MC Planning Board turmoil is put to rest

After two-weeks of upheaval over the county commission's recent appointment to the county planning board, tempers have subsided and plans have been finalized concerning the future of that board. At the Monday, Dec. 13 county commission meeting, County Attorney Chester Jones presented information on expanding the county's planning board from 11 to 13 people – as requested by commissioners at the Dec. 6 meeting – but in one week that request changed.

At a planning board work session Tuesday, Dec. 7, planning board members voted unanimously to ask the county commission not to change the ordinance regulating the size of the planning board, but in one week that request changed.

‘Snow Days’ come with a price

Winter weather came fast and furious this year causing a two-hour delay at Highlands School on Friday and no school county-wide Monday and Tuesday. Since students are required to go to school 180 days a year, and because the state mandates the last day of school be June 10, school administrators have to get creative with make-up days.

Macon County School’s, Tuesday, Dec. 14 instructional day will take 2.2-mile easy hike to Kings Creek and Spoon Auger falls, with a modest climb to view each fall. Call leaders Mike and Susan Kettles, 743-1079.

A 22-pound Santa made with Kilwin's chocolate is being donated by Jerry Moore owner of Kilwin's in Town Square on Main Street. Santa will be at Kilwin's until Christmas Day. $1 per ticket or $5 for six tickets.

A 22-pound chocolate Santa is being donated by Jerry Moore owner of Kilwin's in Town Square on Main Street. Santa will be at Kilwin's until Christmas Day. $1 per ticket or $5 for six tickets.

Area firefighters join forces to fight blaze.

Fire destroys Coppage home in Horse Cove

At 1:41 p.m., Tuesday, Dec. 14, Highlands Fire & Rescue, as well as Cullasaja, Cashiers-Glenville, Satalah, Sky Valley and Sassy Mountain responded to a call of a house on fire at 4553 Horse Cove Road.

Multiple departments were called due to limited available water sources in the area.

Departments responded as quickly as they could given the location and the condition of the icy roads but when they arrived, the home – owned by the Coppage family – was fully engulfed.

“There was a lot of fire when we got there,” said Highlands F&R officer Robbie Forrester. “It was a frame house and the wood was dry.”

When firefighters arrived, Kara Joiner and her two children were in the yard – firefighters don’t believe Rick Joiner was home when the fire broke out. The Joiners were living in the Coppage home.

One vehicle – a Suburban – was also destroyed. Only the home’s foundation is left.

Firefighters believe the fire started around the fireplace but the FireGround Investigator began investigating on Wednesday to determine the exact cause.

Highlands responded at 1:41 and got back to the station at 7 p.m. – Kim Lewicki

“We are all about birds!”

526-3910

Nature's Website
HighlandsInfo.com
Highlands needs a professional process for hiring department heads

Dear Editor,

At the last Town Board, the discussion concerning the status of the search for a new zoning administrator raised concerns about the hiring procedures of the town. A question was asked if the applicants for the position had been sent a letter confirming their applications. Apparently about a dozen people have applied, yet no letters had been sent to the applicants acknowledging the receipt of their credentials. In addition, the notion was put forward that it was time to start a review where most applications could be discarded into a trash bag.

Surprisingly, there did not appear to be a systematic process for screening and determining the best-qualified candidates for this very important professional position. I would like to propose several procedures that could help ensure a consistent, open and fair process in selecting professionals to fill the major town department positions. I concede that the procedures outlined will not necessarily be applicable and needed in all hiring situations, such as hourly positions that can be filled efficiently by the Town Manager.

First, whenever a person applies for a position, a letter acknowledging receipt of the application should be sent immediately. That letter and the application credentials should be placed in the applicant's file. An evaluation form identifying all required qualifications and experience stated in the position announcement should be included in each applicant's file. A screening committee could then review the files and complete the evaluation form for each applicant. This process would ensure the identification of both unqualified and highly qualified applicants. It would also document that each applicant was given a complete review and consideration. The screening committee could be an existing town committee related to the open position, or the town board, mayor, and town administrator could create it.

Second, after qualified applicants were identified, the Town Board could select the top applicant, or applicants, that they wish to interview. All stages of the interview process need not be done in closed session. While there is a need to discuss an applicant's credentials, professional views, and references by the Town Board in a closed session, much of the interview process could be done in open session where the public and stakeholders could ask questions of the candidate in order to learn about his or her professional ideas as applicable to Highlands. This type of forum would allow feedback to be given to the Town Board. For instance, in hiring a new zoning administrator, it may be helpful for the Planning Board and Zoning Board members to be involved in the process, as well as the real estate professionals and other community leaders.

Finally, after the Town Board makes the hiring decision, a letter should be sent to all applicants informing them that the position has been filled. The files of all applicants should be retained, not put in the trash.

By not having a consistent hiring process, the town opens itself up to litigation from an applicant who may believe he or she was not given full consideration or was treated unfairly. In such a situation, a defense cannot be that this is the way we do it in the mountains. As a community, we need to subscribe to the best and current practices in hiring professionals in our government.

An alternative to the process outlined above would be to hire a personnel consulting firm that would conduct a professional search for qualified applicants and certify that a professional process was followed at all stages.

Patrick Taylor
Highlands

Grassroots groups gather regarding bears

Dear Editor,

I, along with many others, appreciate your letters regarding bears. Many of us have similar concerns regarding the bear hunting issues that both of you mentioned.

With the help of Wild South, Bill Lee, JMCA, NC Representative Ray Rapp, biologist Mike Carraway, Captain Greg Daniels of the North Carolina Wildlife Resource Commission wildlife enforcement division, affiliates of the North Carolina Wildlife Federation, Highlands-Plateau Audubon Society, responsible hunters and other interested individuals, we are making a major attempt to address “some” hunting practices that need to be examined. At our meeting in Waynesville in November, this group met to begin discussions.

Our core group of individuals and organizations fed a coalition, of those who
Discounted flu shots now available for adults at MC Public Health Center

The Macon County Public Health Center is now able to provide flu shots at a discounted rate for any adult who has not yet been vaccinated. The new rate is $14 and shots are available on a walk-in basis (no appointment needed) Monday - Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the health center's Lakeside Drive location.

This year, seasonal influenza vaccine provides protection against three strains of influenza, including H1N1. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that everyone 6 months of age and older get a yearly flu vaccine.

The new discounted rate for adults has been made possible by a recent state-level decision to expand the allowable use of state-supplied vaccine from juveniles to adults, too.

The public health center will bill Medicare and Medicare replacements, BCBS, Crescent, and Tricare - so clients should bring their cards with them to their visit. Medicaid enrollees should be prepared to pay at the visits in the event Medicaid does not cover the cost.

To keep up-to-date about seasonal clinics, visit the health department’s website at www.maconnc.org or call 349-2081.

...on this day from the History Guy

Dec 16, 1770
Premiere of Ludwig van Beethoven, in Bonn, Electorate of Cologne.

Now here was a REAL Music Man, the estimable Mr. Ludwig van. This composer was iconic, an acknowledged master of things symphonic. His reputation shall never fail to be high on any scale. Some found his work to be immoral, others, somewhat more, pastoral. Even pieces incomplete are thought by many to be suite. Concertgoers are beholden to the legendary, late, great Herr Beethoven.

...SNOW DAYS continued from page 1

clement weather present us with a unique set of challenges and minimal opportunities to make up lost days of instruction,” said Superintendent Dan Brigman. “I greatly appreciate everyone’s ongoing flexibility and patience as we seek the most appropriate options available to ensure minimal loss of instructional time and preservation of the approved calendars.”

• THANKS •

At the Community Thanksgiving Dinner at the Civic Center Tuesday, Nov. 23, we served 250 people and still had leftovers!

A very special thanks to Rev. Gary Hewins and Rev. Hinson of Community Bible Church for the very best program we ever had.

Thanks also to Highlands Recreation Director Selwyn Chalker and his crew for all they did.

And last but not least, my utmost thanks to David Beewho made the turkey, dressing, mashed potatoes and gravy. Also thanks to each church for their participation.

It was the best dinner ever!

Pat Griffin
Highlands

Monkey Hill’ site of free winter fun in town

A winter blast swept down from Canada over the weekend bringing frigid temperatures registering 2.8 degrees Sunday night and snow-filled winds gusting to 30 mph. By the time it was all over Tuesday AM, Mother Nature dumped about 12 inches of snow on the plateau and caused temperatures to register -1.3 Monday night.

Photo by Kim Lewicki

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While sugarplums dance in the heads of our sleeping bears...

...Sneak on in to see our distinctive selection of gift ideas for your favorite birder, football fan or nature lover.

We’re all about birds...
...and more!

the bird barn
at The Falls On Main
526-3910

Pat Griffin
Highlands
There are certain things in life you learn to ask about, especially if you don’t get a hoot about the answer. One of those things is to never ask why your dryer has balls.

It all started when the gas man came to our closed home to turn on our natural gas. After firing up the water heater and range, we headed for the clothes dryer to make sure it was heating. The guy opened the dryer door and removed a scary looking rubbery ball with spikes. With a look of puzzlement on his face, he held it up for me to see.


The guy must’ve been married because he nodded, accepted my response, threw the ball back in the dryer and shut the door. End of story, right?

Wrong! A couple of days later I went to the dryer to retrieve an article of clothing. I was shocked. Now there were two blue balls in the dryer. The second one was even scarier looking than the first. A little larger than a softball, it looked like one of those World War II land mines lying on the bottom of the ocean, complete with protruding horns with holes in the end.

I hesitated, holding the ball in my hand, pondered my next move. Do I do the smart thing and just throw it back and forget I ever saw it or do I do the stupid thing and take it to the laundromat and ask what it is? It seems I never learned because, like the gas man, I held it up for her to see and asked, “What is it?”

“Oh, that! That ball is making my life much easier,” she responded. “See this opening? I pour a small amount of tap water in that hole, and then I toss the ball in the dryer with the clothes. As the dryer tumbles, it makes steam and irons our clothes. TA DA!”

Now here’s the part where my years of husband training takeover. Since I have been married to my little missus since before the invention of the wheel, I’ve learned not to pursue issues like this further and ask how it makes steam unless the ball reaches a temperature of 212 degrees or over.

No, no, no, I don’t ask that question. You see, if I ask that question, she’ll snatch the ball from my hand and say, “I’ll show you. Let me get the box and you can read for yourself.”

She’ll say this because she also doesn’t have a clue how the ball makes steam and irons clothes.

Instead, I say, “That’s awesome, sweet baby. No more ironing.”

Sarcastically, I ask, “Do they also make a ball that sews buttons back on shirts?”

Waiting for the possibility she might throw the ball at me for being a smart-ass, I quickly asked, “While we’re on the topic of balls, what does that small blue ball with the spikes do for us?”

“Well, Mr. Smarty-pants, since you asked, I’ll educate you. That little blue ball keeps your shorts from wadding. If clothes are in the dryer, they don’t dry properly and you’ll have wet shorts.”

Again, being a seasoned husband, I accepted her explanation and didn’t ask about the principle behind the technology. In my younger years when I was more stupid than I am now, each of the ball issues would have turned into a major debate. (We don’t fight anymore, we just debate.) I would have challenged the technology. Like most women, my little missus is not interested in how things work. If it works, who cares? It’s kinda like elephant repellent balls. Put one of those babies in your dryer and you guarantee to have no elephants in your house. Hey, that works.

So now you know our dryer has blue balls, two of them. Whether they’re working or not, we don’t care. My clothes are ironed and my shorts are not wet or wadded. But more important than anything, my little missus is happy and life is good.

Note: Tumbling blue balls is the future of a happy home and strong America. Write that down.
The state of Haiti is really too much to comprehend

I don’t pretend to be able to see inside the soul of Haiti. My personal experience has been of happy people, who are grateful for any small favor. Despite living conditions for Haiti’s masses so deplorable that few Americans would tolerate them, Haitian people are usually smiling.

Haitians have shown remarkable resilience and unmatched patience with their condition. They suffer a standard of living that is the poorest in the hemisphere, and smile. They watch their families die from preventable diseases and suffer during a very public and vocal period of mourning, smile again. This is a land in which people die from the water they drink; where malnutrition, poverty, and unemployment are pervasive. It is also a country where people find a reason to smile, or perhaps they feel a person shouldn’t need a reason to smile.

This has been a year to test even the Haitian spirit. In January, a massive earthquake claimed some 250,000 lives. Thousands more were injured and destruction was widespread. The Haitians mourned their dead, and then, perhaps grateful that their lives had been spared, smiled again. The Haitian people have a marvelous capacity for happiness.

There was a rare bit of good fortune in November when Hurricane Tomas spared Haiti a direct hit. But, in Haiti, the news is rarely all good. The storm produced heavy rains, which fanned a cholera epidemic, already underway. The cholera epidemic is yet another example of incredibly bad luck. Despite primitive sanitation and a host of diseases spread by food, water, and fecal contamination, Haiti had never experienced a cholera outbreak. The organism responsible for the disease, vibrio cholera, apparently did not exist in Haiti. More than 2,000 Haitians have died since October.

In 2007, cholera claimed just over 4,000 deaths in 53 countries. Cases are now being confirmed in The Dominican Republic. Bacteria have little respect for international boundaries. It is probable that cholera was introduced by Nepalese, United Nations peacekeepers. The strain of bacteria originates in south Asia. The first cases occurred downstream from the UN base. Human excrement was found to be polluting a stream that fed into the Arbonite River, where initial cases were reported.

The Haitians smiled a bit less as the epidemic took hold. Rumors spread that the germ had been intentionally introduced to kill peasant Haitians. Health officials could do little more than drive through slums and shanty towns in trucks with loud speakers, advising the people to wash their hands. Soap was occasionally distributed with the advice. Foreign and local health care providers have provided rehydration to victims of an illness that can kill a healthy adult in a few hours. Despite their efforts, the death toll continues to rise.

The recent presidential election was badly flawed and almost certainly fraudulent. It remains to be seen if it was fatally flawed. One wonders if we will see the breaking point in Haitian patience, if grim scowls will replace the broad smiles we expect in Haiti. Haiti’s leaders complain that little of the foreign aid that was promised for rebuilding after the earthquake has arrived.

In a country where elite don’t trust the people to select their leader, it is understandable that foreign donors might be reluctant to send money to further fill the pockets of the rich. It has been a terrible year in Haiti. Every tragedy is magnified by the nation’s poverty. Lack of building codes increased the death toll from the earthquake. Lack of proper sanitation and secured drinking water supply spurs the cholera epidemic. Intermittent flooding kills thousands instead of tens because there is so little topsoil to absorb the rainfall. Erosion followed deforestation in a country too poor, or too corrupt, to replant.

The most recent insult, a fraudulent election, may be what it takes to make the people of Haiti finally lose their sense of humor. I’d hate to see a humorless Haiti. They have so little else.

Quantities limited. Prices subject to change.

Feedback is encouraged.
email: hsalzarulo@aol.com

Time to get ready for Christmas at Bryson’s Food Store
Locally owned and operated since 1977

Poinsettas Wreaths Garland Apple Cider Aspen Spices Assorted Gift Baskets
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Bryson’s Gift Cards make the perfect gift throughout the year!

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Sunday 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.
103 Highlands Plaza Highlands NC 828-526-3775

Join us to Celebrate the Christmas Season at Highlands United Methodist Church

Sunday, December 19
10:50 a.m.
Christmas Cantata
Christmas Eve Services:
5 p.m.
Family-friendly
Candlelight Service
7-8 p.m.
Drop-in Communion
11 p.m.
Candlelight Service
Sunday, December 26
10:50 a.m.
Sunday Worship Service
315 Main Street / 526-3376
Pastor Paul Christy
M y sons, who live in South Florida, have been raving memorably about their beautiful weather recently (they know how much I love it) while we have had nary forerunners of winter. I read with interest this morning that Ft. Lauderdale set a new cold record — 42 degrees — for Dec. 7* in the last 169 years. Miami is expecting 30s before the spell is over. Payback would feel great if it weren't 19 degrees here as I write this.

Unfortunately, the frigid weather probably won't reach Cancun MX where the 2010 United Nations Climate Change Conference is being held. You remember the time when climate change was called global warming, don't you? Their choice of Cancun was a stroke of genius, since most of the rest of the Northern Hemisphere is in the deep freeze.

While the attendance to the conference would have been really puny without the incentive of plush resorts and warm weather, it is doubtless significant from its Copenhagen predecessor. I'll tell you later. But first, I'm going to let you in on the mind-numbing places my research takes me.

According to the Wikipedia: "The 2010 United Nations Climate Change Conference is being held in Cancun, Mexico, from 29 November to 10 December 2010. The conference is officially referred to as the 16th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 16) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the 6th session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties (CMP6) of the Kyoto Protocol."

In addition (good grief, there's more?) the two permanent subsidiary bodies of the UNFCCC, the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) and the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) — will hold its 33rd sessions. The 2009 United Nations Climate Change Conference extended the mandates of the two temporary subsidiary bodies — the Ad Hoc Working Group on Further Commitments for Annex I Parties under the Kyoto Protocol (AWG-KP) and the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention (AWG-LCA) — and they will meet as well.

There is more, but I've had enough, and I'm sure you've had more than enough here you thought the UN folks sat around doing nothing. Wesley Pruden has something he'd like you to know. From the December 2nd edition of the Washington Times: "Smash dies hard, but eventually they die, and when they do, nobody wants to get close to the corpse. You can get all the rooms you want this week in Cancun. The global-warming caravan has moved on, bound for a destination in oblivion. . . the Washington guests are staying home. Nobody wants to get the smell of the corpse on his clothes. Everybody who imagined himself anybody raced to Copenhagen last year for the global-warming summit, renamed 'climate change' when the globe began to cool, as it does from time to time. Some 45,000 delegates, 'activists,' business representatives and the usual retinue of journalists registered for the party in Copenhagen. This year, only 1,234 journalists registered for the Cancun beach party. The only story there is that there's no story there. The UN organizers grumpily concede that Cancun won't amount to anything, even by UN standards."

My, my, how insensitive. From suite101.com: "Wiki leaks exposes the United States for manipulating the Copenhagen Climate Accord in order to expedite their climate change agenda. In the latest release of cables, WikiLeaks reveals how the U.S. used corruption tactics to manipulate other countries into backing Obama's global warming plans during the Copenhagen Accord."

This just in: From THE WEEK website: "As negotiators from nearly 200 countries met in Cancun to strategize ways to keep the planet from getting hotter, the temperature in the seaside Mexican city plunged to a 100-year record low of 54 degrees F. Climate change skeptics are gleefully calling Cancun's weather the latest example of the 'Gore Effect' — a plunge in temperature they say occurs whenever former Vice President Al Gore makes a speech about the climate. Although Gore is not scheduled to speak in Cancun, it could be that the Gore Effect has been recently confirmed.

Climate Gate was bad enough, but Cancun's weather is particularly 'inconvenient' for global-warming alarmists. It's a reminder that global temperatures have "flatlined" despite rising carbon dioxide levels, which is decidedly chilling against the concept of hampering economic growth to limit CO2 emissions."

I realize this is a parochial example, but my hometown of Minneapolis is starstruck at its third cold snap (minus 15) accompanied by its third heavy snow (10 more inches) and it isn't even winter. I rest my case. For now.
HCH’s pharmacy strengthens patient safety by ensuring quality medication measures

HCH Pharmacist, Jim Cothran, said “We are working hard to make sure our patient’s medications are safe during their stay with us. Our medication safety program is top notch and administered through the latest computer technology.”

When a medication is ordered for a patient at HCH, the computer automatically checks for allergies, interactions with other medications, how well the patient’s body may or may not metabolize the medication, and how the medication might interact with food.

“Once the medication order has been reviewed by our Pharmacy, it is delivered directly to the nurses’ station,” said Cothran. “When it is time for the patient to receive their medication, the nurses utilize the medication barcode scanning system to ensure that he or she is getting the correct medication at the correct time.”

HCH has also implemented a new Computerized Physician Order Entry (CPOE) to increase patient safety and decrease human errors during the ordering process of medications.

A simple weight loss plan

By Richard S. Matthews, Jr. MD

Many times when I see a patient in the office for a routine examination, or a physical exam, we talk about diet and exercise. I have found that most patients are not eating enough fruits and vegetables. I have a simple 1-2-3-4-5 plan that is easy to remember.

This diet, or change in eating habits, will lower your cholesterol without pills, help you lose weight and add fiber to your diet to dramatically reduce constipation.

I recommend for most people to have one salad, two pieces of fresh fruit, and three fresh vegetables everyday.

Studies show that consuming five fruits and vegetables a day with increase ones intake of health boosting antioxidants. These protect your cells from toxic substances in your system, protect your cells from damage, and are thought to slow aging and reduce the risk of cancer, heart disease, arterial disease, and other problems.

Via this 1-2-3-4-5 diet, I suggest that you have: (1) salad everyday, (2) two pieces of fresh fruit everyday, (3) three fresh vegetables a day, (4) eat no more than 4 to 6 oz. of any type of protein or meat any day, and (5) to drink five glasses of water every day.

By adapting this healthy eating routine, you will be on the right track to improve your health, mood and boost your energy levels.
Have you ever wondered why the Highlands-Cashiers area is such a nice place to live? There is the natural beauty, the temperate climate, lots of cultural and educational things to do and too many golf courses to count. The Halloween Festival has to be one of the best in any town, the tree lighting ceremony is always a joy to see and to participate in and the Christmas parade is pretty special for such a small town. This truly is really a wonderful place to be.

In addition to all these things, I think what makes our area such a special place is the giving nature of all the people, summer and locals, as well. We just had the Alternative Giving Fair where 13 of the local charities participated. Any one of the activities that were featured there would make a town proud, but we have 13! These range from local charities like the Emergency Council, the Community Care Clinic, the Free Dental Clinic and the Literacy Council to International charities, such as the missions to Bolivia, Bosnia and Haiti, Living Waters to the World, and the Friendship world Mission. In my mind, these are what make our town something special.

Every other week we will have contributions in this column from all of these groups and more explaining what they are doing so readers can get involved, if they care to, as participants, donors or just to offer prayers and moral support to all these worthwhile groups.

First up: The Literacy Council of Highlands

— Dr. John Baumruker

A Collaboration of Literacy and Art: The Literacy Council/Bascom Outreach Program

“A growing body of studies, including those in the research compendium Critical Links, presents compelling evidence connecting student learning in the arts to a wide spectrum of academic and social benefits. These studies document the habits of mind, social competencies and personal dispositions inherent to arts learning. Additionally, research has shown that what students learn in the arts may help them to master other subjects, such as reading, math or social studies.”

Consequently, the Literacy Council of Highlands is collaborating with the Bascom Center for the Visual Arts for a six-week pilot program funded through the Bascom’s Youth Outreach initiative. This pilot program features local children’s authors and a corresponding Appalachian-themed art project that reflects the literary theme. This study is currently being implemented during the Literacy Council’s Monday/Wednesday and Tuesday/Thursday after-school groups where the children are working on a quilt for display at a culminating reception to be held at the Bascom. Following the reception, the quilt will be on permanent display at the Literacy Council.

There are many wonderful children’s authors, including award-winning Appalachian author Cynthia Rylant, Spruce Pine native and Appalachian State graduate Gloria Houston and Lester Laminack, Professor Emeritus with the department of Birth-Kindergarten, Elementary and Middle Grades Education, at Western Carolina University. The Literacy Council has selected the following six pieces of literature by these three authors for the study:

Week 1: Saturdays and Teacakes by Lester Laminack
Week 2: When I Was Young in the Mountains by Cynthia Rylant
Week 3: My Great Aunt Arizona by Gloria Houston
Week 4: Snow Day by Lester Laminack
Week 5: Silver Packages: An Appalachian Christmas Story by Cynthia Rylant
Week 6: The Year of the Perfect Christmas Tree by Gloria Houston

As we are nearing the end of our special Appalachian project, the children are working on their fourth quilt square. This week, we are reading Silver Packages by Cynthia Rylant.

This lovely book is based on the true story of a poor boy in an Appalachian coal mining area of Kentucky. Every year a train would come into his town and a wealthy man would throw beautiful silver packages from the train to all of the children. Each year the boy longed for a doctor’s kit, but year after year, he would get things he needed, like underwear or socks. The end of the story reveals that the boy grew up to become a doctor and, of course, he finally got his doctor’s kit. Through his experiences, he had learned a special lesson about giving back to those in need. The Christmas train has been in operation since 1943 and is still operating today thanks to the help of volunteers.

With Christmas being just a hop, skip and a Drew Brees pass away, let's look at some of the events of the past week:

The biggest win in baseball is that Cliff Lee spurned the Rangers and the Yankees to sign with Philadelphia, giving them perhaps the best starting rotation of all time. The Gold Standard for 4 man rotations has always been 1993 Atlanta, which featured Greg Maddux, Tom Glavine, John Smoltz and Steve Avery. While looking back, that rotation was phenomenal, I think that what the Phillies starters have already accomplished is remarkable. Both Roy Oswalt and Roy Halladay have won twenty games and 3 Cy Youngs, and Cole Hamels and Lee have both been two of the best post season pitchers in the game. It is certainly going to be a tough year for National League hitters when they face the Phillies.

Urban Meyer has left the building...again. While this year's retirement may not be the shocker that last year's was, Meyer stepping down from UF still qualifies as earth shattering news in the college football world. Meyer's successor at UF is former Auburn and Texas defensive coordinator Will Muschamp (he of the boom...mother-shut your mouth....seriously, youtube it and you will see). Muschamp will bring an aggressive, no-nonsense style to both recruiting and the field, but it remains to be seen how well the spoiled UF fans treat Muschamp if the Gators struggle again next year.

Brett Favre's consecutive games streak ended at 297 on Monday night when the old man couldn't go against the New York Giants. Somewhere...John Madden is weeping softly and clutching his Favre bobblehead. While Duke remains #8 overall in the NCAA basketball poll, they suffered a debilitating loss when freshman PG Kyrie Irving suffered a torn ligament in his big toe against Butler. This will inevitably open the door for Kansas, who add freshman sensation Josh Selby after he served his 9 game suspension for improper benefits. Both Kansas and Duke look great, but Duke just lost a freshman All-American and Kansas gained one-you do the math there.

The BC Championship game is set, pitting the Oregon Ducks against the Auburn Tigers. This is a great matchup, but it is disappointing that TCU cannot be involved despite the fact that they have been a top 10 team all year and finished the season undefeated. Obviously a playoff would determine the best team, and allow TCU the chance to compete which is really all any college football team/coach/fan wants. As far as the game between Auburn and Oregon, I'm gonna have to go with Auburn in a shootout. I do think that Oregon has the better overall team and is better coached than the Tigers however, Auburn has Cam Newton and at this point in the season it would be really hard to bet against him.

And finally, the Denver Broncos fired Josh McDaniels after a tenure marred by bad trades, spycgate I and just a general over the top arrogance from a guy who hadn't accomplished much of anything outside of his tenure with the New England Patriots. Sound familiar? If so, that's the something that happened to Bill Belichick during his first go around as a head coach with the Cleveland Browns. I think the experience with Denver will humble McDaniels, and he might be able to resurrect his career much in the same way that his mentor did.

Highlanders sweep Swain

By Ryan Potts

The Highlander basketball squads hosted the Swain Maroon Devils Friday night in Highlands and came away with wins in both the varsity girls and varsity boys.

The Lady Highlanders came out strong against the Lady Devils, taking a 9-4 lead at the end of the first quarter behind the strength of some hot shooting by senior Courtney Rogers. The Lady Devils were able to fight back, pulling within two at the half and creating what would be a nip and tuck game throughout the second half. The Lady Highlanders managed to build a working margin of 8 points in the second half and ultimately held on for a 44-40 victory. Rogers led Highlands with 10 points and Emily Munger added 13.

The varisty boys came into the game looking to end a 4 game losing streak and were able to hit the ground running with a hot start shooting to take an 8 point halftime lead. The Highlanders were able to stifler the Swain offense with tough man to man, and got plenty of offense from PG Logan Schmitt and frontcourt players Robbie Vanderbilt and Josh Delacruz. The Highlanders pushed their lead out to double digits in the second half and came through with an 11 point victory. Schmitt lead the Highlanders with 17 points and Vanderbilt and Delacruz added 13 and 11 respectively.

The Highlanders will host arch rival Blue Ridge on Friday night weather permitting.

What's for Dinner?

Highland's favorite lunch place now has homemade dinner to go.
All served hot and ready to take home.
Mon - Sat pick up from 4-30 pm until 6-30 pm.
Each Dinner feeds a family of four.

Mon Buffalo Wings or Chicken Tenders and hand cut fries 14.95

Tue Premium in-house made soup large salad and dinner rolls 15.95

Wed Chicken or Steak pot pie and a large salad 14.95

Thu Smoke roasted Chicken, flame roasted corn on the cob and a large salad 14.95

Fri Wild fried shrimp, hand cut fries, handmade hush puppies, and coleslaw 18.95

Sat In-house smoked BBQ, coleslaw, apple and bacon baked beans, and yeast rolls 16.95

Mountain Fresh Grocery & Wine Market
Corner of 5th & Main, Highlands NC 828-526-2400

Ryan Potts tryanpotts@hotmail.com
Ongoing
• At Health Tracks at Highlands-Cashiers Hospital, various exercise classes all week long. Call 828-526-1FIT.
• Nantahala Tennis Club meets everyday at 9 a.m. at Highlands Recreation Park. $2 per person; all visitors welcome. Call 526-3556.
• YOGA-Moonrise Yoga - The Highlands Dedicated Studio, 464 Carolina Way. Mon 5:15pm and Sun 9:30am. All Levels. Mats provided. Pre-register.

Sundays
• After shock Youth meets every Sunday Night at 6:30 p.m. downstairs at Cullasaja Assembly of God at 6201 Highlands Road, Franklin, NC. Contact youth ministers Seth & Sarha Henegar at 828 369-7540 ext 203.
• The High Mountain Squares will be having a dance workshop get-together on Sundays. This will include main stream and plus levels. The caller will be Jim Roper from Cornelia, GA. The dances will be held at the Environmental Resource Center, Lakeside Drive, Franklin, from 3 to 5 p.m. The cost is $3 per person. For information, call 828 349-0905, 828 369-8334, 706 782-0943.

Mon. & Thurs.
• On the Mat Yoga at the Episcopal Church of the Incarnation on Main Street. Upper Level Jones Hall. Mon., and Thurs. at 10:45 a.m. Bring your mat. 828-203.
• Heart Healthy Exercise Class at the Rec Park. 8:30-9:30 a.m $20/month.
• Step Aerobics with Tina Rogers at the Rec Park 9 a.m. $10 per class or $50 a month.

First Mondays
• Participate in your hospital by joining the Auxiliary of the Highlands-Cashiers Hospital first Monday of each month at 10 a.m. at the hospital.

Mondays
• Closed AA meeting, 5:30 p.m at the Episcopal Church at Fifth and Main streets.
• Highlands Rotary Club meets at noon at Highlands Conference Center at noon.
• Closed AA Women’s meeting, 5:30 p.m. at the Episcopal Church at Fifth and Main streets.
• The Highlands Dialogue Tuesday discussions at the Civic Center from 10-11:30 a.m. For information about the Highlands Dialogue or any of our upcoming discussions, e-mail John Gaston johngaston@aol.com or Karen Hawk kwilson@earthlink.net.

Tues. & Thurs.
• Study Hall at the Literacy Council of Highlands in the Peggy Crosby Center from 3 to 5 p.m. Come do your homework, projects use the resources on site and get help from a tutor. For more information, contact Faviola Olvera at (828) 526-0925 or by email at missolvera@yahoo.com.
• Kettlebell Class at the Rec Park with Ginger Baldwin at 5:15 p.m. Fast moving free weight kinetic chain movement for 30-40 minutes. $8 per class. Call 526-3556 or 528-4859 to reserve a spot.

Wednesdays
• The Highlands Mountaintop Rotary meets at 7:30 a.m. in the dining room at the Highlands-Cashiers Hospital. Enter the hospital in the main or emergency entrance and follow the signs downstairs. Visitors are welcome. Meetings end at 8:30 am.
• Men’s interdenominational Bible Study at 8:30 a.m. at First Baptist Church.
• The Homegrown Buds, a homeschool 4-H club, meets at noon at the Macon County Library on Siler Road in Franklin at 1 p.m.

Sat. & Sun.
• Study Hall at the Literacy Council of Highlands in the Peggy Crosby Center from 3 to 5 p.m. Come do your homework, projects use the resources on site and get help from a tutor. For more information, contact Faviola Olvera at (828) 526-0925 or by email at missolvera@yahoo.com.
• Kettlebell Class at the Rec Park with Ginger Baldwin at 5:15 p.m. Fast moving free weight kinetic chain movement for 30-40 minutes. $8 per class. Call 526-3556 or 528-4859 to reserve a spot.

Every Third Saturday
• The Highlands Mountaintop Rotary meets at 7:30 a.m. in the dining room at the Highlands-Cashiers Hospital. Enter the hospital in the main or emergency entrance and follow the signs downstairs. Visitors are welcome. Meetings end at 8:30 am.
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Upcoming and Ongoing Events

The Bascom's winter schedule includes “Saturdays at The Bascom” program

Now open year round and welcoming visitors on Fridays and Saturdays there's plenty to see and do at The Bascom in January and February. What's in store?

- Spend “Saturdays at The Bascom” and discover Art Cinema or take in an exhibition with a local flair. Enjoy a schedule of great Saturday afternoon movies and learn inspiring stories about art and artist's lives.
- View The Bascom Collection, January 8-February 12, which includes 20th and 21st century American art in numerous media. Then, from February 19-April 2, Regional Art Leagues will present their annual exhibition, Join us in celebrating the art and artists who offer a glimpse into the beauty of the plateau.
- Students will use their imaginations at Saturday Art School (January 8-February 12) for fun, hands-on, age-appropriate art classes. Other winter art classes for young people include Friday morning’s Pre-School Creativity Classes (January 14-February 18), Tuesday After School Art

Order of Eastern Star has Holiday goodies for sale

Pumpkin Rolls
This is your last chance in 2010 to get your pumpkin roll from Highlands Chapter #284 Order of the Eastern Star. We will be selling pumpkin rolls in front of Bryson’s Food Store on Friday, December 24. Pre-orders may be made by contacting Paula Gordon, Worthy Matron at 342-4378 or calling the Masonic Lodge at 526-4533 and leaving a message with your phone number. But — you don’t have to pre-order to be able to get one. Don’t miss out — the pumpkin rolls will be gone after December 24 and won’t be back until Thanksgiving 2011.

Pecans
Eastern Star has pecan pieces and chocolate covered pecans from the 2010 crop. The pecan pieces are 16 oz bags for $8.00 and the chocolate covered pecans are 12 oz bags for $8.00. Please call Paula Gordon, Worthy Matron, at 342-4378 or calling the Masonic Lodge at 526-4533 and leave a message with your phone number. We will call back.

Reserve your spot at the table for Christmas Dinner

The 9th Annual Christmas Dinner will be served in the quaint elegance of the Hudson House at Highlands Country Club (30 Hummingbird Lane). Over 8 years this dinner has raised more than $60,000 for local non-profits. Beneficiaries include Habitat for Humanity; The Literacy Council of Highlands; The International Friendship Center; and Hospice.

This year all proceeds will go to Gar’s Kids Program at Carpe Diem Farms; R.E.A.C.H. of Macon County; and Big Brothers Big Sisters of Highlands. Although not always thought of, these non-profits provide vital and meaningful services to those in our community very much in need of our love, thoughts, and generosity.

Gar’s Kids is an interactive camp for boys and girls of ages 5-13 and emphasizes empowering children. It began 30 years ago as a one-week scholarship program and evolved into three summer day-camps and an after school program which include therapeutic riding programs.

Domestic violence knows no boundaries. It affects families and individuals of all genders, races, ages, and economic status. R.E.A.C.H. of Macon County provides services to victims of domestic violence formed in 1990 after community leaders saw the local need to initiate a program to address the growing problem of domestic violence.

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Highlands provides one-on-one mentoring to children of the Highlands Community. The dinner is $35 per person for adults; $25 per person for children under 12; and children under 5 eat free. The dinner includes a mouthwatering buffet of Ham, Turkey, Squash Casserole, Scalloped Potatoes, Sweet Potato Soufflé, Cranberry Walnut topped Salad, Sautéed French Green Beans, Orange Cranberry Relish, Dressing, Gravy, and Rolls.

Let us prepare your meal and do your dishes. Give yourself the gift of calm, ease, and time with your family on this most special day. Call 526-5102 for reservations to the 9th Annual Highlands Christmas Day Dinner.
What are you looking at?

Isaiah 45:22

What are you looking at when it comes to your life and expectations? Do you think God is going to come down into this world and save you? He is very dear in Isaiah about how your salvation will come. He says “Turn to me and be saved...”

It is very difficult for men to simply turn to God. There are so many distractions. Yes, it is true, God did come down into this world to bring salvation. He did that through Jesus Christ. Jesus came and did for men everything they could never do for themselves. But you are not saved by his works unless you first look to him and turn from your sinful selfish ways. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus makes it clear you must narrow your interests in this world and bring the thoughts and attitudes of your heart and mind to focus on Christ and his works until your hope of salvation is exclusively in him.

Many have a mental image of what a true Christian is to be. This image can become a serious hindrance to your concentration on God. When you are looking at what you think you need to be, you miss the point. There can be no salvation in the works of men. Salvation is very simple, it is “Turn to me and be saved” it is not “you will be saved” it is “be saved.” The very thing you desire, you shall have if you focus on him and on him alone.

When Jesus went to the Feast of Tabernacles in Matthew 2:7, he went to make it dear to the people that salvation was found in him and in him only. He stood up as the priest brought the water that represented life into the Temple and declared “If a man is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him.”

To end the thirst of a dry soul one must come to Christ and drink. There is no other way to have life in the soul than to come to Jesus Christ. Paul in Ephesians 2:5 says you can be made alive only in Jesus, Jesus himself makes the same point in John 14:6 when he says “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”

In Revelation 22 where the River of Life is so vividly shown and the coming of Jesus at the end of time is declared and the last invitation given, we hear these wonderful words, “The Spirit and the bride say, ‘Come!’ Whoever is thirsty, let him come. Whoever is hungry, let him eat. Whatever you desire, you shall have if you focus on him and on him alone.

Pick yourself up, awaken and turn to God. Build your hope and trust on Jesus Christ and his works alone. Do not let your focus be distracted from him and what he has done for you. There is nothing in this world that offers the gift he offers. Turn to him and be saved, look to him alone. The moment you do, salvation is yours, free and clear.
... TURMOIL continued from page 1

steady to leave it the way it is.

Jimmy Goodman, whose appointment to the board over Al Slagle’s reappointment, sparked the recent controversy, was at the meeting.

Evidently, the terms of two members are expiring in the spring so the planning board’s plan is to recommend Al Slagle be appointed to one of those positions because the current members whose terms are expiring don’t want to be reappointed.

Still to be discussed at another time is a request that came out of the MC Commission’s Dec. 6 meeting to put a mechanism in the ordinance regulating the planning board that would allow the removal of a member if he or she obstructs and prohibits the board from doing its work as outlined by its mission statement.

Monday night, Attorney Jones expressed concern about freedom of speech. The commission agreed to discuss that and the possibility of doing away with term limits at another time.

The board also agreed to cancel the December 27th meeting due to the Christmas holidays and voted to return to one regular meeting a month, which will be held on the second Tuesday of each month at 6 p.m. The next regular meeting will be on Tuesday, January 11.

The resignation of Commissioner Jim Davis was accepted, effective Dec. 30, and Kevin Corbin, who was picked by the Republican party to replace Davis, was accepted.

Commissioner Davis originally submitted his resignation at the Nov. 22 meeting, to be effective Jan. 10, 2011, but his Senate term begins Jan. 1, 2011, so he resigned effective Dec. 31. Corbin will replace Davis effective Jan. 1.

State law requires all counties to adopt a code of ethics by January 1 and all board members have ethics training. All members, including Corbin, have had the training and the code was adopted.

Take an ornament; give a gift

"Giving Tree Ornaments" for the children whose families have registered this year with the Highlands Emergency Council, can be picked up this year at the following locations: RBC Bank, Macon Bank, First Citizen’s Bank, Bank of America, Wachovia/Wells Fargo Bank.

Gifts are to be returned to these locations by December 17th at the very latest, and should be unwrapped. Gift bags are acceptable.

Any questions can be directed to the Highlands Emergency Council at 526-4357, or the respective Manager’s at the participating banks.

Dr. Joseph H. Wilbanks, D.D.S.
278 East Doyle St. • Toccoa, GA
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You are only 50 miles away from 30 years experience in top-notch, high-tech, one-stop dentistry known for its gentle touch.

• Dental Implants
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• Wisdom Teeth Extractions
and of course Fillings and Cleanings!
(IV Sedation, too)

Signs of Christmas all around us

Linda Barden snapped this shot of Thorn Park at Mirror Lake on Thursday, Dec. 9. The next morning ice and snow caused a two-hour delay at Highlands School.

Look Refreshed and Wrinkle-Free this Holiday Season!
10% off
JUVÉDERM® BOTOX® and RADIESSE®
Through December 24, 2010

Robert T. Buchanan, MD
Board Certified Plastic Surgeon
209 Hospital Drive • Suite 202 • Highlands

The Gift That Keeps On...
Seeing Clearly

Imagine a gift that your loved one will use every waking minute of the day. It’s hard to think of many gifts you could reasonably give that would literally change his or her life. A life without glasses or contacts is just such a gift. Call or go online today to see just how easy and affordable All Laser Lasik can be. Give the gift of sight this year.

Help your loved one make those bad eyes Blue.


30) home. Small yard, 8 years old. 706-746-3551. Leave Message. (12/9)

$439K furnished. By appt ONLY. 526-0974

wormy chestnut walls. Completely renovated in 2000. Below REA at

(12/9)

Non-Commercial Classifieds:
$6 for first 10 words; 20 cents per word thereafter.

COMBINED – 2/2. Unfurnished, $600 a month plus utilities. Call 526-5838 ext.

 Charlie @ (828)526-8645 (st. 4/22)

$205,000 FOR BOTH. BY OWNER NO AC NEEDED. CLASSIC COUNTRY HOME. 4.2 acres. Perennial landscaping. 4 bed 3 bath, garage and shed 2900 sq ft living space. 1.523 sq ft. deck. $338,500, 743-5788 (st. 10/15)

REAL ESTATE FOR RENT


CLASSIC 40’S CABIN in Webbmount area w/ 1+ ac. 2/2.5 w/ wormy chestnut walls. Completely renovated in 2000. Below REA at $439K furnished. By appt ONLY. 526-0974

$103,000!! LOWER CLEAR CREEK. 5 miles from Main Street. 2 Lots. .55 & .95 acres. Septics installed. Borders National Forest. 2005 2bed, 2bath. Very cozy with fabulous view. Call 828-482-2052.

COTTAGE ON TURTLE POND ROAD NEAR DILLARD ROAD. 1/2 unfurnished, $600 a month plus utilities. Call 526-5838 ext. 2367 (st. 9/30)

1 BED/1 BATH APARTMENT. Furnished. Clean. No smokers, no pets. $450 per month plus utilities. Call 828-200-9360. (10/7)

2 BEDROOM, 1.5 BATH, central heat/air, dishwasher, wood floors at Oak Squares Apartments on Main Street, Highlands. Washer/dryer access. Competitive rental price. Call 828-421-1157. (st. 9/23)

SMALL PRIVATE ONE BR FURNISHED COTTAGE ON CHESTNUT STREET with screen porch. Additional sleeping loft. Three blocks to Main Street. Available immediately. $650, monthly plus utilities for six months lease. e-mail: chestnutcottages@yahoo.com or, contact Charlie @ (828)526-8645 (st. 4/22)

ITEMS FOR SALE

GLASS TOP TABLE WITH 4 PARSONS CHAIRS – paid $1,500 will sell for $650; Bissell Steam cleaner – $100; Service for 8 Mikasa $45; Service for 4 Portuguese dinnerware $35; Set of golf clubs with bag $30. Call 349-0294. (12/9)

AFGHANISTAN VINTAGE RIFLE – Saw one at gun show for $7,000-$10,000. Great for Christmas for REAL gun collector. Over 100 years old. Will sacrifice for $1,899 or OBO. 828-371-2129 or 828-524-7239 (st. 9/9)

Baldwin Organ $100. Guilbransen Spinet piano $250 828-526-4818 (st. 8/26)

Piano – MAKE OFFER!! Gorgeous Fully restored. Late 1800s upright owned by the Vanderbelts and was in the Biltmore Estates. Plays beautifully $7,000 invested, worth more way. Must sell. Will sacrifice for $2,100. 828-524-7239 or 828-371-2129. (st. 10/22)

COLEMAN 5000 ER ELECTRONIC GARAGE DOOR – paid $1035. collector’s dream. $500. – (st. 9/9)

2009 CAMOUFLAGE ATV 250 CC BRAND- KAYAK has front and rear racks with helmet and trailer only 20 miles. Great Christmas Present or Great for Hunting Season! Paid $5,000, will sacrifice for $1,895 or OBO. 828-371-2129 or 828-371-2129. (st. 9/9)

Vehicles for Sale


2003 Nissan Frontier – 4 Door, 60,000 miles. Excellent condition, $9,000 OBO. 526-9180. (st. 5/20)


RESTAURANT FOR LEASE ON THE CASHIERS ROAD. – Previously occupied by High Country Cafe. 6,300 sq ft. Call Buddy or Sherry Kremser at 706-762-6252. (st. 11/5)

SERVICES


WILL SIT FOR ELDERLY, HANDICAPPED OR CHILDREN. Your house or mine. 13 years childcare experience. By the hour. Call 828-966-3988. References.

24 HOUR CARE FOR YOUR LOVED ONE – 16 years experience. Will travel to accommodate. $2,800 monthly. negotiable. Call Clare Myers 828-349-3479 or 828-342-1603.

Highlands Police & Fire Reports

Highlands PD log entries from Dec. 8
Only the names of persons arrested, issued a Class-3 misdemeanor, or public officials have been used.
Dec. 8
• At 5:30 p.m., a van was reported stolen from a residence on Azalea Circle.
Dec. 10
• At 4:17 p.m., officers were called to a home on Raoul Road to help get someone into bed.
• During the week, police officers responded to 6 alarms and issued 5 citations.

Highlands F & R Dept. log entries from Dec. 8:
Dec. 8:
• At 11:59 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Cook Road. The victim was taken to the hospital.
Dec. 9
• At 3:09 p.m., the dept. responded to a vehicle accident on Dendy Orchard Road. There were no injuries.
Dec. 10
• At 11:20 a.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm on Church Street set off by the sprinkler system.
• At 6:28 p.m., the dept. responded to a call of an unattended brush fire on Rook House Road. It was extinguished.
• At 10:10 p.m., the dept. provided mutual aid to Satolah on a structure fire on Luther Owens Road.

Dec. 11
• At 6:11 a.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm on Falls Court West. There was no problem.
Dec. 12
• At 10:56 a.m., the dept. responded to a call of a possible structure fire on Leonard Road. Plastic food containers were burning in the oven.
• At 4:57 p.m., the dept. responded to a vehicle accident on Cook Road. There were no injuries.
Dec. 13
• At 2:49 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to Church Street. The victim was taken to the hospital.
Dec. 14
• At 11:38 a.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Whiteside Mountain Road. There was no problem.
• At 1:41 p.m., the dept. responded to a call of a structure fire at a residence on Horse Cove Road. The home was completely destroyed.
• At 3:34 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Spruce Lane. There was no problem.
• At 5:12 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm on Main Street which was set off by a water break.
• At 5:38 p.m., the dept. was first-responders at a residence on Claire Lane. The victim was taken to the hospital.
• At 10:35 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Buckberry Road. It was due to smoke from a kerosene heater.
Dec. 15
• At 6:55 a.m., the dept. responded to an alarm at a home on Falls Drive West. There was no problem.

Salons & Spas
Images Unlimited Salon
225 Spring Street • Highlands
Highlights, Color, Cuts & Perms
~ Yonka Facials ~
~ Microdermabrasion ~
~ Manicures & Pedicures ~
~ Acrylics & Gel Enhancements ~
Gift Certificates
828-526-9477
Walk-Ins Welcome!
Opening at 9 am, Tuesday - Saturday
Owner/Stylist: Lacy Jane Vilardo,
Stylist: Heather D. Escandon,
Stylist: Christa Hooper,
Massage Therapist: Betsy Phillips
Located behind Highlands Decorating Center on Highway 106 (The Dillard Rd)
NC LMBT #1429
(828) 526-4192
OPEN: Tues. - Sat. • Monday by appt.
Color, Cuts, Up Do's, Highlights, Massage, Facials, Pedicures,
Reflexology, Personal Training
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Color, Cuts, Up Do's, Highlights, Massage, Facials, Pedicures,
The Rotary Club of Highlands honored the Highlands School Students of the Month for November at its November 30 meeting. Shown with Highlands School Counselor, Thomas Jessup, are middle school winner, Rachael Foster, elementary school winner, Anna Stiehler, high school winner, Robbie Vanderbilt, and Rotary President, Jodie Cook.
The Rotary Club of Highlands joined with the Highlands Police Department and the Macon County Sheriff's Department to sponsor SHOP WITH A COP Bingo on December 9. Ella Crook, a 6 year old Highlands resident, won the final Super Bingo game and took home $100. She is shown with Highlands police chief Bill Harrell (left) and Macon County sheriff Robbie Holland.

The Mountain Garden Club recently made a special visit to the residents of Highlands-Cashiers Hospital's Fidelia Eckerd Center (FELC) spreading joy and Christmas spirit. Fashionably dressed as reindeer, Mountain Garden Club members performed various seasonal songs with lively and unique dance choreography.

In addition to their routine, Club Members hung Christmas decorations as part of their ongoing project to beautify the grounds in the courtyards of the living center. White lights were hung outlining the gazebo, draping the picket fencing in one courtyard and ornaments were hung in the other. Adding a festive touch inside, gel ornaments were also hung in the windows. "We can't thank Cecil Hines, Candy Field, Carol Strunk, Carolyn Cook, Elizabeth Little, Suzy Mosely and Midge Rothermel enough for their work, time and contagious spirit they bring to our center and its residents," said Ava Emory, RN, FELC Chief Nursing Officer. "They not only brighten our facility; they brighten the lives of our residents and staff."

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Mrs. Sizemore and her 1st grade students with Smokey Bear and Greg Brooks of the US Forest Service.

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**Smokey Bear visits Highlands School**

Students in Mrs. Donna Sizemore’s 1st grade class immediately recognized the tall visitor on November 30.

“Smokey!” they shouted.

Smokey, who burned his paws in a wildfire as a cub, has been teaching children and adults about preventing wildfires since 1944. But usually people see Smokey on TV or in a parade, not up close.

“Did you high-five Smokey?” Greg Brooks of the U.S. Forest Service asked the first graders.

Mr. Brooks, who works with Smokey in the Nantahala Ranger District, talked with the students about campfire safety.

“There are good fires, and there are bad fires.” he explained.

Students watched a video and saw how to use water and a shovel to be sure a campfire is out. They also received Smokey Bear coloring books, refrigerator magnets and other items.

The visit from Smokey and Mr. Brooks was arranged by the Mountain Garden Club, which is sponsoring the students in the 2011 Smokey Bear poster contest.

“This is the 50th anniversary of this national contest,” said Dixie Barton of the Mountain Garden Club.

“We can’t wait to see the posters these students make,” said Dr. Becky Schilling, also of the Mountain Garden Club.

Five days after Smokey’s visit, Todd Moss from Moss Tree Farm, whose son Brandon is in Mrs. Sizemore’s class, said “Smokey is all he’s talked about!”

Calling his son nearer, he asked, “Brandon, what does Smokey say?”

“Never play with matches!” said Brandon.

“And what else?”

“Only you can prevent wildfires!”

The Smokey Bear/Woodsy Owl poster contest is for students in grades 1-5. Entries must be sponsored by a garden club belonging to the National Garden Clubs, Inc. For information contact Dr. Becky Schilling of the Mountain Garden Club at rjs@dnet.net or 828-200-0699.

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**LETTERS continued from page 2**

Dear Fred ... about Sanford, FL

Dear Editor,

I’m writing in response to Fred Wolfdridge’s Dec. 9 column.

Fred, you old bozo. Now you’ve done it. Up until now I’d always loved your column — your droll wit, your hilarious sarcasm, your flair for foolery. But then you went and blew it in your Dec. 9th column by belittling my dear old hometown of Sanford, FL, a lovely old southern town full of great morality, integrity and charm.

If I were shorts, they’d be in a wad because you have besmirched the birthplace of six generations of my family merely because of your story of assault rifles being offered as a premium by an insensitive nitwit of a truck dealer. This is strictly atypical of peace-loving Sanford. And what’s more, you told the terrorists of the world how simple it is to convert an AK47 into a more deadly weapon. Duh.

Instead of a slow ride down commercial Frenchies you described, one should take a slower ride around Sanford to experience the many antique shops and fine restaurants on First Street, to see the museums and Fort, Melion Park on the beautiful St. Johns River, or to cruise the residential areas — the myriad of churches and beautifully restored historical homes all over town.

No, Fred, America has not gone mad, especially the quality of Americans lucky enough to claim towns such as Sanford as home. Unlike your smeared presenta-

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**Tree of Lights**

This December at Highlands-Cashiers Hospital

Place an ornament on the Hospital Christmas Tree in memory of or in honor of a family member or friend with a gift of $50 or more. These bells (in honor of) and stars for students entering the health care field. Has been made by: _______________________

Address: ______________________________

Signature of Hospital Auxiliary member receiving donation: _______________________

Amount donated $: _______

Any Questions, call 526-3700.

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**Bear hunting watch continues**

Dear Editor,

Last week, my letter to the editor regarding hound hunting of bears was published. I want to thank you all for your positive and supportive responses. I will continue my quest to make a difference in the state of North Carolina. I have replied to all of the emails I received, however, I did have some email problems on Thursday and Friday that have since been resolved. If you sent an email and did not receive a reply, please try again. Again, thank you to all who have shown support and encouragement. I will keep you posted.

Kate Messer

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