-19). “Not many of you should presume to be teachers, my brothers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly” (James 3:1). As a pastor I have to constantly evaluate my motives concerning the ministry. I, like you, need to ask the question: Are we coming to a deeper experience and understanding of the love of Christ. When we begin to preach or teach away from that truth, we begin to let one another down. The apostle Paul warned his son in the faith, Timothy, about this very issue. “For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear” (2 Tim. 4:3).

Highlands is hospitable. Highlands honors the church. Highlands is hungry for the Word. I encourage you to eat the Bread of Life that we as a town may become more like what we eat. Christ Himself.
... BRUGGER continued from page 7

doing a TV story on the free Dental Clinic in Cashiers and hearing about poor people who could not afford dental care — that would clear out an enormous amount of inefficiency in the system and reduce total costs. But I believe that something must be done and any of these plans is far better than nothing. For me the basic question is, what kind of society do we want? I remember counting for 10.9 percent of the GDP in Switzerland, 10.7 percent in Germany, 9.7 percent in Canada and 9.5 percent in France, according to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.

I don’t hear the people opposed to the Democratic plans offering any solution of their own. All they seem to be doing is trying to manipulate the populace with fear. “Obama wants to kill your Granny” is the latest outrageous distortion. All I’ve heard from the Republicans is “do nothing.” I’m not thrilled about the plans coming out of Congress. I think we should have a single payer system — that would clear out an enormous amount of inefficiency in the system and reduce total costs. But I believe that something must be done and any of these plans is far better than nothing.

For me the basic question is, what kind of society do we want? I remember the rich people I know, so that might not be so great. I do like smart people, unless they mention MENSA.

I could go on, but I think you get the point. Bull wants veto add that I lost two million to him playing “Rock, Paper, Scissors,” but it doesn’t count since I don’t intend to pay. The question that sprouts from this exercise in self deprivation, or self mutilation, is how my life might have changed if I’d put my money in XYZ, Inc. instead of Lanham Lumber. I’d probably be retired, but since I enjoy my work, I’m not sure that would be such a good thing. I just wouldn’t feel right about working if there were unemployed anesthesiologists who needed the money. I’d feel obligated to fly first class and ski at Vail rather than Steamboat. I’d resent the airline and miss my friends in Steamboat. I’d hang around rich people, but I don’t like most of the rich people I know, so that might not be so great. I do like smart people, unless they mention MENSA.

We wouldn’t delay painting the house or repairing the retaining wall. We wouldn’t be debating new carpet versus hardwood. We’d install hardwood and cover the floors with Oriental rugs. Lizzie loves her car, but it has 192,000 miles and should be replaced. Last year was tough for XYZ. The value of my shares would have fallen from roughly $80 million to just over $17 million, and I would have been sick about it. As it is, I’m quite healthy, and I have something to write about this week. I’m delighted for my friend who offered me a share of her company for what seemed like a lot of money at the time. Mine is a pretty funny investment history. I just wonder why I’m not laughing.

... MC SCHOOLS continued from page 6

The federal government has allocated a minimum of $1.348,952 to the Macon County Board of Education. The money will be used to construct the new K-4 school and build a new gym at the Nantahala School. QZAB funds can be used to assist local education agencies and schools to establish qualified zone academies in partnership with local businesses for the repair and renovation of older buildings.

For 2008, the federal government allocated $12.6 million and for 2009, $44.09 million. The “partnership” aspect represents a 10% in-kind match from local partners. That money will be used for a new roof, heating, air-conditioning and electrical components at Franklin High School and to make internal renovations at Nantahala School which will make it more energy efficient. Dropped ceilings will be installed, lighting fixtures will be replaced and the roof will be replaced.

Meanwhile, at Highlands School, the work has begun on the soccer field, and work is nearing finished on the new bathrooms in the elementary wing. The next board of education meeting is Tuesday, Aug. 11 at 6 pm.

... SALAZRULO continued from page 5

and they were probably right. Disney, fearing a backlash, withdrew and left us holding 100 nearly worthless acres of farmland.

I could go on, but I think you get the point. Bull wants to add that I lost two million to him playing “Rock, Paper, Scissors,” but it doesn’t count since I don’t intend to pay. The question that sprouts from this exercise in self deprivation, or self mutilation, is how my life might have changed if I’d put my money in XYZ, Inc. instead of Lanham Lumber. I’d probably be retired, but since I enjoy my work, I’m not sure that would be such a good thing. I just wouldn’t feel right about working if there were unemployed anesthesiologists who needed the money. I’d feel obligated to fly first class and ski at Vail rather than Steamboat. I’d resent the airline and miss my friends in Steamboat. I’d hang around rich people, but I don’t like most of the rich people I know, so that might not be so great. I do like smart people, unless they mention MENSA.

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McKenzie Thompson HS Class of 2005

A believer in the value of knowledge, McKenzie is on the road to success which she attributes to the support she received as a Highlands School graduate.

McKenzie, Highlands School graduate Class of 2005, has a B.A. in Journalism and Mass Communications (BAJM) and French Minor from UNC-Chapel Hill and is working with Duke Medicine Office of Marketing and Creative Services as a designer.

“Knowledge is quite chameleon. There are often efforts to tame, refine or constrain it, but knowledge remains unruly. No, knowledge does not lie dormant on some forgotten shelf; it is vivacious, answering our questions, questioning our answers, and inviting us to admire the concurrence of Life’s beautiful simplicity and bustling complexity. Knowledge, compassion and action are the keys to eradicating, and more importantly, preventing the problems that plague the well-being of ourselves, our communities and our environs.”

I commend the Town of Highlands for its commitment to further education and pursuit of knowledge through financial aid, and I am grateful for the support I received during my wonderful undergraduate years at UNC. My hope is that Highlands’ youth will pursue knowledge passionately, and that the community will continue to help open their minds and doors of opportunity and be able to continue to provide them with outstanding support.

The Town of Highlands Scholarship Fund began in 1975 and has grown to $785,000, with the interest disbursed to graduates of Highlands School both heading for trade schools, colleges and universities and enrolled at higher education institutions.

The new short-term goal of the fundraising committee is to be able to fund full tuition for at least one year for this year’s rising freshman class at Highlands School.

The long-term goal is to be able to fund the entire tuition for all of the school’s graduates.

To help, please send a tax deductible donation in with your utility bill or take a donation to Town Hall (temporarily in the Highlands Village Shopping Center on N.C. 106). If you want to help with year’s fundraising efforts, call Gloria at 828-342-2302.

Its main fundraiser is the Golf Classic set for Monday, Aug. 17 this year. There is still time to register. Call David Cull at the Cullasaja Country Club for information at 526-3531.

Register now for the Town of Highlands Scholarship Fund Golf Classic Monday, August 17 (See form on page 11).
Surgical Expertise That Makes A World Of Difference... That’s Not Worlds Away.

NO MATTER WHERE YOU CALL HOME... you can feel confident in the expertise and experience of our board-certified general surgeons, F. Augustus Dozier, MD, FACS, and William J. "Billy" Noell, Jr., MD, FACS. Utilizing the latest laparoscopic and conventional surgical techniques, they have decades of experience that will help you recover from such procedures as hernia repair, gallbladder removal, colon and intestinal surgery, breast surgery, melanoma surgery, surgical biopsies and more.

And because Highlands-Cashiers Hospital accepts the majority of health plans (Blue Cross Blue Shield, UnitedHealthcare, Medicare and others), driving up the mountain for our highly personalized care doesn’t have to mean paying higher costs. We do everything possible to make sure you can afford the surgical care you need.

With our board-certified anesthesiologists and veteran team of surgical nurses, you can rest easy knowing that your surgery and recovery are in the hands of highly skilled professionals who are making a world of difference - close to home.

For more information on general surgery services, call 828-526-2371.
 Episcopal Church offers week of food at discount prices with no strings attached

Place orders at the church by noon Aug. 17 for pickup Aug. 22

The Episcopal Church of the Incarnation, as part of their Outreach Program, will begin Angel Food Ministries this month. Angel Food is available in quantities that fit into a medium-sized box at $30 per unit - retail price $65.

Each month's menu is different than the previous month and consists of both fresh and frozen items.

Generally, one unit of food feeds a family of four for about one week or a single senior citizen for almost a month.

Specialty boxes such as steaks, chicken and pork are also offered. Angel Food is always purchased from top food suppliers. Providing quality, nutritious food at significant discounts on a regular basis is one practical way to give people a "hand up" during difficult times.

Angel Food Ministries participates in the Food Stamp Program. This program is designed to help anyone who needs assistance with good nutrition.

There are no applications to complete or qualifications to which participants must adhere, and there are no restrictions, conditions or forms to fill out to purchase Angel Food. This food relief program is open to one and all. There is no limit to the number of units or bonus foods an individual can receive.

Angel Food orders can be picked up for at the office of the Episcopal Church of the Incarnation Monday through Friday, from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Payment is by cash or EBT cards only. No checks.

The deadline for August orders is noon Monday, Aug. 17. Distribution will be Saturday morning, Aug. 22 at the Episcopal Church from 9-10 a.m.

For further information call 526-9191 or 526-9889. The August menu can be picked up at the church office.

Angel Food Ministries is a non-profit, non-denominational organization dedicated to providing food relief and financial support to communities throughout the United States. This program began in 1994 in Monroe, GA and has grown to serve thousands of families every month across 35 states.
Tales from the Burkot lounge

About 11 years ago (in an appropriate age joke here) I was a wide-eyed freshman at Campbell University, ready to "grab the world by the tail" (but still incapable of doing my own laundry) and begin my college career by making new friends.

One of my first experiences at Burkot Dorm in Buies Creek was sitting in the lounge area ($15,000 a year and we still didn't have cable in our rooms) and watching sports with some of the other new freshmen. There was really no other place to go on campus to hang out, and certainly not anywhere else to watch a ball game. It was here that I met some guys that would become friends for life.

Whether they were from New York, Maine, Georgia or Florida — we developed some pretty long lasting relationships in those first few weeks in the lounge — partly out of common ground, but mostly out of necessity.

The reason the lounge was so important was not only because it was a central location in which to hang out, but it was also a place for discussion and opinion amongst people from all different areas and backgrounds.

It was in the lounge where we argued who was the greatest basketball or baseball player of all time, who was the greatest coach ever, who had the hottest cheerleaders (come on, we were 18 year-old boys, after all) and we decided which moments in history were those that deserved reverence or disdain.

The Burkot lounge was like a local sports bar with plenty of regulars, only without the cigarette smoke or booze and with a terrible girl-to-guy ratio. It was PTI or Around the Horn before those shows were even thought of, and with local college kids scoring points rather than overpaid sportswriters and their phony TV personas.

It was here that you had Josh, Kevin and Andy representing the great state of Maine and lamenting the fact that the Red Sox and Patriots were cursed (Little did they know that New England would become the sports capital of the world in just a few years).

We had Darren the Yankees fan, a true Yankee fan who did his homework and knew all of the tradition and history (and how not to alienate the locals by being obnoxious).

There were Jamie and Casey, true southerners who loved NASCAR, the Braves and Tar Heel basketball.

One of my first experi-

ences at Burkot Dorm in Buies Creek was sitting in the lounge area ($15,000 a year and we still didn’t have cable in our rooms) and watching sports with some of the other new freshmen. There was really no other place to go on campus to hang out, and certainly not anywhere else to watch a ball game. It was here that I met some guys that would become friends for life.

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It was in the lounge where we argued who was the greatest basketball or baseball player of all time, who was the greatest coach ever, who had the hottest cheerleaders (come on, we were 18 year-old boys, after all) and we decided which moments in history were those that deserved reverence or disdain.

The Burkot lounge was like a local sports bar with plenty of regulars, only without the cigarette smoke or booze and with a terrible girl-to-guy ratio. It was PTI or Around the Horn before those shows were even thought of, and with local college kids scoring points rather than overpaid sportswriters and their phony TV personas.

It was here that you had Josh, Kevin and Andy representing the great state of Maine and lamenting the fact that the Red Sox and Patriots were cursed (Little did they know that New England would become the sports capital of the world in just a few years).

We had Darren the Yankees fan, a true Yankee fan who did his homework and knew all of the tradition and history (and how not to alienate the locals by being obnoxious).

There were Jamie and Casey, true southerners who loved NASCAR, the Braves and Tar Heel basketball.

Rob, the quintessential long suffering Cubs fan; Colin the Miami Dolphins trivia buff and Pat the Jets fan, who never failed to respond to a cross campus ESPN battle cry.

These guys kept you on your toes with their knowledge of their teams, their idols and the cities that they loved and with more than a little crassness when necessary. The personalities, the discussions and the rapid-fire insults were great at sharpening your wit and toughening your skin — all while building friendships in the process.

It was in the lounge that we watched the flap that was the XFL (Vince McMahon’s attempt at creating another football league). We watched Connecticut shock the world by beating what looked to be an invincible Duke team for the 1999 National Championship. (Still the most disappointing loss I have ever went through as a fan... simply devastating)

We criticized Super Bowl commercials in that lounge, laughed at commentators and developed a collective deep-seeded hatred for Billy Packer.

Perhaps the greatest memory of that particular time period was watching the home run chase between Sammy Sosa and Mark McGwire with about 30-35 people in that lounge every night, waiting to see if one of them would break Roger Maris’ long-standing home run record.

We were all there when McGwire hit number 62, and I can imagine that the cheer from us could have been heard throughout Buies Creek (and even past the lone stoplight in town). It’s a shame to think that those numbers will be tainted due to the use of steroids, but it still doesn’t take away from the magic of that night.

Now, 11 years later, I still talk to many of the guys who shared the lounge with me that first year. Some are great friends who have been in weddings and other get-togethers, others are simply Facebook friends who share an occasional comment or two. However, I am still indebted to those guys with whom I shared conversations and memories that first year. They certainly helped get me through my freshman year, but they also helped to build upon the love of sports that continues with me to this day. Ultimately, the love of sports can be a common bond for many people, and I am certainly glad that I was able to be a part of the lounge and what it meant to all of us that first year.
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<td>Fax: 828-526-8764</td>
<td>1540 Blue Valley Rd.</td>
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This summer, Highlands youngsters attended a basketball camp put on by Coach Brett Lamb and his Highlands School varsity girls team. Camp-goers learned the ins and outs of basketball through drills and mock games.

Photo by Stephanie McCall

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Aspiring basketball players learn at camp

This summer, Highlands youngsters attended a basketball camp put on by Coach Brett Lamb and his Highlands School varsity girls team. Camp-goers learned the ins and outs of basketball through drills and mock games.

Photo by Stephanie McCall
The engineering necessary to balance the wheel, as called for in the play script. Rotated to reveal several bottles of wine.

Bill has constructed with spruce and pine lumber an authentic looking water wheel. Bill agreed, perhaps with some reluctance, that the waterwheel took some thought and additional carpentry, but Bill has managed to create just what the script demanded. A visit to Bill and Evelyn Hall's charming rustic house revealed that Bill has done most of the remodeling of the home himself, building cupboards, dressers and many handsome pieces of furniture.

On that world-wide-web, where all and anything can be found, Virginia discovered plans for constructing different-sized wheels, mainly for gardens. Next needed was a carpenter. Then came Bill Hall to mind, a retired general manager soon to celebrate his eightieth birthday, who has worked for a number of years in HCP sets.

In the workshop at his home in Horse Cove, Bill has constructed with spruce and pine lumber an authentic looking water wheel, six feet in diameter, that can be rotated to reveal several bottles of wine stored in the spaces between the blades of the wheel, as called for in the play script. The engineering necessary to balance the wheel took some thought and additional carpentry, but Bill has managed to create just what the script demanded.

Andrew's interest in cooking started when he was eight watching his mother and grandmother cook. Andrew recalled that watching Julia Child was a part of his grandmother's daily routine. Andrew was born in Miami and his first job was with Mary and Fried Chicken. Andrew moved to Highlands in 1988 lured by the cool weather and the charm of Highlands. Andrew is married to Suzanne McDavid and the couple has two children, Remy and Sydney.

Andrew's parents, Alan and Marta, opened the Veranda in 1981 after moving to Highlands in the late 70s. When asked about the hot pepper sauce collection, Andrew said that his father started the collection and at one time had 1,500 different varieties. Andrew said his father "just loved" hot food. The collection has been reduced to about 300.

Andrew and his sister, Marlene Alvarez, took over the ownership of the restaurant in 2000 and continues the outstanding reputation and quality started by his parents. Andrew said a trip to Hong Kong in 1996 had a major impact on his style of cooking. He jokingly referred to the open markets where you could literally purchase "fresh meat on the hoof." The many stalls offering "just picked" fruits and vegetables inspired his use of fresh, local ingredients and when possible, grown in his own garden.

On the Veranda has been awarded the Wine Spectator Award of Excellence each year starting in 1989. The award is based on a restaurant's wine list, menu and customer feedback. The restaurant has for several years received the Wine Enthusiast Magazine Award of Distinction. On the Veranda was recently cited in the Wall Street Journal as being located in what may be the last Joe Webb house built.

To make a reservation for the class or for additional information, please contact the CLE office at 828-526-8811 or by e-mail at clehighlands@yahoo.com.
The Chamber music final gala concert is
Sun., Aug. 9

The Highlands-Cashiers Chamber Music Festival’s dazzling 2009 season climaxes with the Festival Gala Concert and Dinner Party, 5 p.m. Sunday, Aug. 9, at the Martin-Lipsonco Performing Arts Center in Highlands.

The concert will feature The Eroica Trio performing Casadesus’s “Trio for Piano, Violin, and Cello in C Major,” Lalo’s “Piano Trio #4 in C Minor, Op. 7,” and Bernstein’s “West Side Story Suite.”

The most sought-after trio in the world, the Grammy-nominated Eroica Trio has won a global following with its flawless technical virtuosity, irresistible enthusiasm and sensuality. The group is the vanguard of a new generation of artists who are changing the face of classical music. One of the first all-female chamber ensembles to reach the top echelons of the field, the Eroica Trio is helping to break an age-old gender barrier.

But it’s their supreme musicianship that’s vaulted them to the top ranks. In addition to being perennial HCCMF favorites, the Eroica Trio performs at music festivals throughout the world, including the Hollywood Bowl, Aspen, Mostly Mozart, Ravinia, and Spoleto, Italy. That’s in addition to music education, concerts, master-classes, and special children’s shows at schools and colleges throughout the country.

The trio’s recognition extends beyond the world of chamber music to features in magazines such as Elle, Glamour, Vanity Fair, Bon Appetit and Detour. Grand Mamier has created a new cocktail dubbed “The Eroica,” unveiled for the release of the group’s “Passion” recording. Chateau Sainte Michelle, a vineyard in Seattle, also named one of its vintage Rieslings in honor of the trio.

Sunday’s performance will be followed by a reception and dinner at Wildcat Cliffs Country Club in Highlands. It’s a celebration of a festival that’s earned national recognition.

For tickets or more information, call (828) 526-9060 or visit www.hcmusicfestival.org.

Chamber music final gala concert relies on ticket sales, fundraising dinners at Wolfang’s Restaurant & Wine Bistro and Lake-side Restaurant, and benefits like that staged by John Collette Fine Art. But those just aren’t enough to maintain the entire enterprise.

That’s why the festival offers the Feasts of the Festival. They’re an opportunity to meet interesting people and enjoy wonderful food and drink in setting of some of the area’s most beautiful private homes.

“Mountain Fare” is the irresistible theme presented by Jody and Wood Lovell at 6 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 13. The menu features Trout Beurre Blanc paired with Special Appetizers, Greens, and Potatoes. Cost is $125 per person.

Nancy Rampell and David Blum will offer “Brunch with a View from Sweet Tart Top” at 12:30 p.m. Saturday, Aug. 15. There’ll be Mimosas, Bloody Marys, Frittatas, Breakfast Meats and Special Breads. Cost is $100 per person.

“Catch and Parchment” is hosted by Brenda and Stewart Manning at 6:30 p.m. Sunday, Aug. 30. The menu will be prepared and presented by Last Resort Grill of Athens, Georgia, paired with appropriate wines from the Manning collection. Cost is $125 per person.

An Umbrian Feast on Satulah” will be staged at 6 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 12, by Carter and Nancy Burns. Antipasti, homemade pasta and a special surprise entrée are on the menu. Cost is $125.

Christine Johnson Lucas and Martyn Lucas will host “Prosecco on the Patio” at 12:30 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 13. The menu offers Traditional Brunch Fare with Flair. Cost is $100 per person.

Ann Julian and Wright and Betsy Tumer are offering “A Casual Fall Supper” at 6:30 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 24. The menu promises Barbecue with All the Fixings and Baked Apples. Cost is $100 per person.

“Texas Barbecue,” complete with brisket, ribs and fun sides will be served up by Peter and Valerie Whitcup at 6:30 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 8. Cost is $125.

For reservations or more information, call (828) 526-9060.
The Joy of Chickens

Chickens are hot. As more and more people become interested in healthy eating, chicken coops are popping up in the most unexpected places, including Manhattan! City-dwellers are now hearing the unfamil iar sounds of ducking and crowing from their neighbors’ yards.

If you’ve been thinking about trying your hand at raising chickens, the Hudson Library has a program for you. On Friday, August 14 at 2 p.m., Caroline Barber will bring a favorite hen from her flock to the library and give a talk on the pleasures and challenges of poultry farming.

Mrs. Barber began raising chickens when her husband, who grew up on a farm, suggested they get some chicks. Gathering freshly laid eggs for a breakfast omelet is one of the main pleasures of owning your own chickens, Mrs. Barber said. “Once you begin raising your own chickens you realize how old the eggs in the supermarket are.”

But her message is also a cautionary one. “Chickens are more trouble than I thought. And you need to protect them from predators, and we have lots of them around here: foxes, bobcats, and raccoons. I have friends who live in Houston — right in the city — who have chickens. They have their own challenges, but certainly fewer predators.”

Mrs. Barber only has hens, because you only need roosters if you want fertile eggs or to raise your own chicks. Hens lay fine without a rooster present. She orders chicks from catalogs in which you can select from breeds with particular qualities such as “good layer,” “good.setter,” or egg color. Her flock is made up of Golden Comets, Mot tled Javas, Partridge Rocks, Black Australorps, and New Hampshire Reds, all of which lay eggs of various shades of brown. Other colors of eggs include blue, green, and even red.

This talk is part of the Together We Read program, which this year is featuring “Animal Vegetable Miracle” by Barbara Kingsolver. Ms. Kingsolver and her family decided to try and live outside of the industrial-food system for one year — vowing that they’d only eat food raised by themselves or within 50 miles of their home or learn to live without it. The book is part memoir and part journalistic investigation into the unsafe and unhealthy way Americans eat today.

Together We Read is a reading and discussion program for the Western North Carolina region. The group’s website (www.togetherweread.org) asks the simple question: “What if all of WNC read the same book?” The program’s primary purpose is to foster a sense of community through the reading and discussion of the region’s best writers. The program began in 2002 and is considered to be one of the best community reading programs in the nation.

If you are interested in learning how you can grow more of your own food, the Hudson Library has many books on vegetable gardening and small-scale farming. In the new book section you’ll find “The Joy of Keeping Chickens,” by Jennifer Megyesi (636.5M), a Vermont organic farmer. The book draws on Ms Megyesi’s own experience as a poultry farmer to provide detailed information about every thing from getting started with chicken to recipes for using your eggs and chicken meat.

For more information about Mrs. Barber’s talk, call the Hudson Library at 526-3031. The program is free. The Hudson Library is located at 554 Main Street, Highlands.

More fundraisers to come at the Highlands Playhouse

The Highlands Playhouse has moved toward the close of its 71st season, but not without a few more fundraisers along the way. The Board of Directors has been working very hard this season to raise money for the Playhouse.

The remainder of the fundraisers includes the 2009 Golf Tournament, a Raffle Benefit hosted by John Collette Fine Art, the Save the Playhouse Campaign and the fifth annual Highlands Playhouse Antique Show. The Playhouse is also continuing to sell the Bryant Art Glass exclusively designed plates with the Highlands Playhouse logo for $20 each. The handcrafted plates are on sale at the PlayhouseBoxOffice on 362 Oak Street in downtown Highlands.

The 2009 Golf Tournament will be held August 10 at the newly renovated Old Edwards Club at Highlands Cove. There will be shotgun start at 1 p.m. The cost to play is $150, to sponsor a hole is $200, and to play/sponsor a hole is $300. The tournament price includes greens fees and cart, hors’ d’oeuvres, auction, dinner and prizes. Special events include ‘Hole in One’ (closest to the pin) and a putting contest. You may purchase dinner for a guest at $30 each. Mulligans will be available at $5 each before the tournament. For a registration form, please call or visit the Highlands PlayhouseBoxOffice 828-526-2695.

John Collette Fine Art is holding a benefit at the Playhouse on July 30. More info: 526-3031.

The fifth annual Highlands Playhouse Antique Show closes the season. The show will be held at the Highlands Civic Center on Sept. 25 and 26 from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. and on Sept. 27 from Noon-5 p.m. Tickets for the Antique Show are $12 and will be available at the Highlands Playhouse Box Office soon. There will be a Preview Party on Sept. 24 from 6-8 p.m. Tickets for the Preview Party are $35. Come view some of the finest art and antiques from all over the county. It’s an event you won’t want to miss.

Don’t forget! Sunday, Aug. 9 the LAST PERFORMANCE of the Shakespeare in the Park Series. Much Ado About Nothing begins at 7 p.m. in Pine Street Park. Bring chairs, blankets and a picnic. Admission is FREE!
• At Fr essers Eatery, Cy Timmons live from 6 p.m.
• Hal Phillips on piano from 7-9:30 p.m. at Skyline Lodge and Restaurant on Flat Mountain Road.
• Highlands Wine & Cheese, at Falls on Main, complimentary wine samplings during business hours.

• Fridays & Sundays
• Highlands-Cashiers Music Festival Concerts every Friday at 6 p.m. and 5 p.m. on Sundays at PAC in Highlands through Aug. 9. For more information, call (828) 526-9060 or visit www.h-cmusicfestival.org.

• Every Third Saturday
• The Highlands Memorial Post #370 of the American Legion meets at the Shortoff Baptist Church. Breakfast is at 9 a.m. Meeting is at 10 a.m. All veterans are invited to attend.

• Saturdays
• At Cypress International Restaurant, live music beginning at 9 p.m. No cover.
• At Highlands Wine & Cheese, Falls on Main, Wine Flights from 4-6:30 p.m. Five wines, artisan cheeses and specialty foods. $10 per person.
• NA open meeting every Saturday at 7:30 p.m. of the ACC Satellite Group at the Graves Community Church, 242 Hwy 107 N. in Cashiers. Call 888-764-0385.

• Saturdays & Sundays
• Highlands-Cashiers Music Festival Concerts at 5 p.m. at the Albert Carlton-Cashiers Community Library. For tickets or more information, call (828) 526-9060 or visit www.h-cmusicfestival.org.

Through Saturday, Aug. 15
• Helen Frankenthaler and the Color Field Painters exhibition at The Bascom. Admission is free. For information, call (828) 526-4949 or visit www.thebascom.org.

Through Sun., Aug. 16
• At Highlands Playhouse, Pump Boys and Dinnetes, opening July 23 at 8 p.m. with an Opening Night Reception catered by New Mountain Events. Performances Tuesday-Sunday are at 8 p.m. and 2 p.m. on Sundays. Call the Highlands Playhouse Box Office at 828-526-2695 or visit the 362 Oak Street location.

• Thurs., Aug. 6
• Bingo at the Community Building to benefit The Highlands Playhouse, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

• Fri., Aug. 7
• Free Mountain Music Concerts at Highlands School old gym, dancing begins at 6:45 p.m. and concerts begin at 7:30. Sponsored by Just for You Relays for Life team Appalachian Bluegrass, Country Cloggin’ Kids and Mountain Sound of Cashiers.

• High Mountain Squares will dance at the Macon County Community Building on route 441 South from 7-9 p.m. Marty Northrup from Columbus, NC will be the caller. We dance Western Style Square Dancing, mainstream and plus levels. Everyone is welcome. For information call 828-349-0905, 828-369-8344, 706-782-0943.

• Sat. & Sun., Aug. 8-9
• Cashiers Quilters Guild Quilt Show August 8th & 9th, 10-4 P.M. at the Sapphire Valley Community Center (3 mi. east of Cashiers off Hwy 64) Numerous quilts. Quilts of Valor display, boutique, vendors, quilt raffle. Arts and Crafts Show in same area. Everyone is welcome!
• FREE Sapphire Valley Art and Crafts Festival. More than 90 artists and crafters displaying and demonstrating their work. Live music, food, drinks. Rte. 64 3 miles east of Cashiers. For more information, call 828-743-1163.

Saturday, Aug. 8
• At Cyranos Bookshop, author Charles Martin signing his latest book from 3-5 p.m.
• THE BIG DQ, an apologizes simulcast conference, will be held at Community Bible Church on Saturday, 9:30am-4:30pm. This conference will answer many teens’ questions before the school year starts.
不易 suggested donation, includes lunch. There will be about a 2-hour break after the conference and then a worship rally. 828-526-4685 or ryan@cbcbascom.org.

• Great Smokies Home School Conference at the Franklin Covenant Church. $10 per family. Pre-register by July 31. For more information call Anna Henderson at 828-507-4896.
• The Nantahala Hiking Club will take a moderate-to-strenuous 6-mile hike on the Chattooga River Trail from Whiteside Cove Road to the Iron Bridge, past river and waterfall views, big trees, rock formations, and maybe wildflowers. Some scrambling over rocks required. Meet at the Cashiers Wachovia Bank (in back) at 10 a.m. Drive to the Iron Bridge, parking is limited. Shuttle at the Iron Bridge pre-arranged. Bring water, lunch; wear sturdy shoes. Call leaders Mike and Sue Kettles, 743-1079, for reservations. Visitors are welcome, but no pets please.

Sun., Aug. 9
• The Highlands Plateau Audubon Society will have its annual picnic at the Village Green in Cashiers at 5 p.m. Please bring $5 for hamburgers and a covered dish. We will provide drinks and utensils. Call Mary Lou Waas at 743-3256 reservations or email Janice Shure at jshure@belkysouth.net.

• Highlands-Cashiers Music Festival Final Gala Concert and Dinner Party at PAC at 5 p.m. featuring the Eroica Trio playing trios of Cassado Lalo and Bernstein’s West side Story Suite. For tickets or more information, call (828) 526-9060 or visit www.h-cmusicfestival.org.

• At First Presbyterian Church, Kirkin’ O’ The Tartan at the 11 a.m. worship service.

Monday, Aug. 10
• The Highlands Playhouse 2009 Golf Tournament will be held at the newly renovated Old Edwards Club at Highlands Cove. There will be a shotgun start at 1 p.m. The cost to play is $150, to sponsor a hole is $200.

• See EVENTS page 30

Stacked stone exhibition opens this week at The Bascom

Gravity-defying stone arches and totem shapes will transform The Bascom's campus this week as “Dave Russell: Stacked Stone Sculpture” opens Aug. 6.

In his found-rock sculptures, Russell makes use of Western North Carolina's abundant granite supply removed with permission from farms, dumps and riverbeds. Look for Russell’s creations on The Bascom's Nature Trail and elsewhere on-campus.

Russell makes moments in time that would not ordinarily occur. He says that Western North Carolina is blessed with good rocks, and granite is one example of a plentiful material. He is drawn to rocks that have the edges, irregularities and “grippiness” that he needs for making his signature stacked stone sculptures.

“These stacked stone works of art celebrate the unblemished green spaces that form the landscape west and north of The Bascom’s new headquarters building,” said Kaye Gorecki, The Bascom’s artistic director. “We invite you to come and delight in these unexpected stone creations as you enjoy The Bascom’s beautiful new green space. This exhibition helps signal the art center's commitment to ecology and green practices, and celebrate the wealth of regional and national artists who create works that complement the landscape.”

The Nature Trail was made possible in part by Horst and Margaret Winkler. Admission to all Bascom exhibitions is free. The exhibition continues through Oct. 30.

The Bascom's new address is 323 Franklin Road, Highlands.

For more information, visit www.thebascom.org or call (828) 526-4949.

"Stacked stone exhibition opens this week at The Bascom"

Works like this stacked stone creation, by sculptor Dave Russell, will be on display outdoors at The Bascom beginning this week. All are welcome.

‘Pump Boys and Dinnetes’ still going strong at The Playhouse

Pump Boys and Dinnetes, sponsored by Old Edwards Inn and Spa, has been delighting audiences for three weeks. Audience members can’t stop raving about the talent and fun that they are seeing onstage at the Highlands Playhouse. “A true delight, I’ve seen it elsewhere and this tops them all!”

Pump Boys and Dinnetes is filled with energetic songs, lively dance routines, and good-ole fashioned fun! Songs like “Be Good or Be Gone,” “Catfish,” and “Farmer Tan” will evoke the country gal or guy in you – it’s a hootin’, hollerin’ good time.

The show takes place along Highway 57, split between the Pump Boys Gas Station and the Dinnetes Double Cupp Diner. The guys drive the women crazy as they both serve up songs about life, love, and relationships. It is a must-see.The Chicago-Sun Times says, “This is sweet cherry Coke entertainment. Just right for summer time consumption.” Pump Boys and Dinnetes, sponsored by Old Edwards Inn and Spa, run through August 16.

Show times are Tuesday-Saturday at 8 p.m. with Sunday matinees at 2 p.m. Tickets are $30 for adults and $12 for children. You may visit the Box Office at 362 Oak Street in downtown Highlands or you may call 828-526-2695 and order by phone.

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Show times are Tuesday-Saturday at 8 p.m. with Sunday matinees at 2 p.m. Tickets are $30 for adults and $12 for children. You may visit the Box Office at 362 Oak Street in downtown Highlands or you may call 828-526-2695 and order by phone.
Having only been in Highlands since January 25, I would like to offer three humble observations about our town. You’ve heard the old saying that sometimes you can’t see the forest for the trees. As a pastor I understand this. Every week I have to force myself to view the ministry through the eyes of those who may be visiting for the first time or may be very new to the church. This is a good exercise for any church or any business that desires to grow. The following observations from fresh eyes are also a way of saying thank you to the people of Highlands.

Highlands is certainly hospitable! It’s not easy moving a wife, a son and a daughter to a new town. Yet here in Highlands it’s not all that difficult. A town is only as good as its people. The people here are open, caring, and they look out for one another. The church in town really desires cooperation and unity and the citizens of Highlands know the difference between talk and genuine small town affection for one another. This town knows the biblical “One Another’s: Pray for one another, love one another, carry one another’s burdens, submit to one another, devote yourselves one to another. Thank you Highlands, for being so very hospitable.

Highlands honors the church: It is so refreshing to see and experience a community who understands the centrality of the church in everyday life. It is not everywhere in America where the church is shown so much respect. The town and the surrounding area here seem to get it. The town will never go any farther than the church. As the church goes so goes the town and so goes the nation.

Highlands is very hungry for the Word of God: I have been so surprised by the overwhelmingly obvious desire among the people of Highlands for the preaching of the Word of God. There exists in this town a God-given gift, an appetite, and thirst for something more or something less than Scripture. Things I see in the scriptures are happening on our mountain. On the road to Emmaus, Jesus opened the scripture to two men as they walked. The men later explained that their hearts were burning within them as Christ shared the Word of God (Luke 24:27,32). Familiies are coming alive to the Word. Students’ hearts are burning within them as they are increasing in passionate about the truth in Scripture.

The church has a mandate to offer people what they cannot find in any other venue (Matt. 28:20). The church has the Bible and the church needs to focus on rightly dividing the Word of truth. For the word of God is living...
**POLICE & FIRE REPORTS**

The following are the Highlands Police Dept. log entries from July 23. Only the names of persons arrested, issued a Class-3 misdemeanor, or public officials have been used.

**July 23**
- At 4 p.m., officers responded to a call of a hotel guest who said his daughter was missing. She was found in town OK.
- At 5:35 p.m., a fanny pack found at the Farmers Market was delivered to the police station. Officers worked on locating the owner.

**July 27**
- At 8:30 p.m., Gerardo Martinez Tiapa, 23, was arrested for driving a stolen car, driving without insurance, without a license and with a false license plate. He was released on a secured $1,500 bond.
- At 7:45 a.m., a license plate found on Spring Street was turned in to the police. When tracked they found it belonged to a vehicle with no insurance and there was a “pick up” order on the plate.
- At 3 p.m., the larceny of a patio table and chair set was reported at a residence on Hickory Hill.
- At 3 p.m., the larceny of a canoe valued at $800 was reported at a residence at Cullasaja Drive and Mirror Lake Road. It has the numbers 414 stenciled on it.

**July 28**
- A suspicious vehicle was reported parked on S. 4th Street and Arnold Road. It was checked out and determined to be OK.
- At 10:40 a.m., the dept. responded to an accident at Main and Oak streets. There were no injuries.
- At 11:37 a.m., a larceny of $125 worth of arts and collectibles was reported stolen from Twigs on N. 4th Street when a woman allegedly picked up the articles and put them in her car without paying for them.
- During the week, police officers responded to 1 alarm and issued 15 citations.

The following are the Highlands Fire & Rescue Dept. log entries from July 30:

**July 30**
- At 11:30 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to assist EMS with a medical call. The victim was taken to the hospital.
- At 9:38 a.m., the dept. responded to an alarm on Hapholt Drive. It was set off by breakfast burning on the stove.
- At 10:11 p.m., the dept. responded to an alarm at a residence on Walkingstick Road. It was cancelled.

**Aug. 1**
- At 4:04 p.m., the dept. responded to a call concerning missing hikers. They had hiked down Glen Falls to Blue Valley and instead of taking a left back toward Highlands, they took a right. They were found and taken back to their car.
- At 8:06 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to assist EMS with a medical call at a residence on Dixon Drive. The victim wasn’t taken to the hospital.
- At 1:21 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to assist EMS with a medical call on Main Street concerning an elderly man. He was taken to the hospital.
- The Dept. Dive Team went to the swimming hole at Bust Your Butt Falls to practice their diving skills.

**From the Dept.:**
Robbie Forrester, of the Highlands Fire & Rescue Dept., asks citizens to trim back their driveways, and foliage around their 911 numbers and fire hydrants.
Also, don’t miss the department’s annual Open House, Saturday, Aug. 8 from 11-3. There will be free hot dog plates and rides on the fire truck.

**FUN & GAMES**

**Hex-a-Ku© 2009**
by Pete Sarjeant and Don Cook

**OBJECT:**
A mystery word or phrase using all different letters is designated by circled squares (other short words will appear when solving, for which a list of meanings is provided). Every puzzle has a different mystery word or phrase (no spaces). Assign different letters to each square of each column and row. In addition, 3x2 cells in the puzzle layout have the same different letters. (This is similar to Sudoku but uses letters instead of numbers.)

**How to Solve:**
Determine the different letters among those given. Write in the mystery word using the clue and these letters. 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 blank squares according to the rules noted above. Focus your attention where the least number of letters are needed to complete a row, column or cell.

**Mystery Word:**
Fast moving water over rocks

**Across**
1. Man’s name (3)
2. golf expert hole strokes (3)

**Down**
3. Ego (2)
4. Radioactive measure unit (3)
5. Apartment (slang) (3)
6. Mineral spring resort (3)

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**PseudoCube©**
by Pete Sarjeant and Don Cook

#BZ3A Level of Difficulty - Moderate

**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 equalling the total of the three center numbers. One of the diagonals is shown with circles.

**THE CHALLENGE:**
Start with the three center numbers for each layer and the other numbers given. Now pour a cup of coffee, pick up a pencil and eraser and try to figure out where the other numbers belong. Good Luck!

Email: pseudocube8@aol.com.

**Solution to #AZ3A in July 30 issue**

**Solution to July 30 Hex-a-Ku**
Celebrating 100 years at the Methodist Church

On Sunday, August 16 the congregation at Highlands United Methodist Church will be celebrating 100 years of worship at their location at 315 Main Street. The day will begin at 10 am with a song and story in the sanctuary, a worship service at 11 am, and afterward a covered dish lunch.

According to Ran Shaffner’s book, “Heart of the Blue Ridge Highlands, North Carolina”, Highlands claimed two Methodist congregations beginning in 1882. It was not until 1904 when the members of the Methodist Episcopal Church South and the members of the Northern Methodist congregation decided to join together in a single congregation.

Buying the lot next to the Masonic Hall from Thomas and Harriet Parker for $250, the Methodists set out to build their building under the oversight of architect John Z. Gottwals. “The wind played havoc with the Methodists when on two separate occasions violent gusts blew down the rafters of the new structure. The new building was heated by a large potbellied stove that stood in the center of the sanctuary. There was no basement, no chapel, no Sunday School rooms, and until the mid-20s, oil lamps furnished the only lighting.”

The Community is invited to share this special time in the life of the Highlands United Methodist Church.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Thursday, Aug. 13
• The Highlands Nature Center will offer another in its series of free day hikes on Thursday with a moderately strenuous ramble down to “The Narrows” on the upper reaches of the Wild and Scenic Chattooga River. The hike will be about 4.5 miles round trip. Older children (over 10) are welcome. Please no dogs. The hike will be led by veteran area hiker, Joe Gatins. Bring a snack, water, and wear appropriate clothing and footwear (boots recommended), and river shoes or sandals for those who wish to get wet in the river. Leave from Highlands Nature Center, 9:30 a.m. There will be about 8 miles driving each way. Call 828-526-2002 for more information.
• The August meeting of The Western North Carolina Woodturners Club will meet on Thursday at 7 p.m. at the Blue Ridge School, in Glenville. Drive to the back of the school to the woodworking shop. Visitors are always welcomed. The club meets every second Thursday at the Blue Ridge School at 6 p.m. September through March and 7 p.m. April through August. Visit our web site at www.wncwoodturners.com.
• The League of Women Voters of Macon County will have a program on national League public policy positions and will discuss members interest and concerns on local issues at Tartan Hall at the First Presbyterian Church in Franklin. This will be an opportunity for prospective members, as well as current members, to understand League positions and achievements, and to help determine how our local League can best have an impact on issues. The annual membership business meeting will start promptly at 11:30, lunch is available at noon by reservation (call 754-5192 or email lwvmacon@wild-dog-mountain.info) and the program will begin at 12:15.

Wednesday, Aug. 14
• At Hudson Library at 2 pm: Caroline Barber will give a talk at the Hudson Library on the pleasures and challenges of raising chickens. Free. For more info call 526-3031.
• Saturday, Aug. 15
  • The Nantahala Club Picnic will be held at the Tassee Shelter on the Greenway in Franklin.

Sunday, Aug. 16
• The congregation at Highlands United Methodist Church will be celebrating 100 years of worship at their location at 315 Main Street. The day will begin at 10 am with a song and story in the sanctuary, a worship service at 11 am, and afterward a covered dish lunch.
• The Jackson County Republican Organization will hold an Orville Coward Forum on healthcare at 7 p.m. at the group’s headquarters, 482 West Main Street in downtown Sylva. The speaker will be Dr. Robert Peterson, Medical Director of Crescent Preferred Provider Organization, Inc., a health care provider organization based in Asheville, NC. He has been instrumental in making Crescent PPO a successful alternative to other similar organizations who provide health care management services for businesses and other organizations in the Western North Carolina area. As major changes to the health care system in the US are about to be made, there are multiple questions to be asked and answered. For additional information call 828-586-3577 or Republican Headquarters @ 828-586-4989.

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Sunday is last chance to see ‘Much Ado’ at Pine Street Park

On Sunday, August 16 the Highlands Playhouse will be presenting its last performance of Shakespeare’s Much Ado About Nothing. Admission is FREE. The show will begin at 7 p.m. at Pine Street Park in Highlands.

Much Ado About Nothing, Directed by Jeremy Miller featuring cast members (first row from left) Dillon Nelson, Danielle Bailey Miller, Gina Hawkins. (Second row from left) Barbara Kukor, Michelle Hott, Shannon Webber, Jeremy Miller, Matt Curtis, Jamey Bailey, Sarah Greene, Michele Gaglio, Stuart Armor

The Highlands Playhouse delivers a stellar retelling of Shakespeare’s Much Ado About Nothing which follows the love quarrel of the witty Beatrice and clever Benedick, as well as the hijinks of the rest of the townspople in Messina, Italy. Join the Highlands Playhouse Company for an evening of hilarity, mischief and love.

The last production is Aug. 9 at 7 p.m. in Pine Street Park in Highlands. As always, admission is FREE and picnics are encouraged. Bring blankets, chairs, and a friend and enjoy some of the finer things in life with the company of Much Ado About Nothing.
Volunteers from Mountain Findings, the community “Resale Shop” for furniture and household items has worked throughout the past year to raise funds to assist the many non-profit agencies in our area. Pictured below are representatives of Mountain Findings as they present checks to three of the agencies which received funds in 2009.

Jack Miller representing Mountain Findings presents a check to Mary Ann Creswell from the Highlands Emergency Council. “The people at the Highlands Emergency Council are so appreciative of the ongoing support that they receive from Mountain Findings”, Mrs. Creswell told Jack.

Mountain Findings Volunteer, Bruce Roellke is proud to present funds to Dr. Travis Goodloe of the Community Care Clinic.

Mountain Garden Club scholarship recipients

Pictured are the 2009-2010 recipients of scholarships from Mountain Garden Club. On the left is Andrew Lamar Billingsley, son of Mary Lee and Lamar Billingsley of Scaly Mountain, who will be pursuing studies in business/agriculture at Western Carolina University. On the right is Austin R. Brooks, son of Mary and William Brooks of Highlands, who will be pursuing studies in environmental conservation at Western Carolina University. The awards were presented at the July 13 MGC meeting by Elizabeth Little, co-chairman of the Scholarship Committee.