County replaces full-time attorney Moxley with part-time counsel

County Attorney Lesley Moxley has been absent from the last several county commission meetings and Monday night the public learned she had resigned. Following a closed session, Chairman Ronnie Beale announced that the full-time, legal services of Attorney Moxley were no longer needed, that the board had accepted her resignation and had worked out a mutually agreed upon severance package.

Though a full-time, on-staff county attorney isn’t necessary by law, North Carolina law does mandate that counties have legal counsel so the board will be using the services of outside counsel — Attorney Chester M. Jones — as Interim Chairman Ronnie Beale announced that the full-time, legal services of Attorney Moxley were no longer needed, that the board had accepted her resignation and had worked out a mutually agreed upon severance package.

Group set to change school calendar

On Feb. 3, the executive committee of the Macon County Association of Educators voted unanimously to petition the NC General Assembly to pass legislation which expands the authority and flexibility local school boards have in setting the school calendar.

“We are asking the General Assembly to modify the school calendar legislation it passed in 2004 which prevents most school districts from starting school for students before Aug. 25 and demands the student school year end by June 10,” said member John deVille.

Among other things, proponents of local calendar control say the lack of local flexibility prevents Macon County Schools from being able to coordinate its calendar with Southwestern Community College and Western Carolina University.

“Those students who wish to participate in dual enrollment experience a two-week gap in instruction toward the end of the first semester as high school students approach final exams week,” said deVille, a teacher at Franklin High School. “The lack of flexibility constantly forces the superintendent and the school board to make difficult decisions about the delivery of the donated items. 

Highlands Police Dept. earns top ranking for traffic safety

By Tom Crosby

Once again the Highlands Police Department has been noted by Triple A as the state’s Top Traffic Safe Community in its population category for the past three years.

The rankings are done by AAA Carolina for communities under 10,000 population which are commended for its traffic safety policies and practices. The Highlands Police Department has been AAA’s top Traffic Safe Community in North Carolina for communities under 10,000 population each year beginning with 2006.

The Highlands Police Department is to be commended for its dedication to enforcing traffic laws because its results have reduced accidents and saved lives.

Junior Michael Shearl defies gravity at a recent Nantahala game played in Highlands. On Thursday, Feb. 11 Highlands plays Hiawassee Dam at home and Friday, Feb. 12 it plays BlueRidge. For more Highlands School Basketball, see page 13.

Photo by Noel Atherton
Thank You Fred

Dear Editor,

I'm writing in response to Fred Wooldridge's letter to me in the Feb. 4 issue of Highlands' Newspaper.

So Fred, I appreciate your invitation to join your deep throat group, but I am more comfortable continuing with my old ways. From time to time I will to write letters to the newspapers, even though I may set myself up to be taken to the woodshed of public opinion.

I will also go to town board meetings periodically if I have concerns. I have found those Highlands politicians, our elected representatives, to be very receptive to folks speaking at the beginning of the meeting during the public comment period. A citizen can even speak at the first few minutes of the meeting and then leave.

The commissioners and mayor don't always agree with comments. Nevertheless, hearing different views in an open and public forum is a part of the grassroots democratic process that begins right here in Highlands and all across small towns and neighborhoods in America.

Pat "my own voice” Taylor
Highlands

This note may help ‘right’ America!

Dear Editor,

With all the political gridlock and current contention in the Congress, perhaps we should review how we choose our politicians? The current T-parties symbolize our general electorate discontent and may be a subject for consideration.

My proposal is to initiate a voting system that allows NEGATIVE votes as well as the usual positive votes (one for each party candidate).

Right now, no vote is deemed an abstention (and a negative) and that's why in an average election, less than 50% of the electorate votes! The non-voters are simply showing apathy and a big zero vote.

In this new system of voting, the candidate with the highest positive or lowest negative number of votes wins!

Look at Robert's Rules. Consider the party state a 'motion' or an 'amendment' proposed and seconded by a regular political nomination committee. The popular votes are then 'for', 'against' or 'abstain'. The candidate with the highest positive count, or least negative wins!

So this system potentially could:

a) create a higher voter turnout,
b) provide an outlet for the frustration we all have for useless attack adds (those candidates get a big minus sign vote), and
c) encourage getting rid of incumbents.

Yours for a more FREE and complete election process.

Pete Sarjeant
Bedford, VA

highlandsinfo.com keeps previous resident in touch

Dear Editor,

I look forward to Thursdays, because I can catch up with what's happening in a town I still hold dear in my heart even though I'm no longer a resident. Great weather pictures, I'm happy to experience them vicariously.

You're doing a great job. I know how hard running a newspaper is, especially in these times. I'm so glad you have taken your own path.

Keep up the outstanding work.

Mike Cavender
New Bern, NC

From Doshie's family

Thank you so much for the excellent care and love that was shown to our beloved Mother and Grandmother Doshie during her time with you. It means so much to us that you gave her the extra special care and so much love and compassion during her last days with us.

Doshie knew you loved her and she loved you all, too. Thank you for all you did for the family to make us as comfortable as possible and to give us our precious time with her before, during, and after her passing. It all means so much to us.

The Family of Doshie M. Wilson
Clarence, EliaMae, and all the Wilson family and Frances Reed and family

From Johnny's family

Thank you to everyone who sent flowers, money, food, cards or said a prayer throughout our time of sadness. This has been a difficult time, but we have found comfort in knowing that so many people care.

A special thanks to Bryant-Grant Funeral Home, the Rev. Junior Jenkins and the Harmony Valley Singers for the beautiful service.

May God bless you all.

The Family of Johnny Henry
George Stanley Picklesimer

George Stanley Picklesimer, age 51, of Cumming, GA, formerly of Highlands, died Friday, February 5, 2010 in Cumming, GA. He was a native of Macon County and a son of the late John L. and Bertha Owens Picklesimer.

Surviving is a sister Kathy Bale of Franklin, NC; one brother, John Picklesimer of Cumming, GA. Several nieces and nephews also survive.

Graveside services were held at 3 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 7, 2010 at Macedonia Baptist Church Cemetery with the Rev. Rusty Wolf officiating.

Bryant-Grant Funeral Home was in charge of arrangements. Online condolences may be made at www.bryantgrantfuneralhome.com.

Joy Lowe Dooley

Joy Lowe Dooley, age 64, of Highlands, NC went to be with her Lord, Saturday, Feb. 6, 2010. She was born in Rabun County, GA, the daughter of the late James N. and Bernice Rice Lowe. She was married to Rev. Edward L. Dooley who died in 1997. She was an assistant administrator for 12 years at the First Baptist Church of Highlands where she was also a member. She loved the Lord and enjoyed her Church work.

She is survived by her son, Rev. Jeremy Dooley and his wife Jaime of Auburn, AL; three brothers, James L. Lowe and his wife Nancy, Bill Lowe and his wife Christine all of Highlands, NC and Rev. Roy Lowe and his wife, Clara of Franklin, NC; one grand-son, Ryne Dooley. She was preceded in death by a sister, Lenora Lowe.

Funeral services were held Tuesday, February 9, 2010 at the First Baptist Church of Highlands at 2 p.m. with Rev. Roy Lowe, Dr. Dan Robinson and Rev. Jeffrey Porter officiating. Burial were held at Highlands Memorial Park.

Bryan-Grant Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements. Online condolences can be made by visiting www.bryantgrantfuneralhome.com.

Hornbeak celebrates her 103rd birthday at Fidelia-Eckerd Living Center

Nona Hornbeak celebrated her birthday with a party attended by family, friends and staff. Pictured with granddaughter, Pamela Miller, Nona enjoyed cake and good company at last week’s gathering.

“It’s always exciting to celebrate the birthday of one of our residents,” said Shauna Mellott, FELC Administrator, “but more so when they achieve such a remarkable age and we, the staff at FELC, are privileged to be a part of that celebration.”

Nona spent much of her life raising a family on their farm in rural Tennessee. She was active in her community church and a committed member of the local PTA. When she wasn’t busy raising her family, Nona enjoyed traveling. She now looks forward to the regular visits from her granddaughter Pamela, and spending time with her friends at FELC.

Highlands student named to Dean’s List at Elon University

Rebecca E. Dotson, daughter of Buz and Mary Dotson of Highlands, NC, has been named to the Dean’s List for the 2009 fall semester at Elon University.

The Dean’s List is composed of students with no grade below a B- and a grade point average of at least 3.50 in a minimum of 12 semester hours.

Elon University, which was founded in 1889, is recognized as a national model for engaged learning, with renowned programs in international study and community service. Elon is one of the more selective universities in the nation and ranks #2 in Masters Universities in the South.

Elon emphasizes an excellent foundation in liberal arts and sciences along with nationally accredited professional programs in the schools of law, business, communications and education. Elon’s 5,600 students come to North Carolina from 47 states and 49 other countries, creating an academic community of global citizens and leaders motivated by concern for the common good.

Rebecca Dotson was a 2006 graduate of Highlands School. She is currently scheduled to graduate this spring with a major in English and minor in Political Science.

WCU’s Dean’s List announced

The following students were on the Western Carolina Dean’s List for the Fall semester:

- From Highlands: Rachel Earlene Alford, Robert Davidson Edwards, Laura Renee Kremser, Christopher Andrew Mouchet, Matthew Preston Neely, Teresa Rose Pearman, Rebecca Shuler, Phillip Lowe, Josh Bryson, Brian Lowe and Bobby Sanders served as pallbearers. Honorary pallbearers will be the Deacons of the First Baptist Church of Highlands.

- Bryan-Grant Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements. Online condolences can be made by visiting www.bryantgrantfuneralhome.com.

- WCU’s Dean’s List

- Also featuring: Hudson • Joes • AG Citizens 7 for All Mankind Project E • Free People Michael Star Tees

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Plumbers see the world different than the rest of humanity. Some call us cold hearted and they’re partially right. We view a person like a banana, the peel being the physical body and the fruit being the personality … or soul of the person. At death, the banana is peeled away and the fruit taken by our maker. The peel is discarded because its job of housing the fruit is done. So rotting dead people, like the banana peel, is worthless in the eyes of a policeman. If I didn’t think that way, death would have eventually overwhelmed me. I’ve been retired from police work for more than 20 years but I still have the stench of rotting flesh inside my nose. Oh, how I pity the rescue personnel working in Haiti.

Miami Beach used to be the place for retirement. After working in the textile mills or automobile manufacturing assembly lines, folks from the north would pick up their retirement watches and head for Miami Beach where they hung out until death.

Miami Beach retirees, mostly Italians and Jews, lived alone in modest accommodations. One of the most common complaints from persons was the “strange smell” complaint. Retirees would pass away and, because there was no one to check on them, would begin to rot. Depending on how hot it was, it only takes a short time. For police officers, this is not gruesome but part of the job … and a part of life. We became “flip” about death and rotting bodies because we saw so many of them. I could sometimes stand on the street and my nose would tell me the building to go to. In Haiti, it must be everywhere. You never forget that smell.

And when I got home from work, my wife could tell by the odor on my clothes I had been on a “stinker.”

One hot summer afternoon, I got a call of a strange smell coming from the trunk of a car. At this point in time, Miami Beach was the number one drug capital in the country. It happened a few years after the Mariel boatlift and finding dead bodies in car trunks was common. Like most officers on my department, I had become an expert on the smell of rotting flesh.

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The car was sitting on a South Beach street in front of a small apartment building. Thousands of flies lined the rim of the truck. After a short discussion with my fellow detectives, we agreed there was a rotting body inside. We called for crime scene technicians and started our application for a search warrant. Crime scene tape was strung around the area and a locksmith was on route.

While we were waiting for dispatch to give us the car owner’s name, an elderly overweight man waddled out of his apartment building and headed for the car. “Are you the owner of this car?” I asked, stopping him from getting any closer. He was stunned.

“What? Why do you want to know? Aren’t you supposed to read me my rights or something?” the old man asked.

“Sir, we are currently getting a search warrant for your car. It would make things a lot simpler if you would agree to open the trunk for us.” I responded.

“I want to speak to a lawyer,” he demanded.

“Well, sir, that leaves me with little choice but to put you in temporary custody,” I said, pulling out my handcuffs. I sat him in the back seat of my detective unit and waited for the search warrant and locksmith.

Hours later, when the trunk was finally opened, we found no rotting body. Wedid find a bag of rotting squid and a small satchel containing bookmaking material. The old guy was a bookmaker. No wonder he was uncooperative. I would have sworn there was a dead body in that trunk.

I walked back to my car and sat next to the old man. Removing the handcuffs, I said, “I use it for bait. I forgot to put it back in the frig. If you confiscate my bookwork, I’ll be out thousands and I live on a small pension. I’ll trade you my bookwork for a great fishing spot.”

“I don’t fish,” I replied, hesitating before speaking further. “But I’ll let you keep your bookwork. Be prepared for a visit from the vice cops.”
Do it for ‘our fellow man’

My Mom said, “Travel is broadening.” I never checked “broadening” to learn if it was a real word. I knew what Mom meant. She meant we learn from travel, learn foreign cultures, learn to appreciate the USA, and in Mom’s case, learn the best shopping districts in several countries. If we look, we can learn.

Weigh the opinions and accomplishments of others at our peril.

I’ve just returned from foreign travel, not a vacation, but an experience to rival and surpass the best vacation I’ve ever had. Many of you have followed my journey. I was part of a superb team, a group of talented and dedicated health care professionals. The majority were from Boston. Three Haitian-Americans live in New York City. I was there too, I’ve written that we became an indivisible unit. We were not divided by the return to our daily lives. Our team met in Boston last night, the first of what I suspect will be many reunions. I was absent in body, but not in spirit.

My friends called last night. They were eating Indian food and drinking Prestige, a Haitian beer, and as far as I know, Haiti’s only export. My friends share a secret, one I’ve tried to share with you. How can a journey of help leave one so satisfied, and yet so empty? At first I denied, or was unaware of the sense of isolation my teammates felt. I was, and am, so happy to be back with Lizzie and Bull, back at work at Blue Ridge Orthopaedics, back home where I belong.

We did much, but we left a job unfinished. Others will, have already, followed. They will close the wounds we left open, revise the amputations we left unfinished. They will mend the hurt feelings we left among the Haitian staff. They will build upon the trust we earned among our patients. A reporter asked me last week about the toys Bull had sent for his Haitian brothers and sisters. She asked if I had used them to try to gain trust with the Haitian children. I was somewhat offended by the question. It seemed as if she had mistaken me for a Jesuit missionary handing out rosary beads to naked natives. I told her that the toys were Bull’s own idea, that I was nothing more than a delivery boy, that his offering was a case of kid to kid solidarity. We speak much of solidarity, not only the solidarity of our surgical team, but among those who have contributed so generously to the Haitian relief effort, and between our people and theirs.

So much remains to be done, because there was so little in Haiti before the quake. A lady, a patient, instructed me about Haiti last week. She described herself as an “addict” and has watched CNN since the disaster. She talked of rebuilding Haiti, without realizing how little there is to rebuild. She didn’t realize that few Haitians go to school, that there are few roads, that electricity, which we accept as a necessity, is available to few, in many areas, only those fortunate enough to own a generator.

There is little industry, and too little political stability and too few educated workers to attract foreign investment. Haitians lack adequate nutrition and safe drinking water. There is too little top soil to support an agrarian society.

It will require a massive international effort to bring prosperity to Haiti. It can be done, but I fear the world will lose interest long before the job is done. It is not a matter so much of rebuilding as it is of building.

We rebuilt a shattered Europe after WWII. We can do the same in Haiti, but only if we retain our focus. After their defeat in 1945, the Chinese turned their back on a country which had known centuries of misfortune. That fact makes an effort both more difficult and more noble.

Feedback is encouraged.
email: hsalzarulo@aol.com
from the history guy ...

Feb. 11, 1963
Julia Child’s “The French Chef” premiers on television.

With a greeting “Bonjour, Bonjour!”
She would introduce a new kitchen chore, perhaps we will have a chance to see
the proper method for a fricassee, or, I wonder, might this be the day
we learn to make the perfect chocolate souffle?
You can cure nearly any malaise
with a sauce of butter, white wine, or Bearnaise,
compose a grand culinary homage
to the many kinds of fine fromage,
it takes hard work and patience, don’t be hasty
to compose the absolutely ideal pastry.
If, when boning a duck, what is the technique?
She can tell you, at it she’s magnifique.
Any thing at all, from soup to fish,
she’s the master of any dish.
And the show’s not over, not complete,
until she’s wished us “Bon Appétit.”

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• H I S & H E R S •
Goal oriented

By Michelle A. Mead-Armor
Football and I got off
to a rocky start. My
first memories of
the sport go back to my
high school days. Sure,
Waynesboro High
School had track and field, baseball, and even
a reasonably good basketball team, but the
school year really revolved around football.
The football players ate at their own
table in the cafeteria, where they were
allowed to eat as much as they pleased,
though they paid no more for their meals
than the rest of us.
High school is a tough time, and
hormones play havoc with the best of us. Many high school males still looked like
little boys, while their classmates were
already shaving. Some girls looked like
they should still be playing with dolls,
while others looked like they could be
posing for Playboy.
The football players stood out for
several reasons. The coaches insisted that
they come to school wearing blazers and
ties, but their dress code didn’t seem to
include actually wearing their shirts
tucked into their pants. The football
players ranged from stocky to downright
fat, and possession of what would pass for
a neck seemed optional.
In the periods between classes, they
could be seen milling around their
lockers waving like lazy oxen off to
their next class, or flirting with the
cheerleaders who threw themselves at
the players with bemoming-like
enthusiasm. One assumed that later in life, these charmed couples would marry,
and produce carbon copies of themselves
– another generation of neckless young
men and perky blondes with turned-up
noses and perfect hair. To think
otherwise would have been heresy.
Being a bookish sort, I had little
contact with the football players until I
wound up sitting next to one in civics
class. Charlie was a sweet young man
– rather like a large-pawed puppy who
resists housebreaking, not out of malice,
but simply because he doesn’t understand
that the rules apply to him.
I was rather flattered that Charlie
talked to me at all, until I realized that his
intentions were not altogether innocent.
Our teacher enjoyed springing pop ques-
zions on us, and watching the hysteria
as those who were not keeping up with
the reading went into blind panic mode.

Mr. Jameson handed out the tests, and then
walked out of the room.
I put my head down, and concentrated on
the task at hand. Charlie sat there,
mesmerized by the fly
on his desk. Suddenly,
Charlie broke out of his
dream-like state, turned
around, grabbed my
paper, read my answers,
and proceeded to copy
them onto his paper. I
was outraged, and
vowed to tell the teacher: “No, you
won’t,” said Charlie, good-naturedly. “I’m
an important player, and if you have me
kicked off the team before the big game,
no one will ever speak to you again for
the rest of high school. No one will date you.
People will move away from you when
you sit next to them at
the cafeteria. You’ll never get a
recommendation to go to a good college.
Hope you’re not going to turn me in.”
And I didn’t.

For the rest of term, I bit my lip as
Charlie regularly cheated off my papers.
Fortunately, he made mistakes in
copying, so his grades were never as good
as mine. I think Mr. Jameson caught on,
too, and identified the source of Charlie’s
new-found wisdom. It was just one of
those things.
Charlie was even rather generous
with his gratitude. In a school where
jocks and geeks didn’t even acknowledge
each other’s presence, Charlie was the
exception. He boomed his greetings to
me from down the hall, sometimes
waving a large hand in my direction, like
a bear directing traffic. While we never
became friends, and we certainly didn’t
date, we did have an oddly symbiotic
relationship. Still, it hurt when he
graduated, and was immediately accepted
to the state university which rejected me
when I tried to enter the following year.
You see, the university had just gonne-
coed, and quickly filled its quota of women.
They also required a much higher grade
point average if you were female, an
outrage which I hope they have changed.
Of course, if you could throw a football
or a basketball, the Hallowed Halls put
down the Welcome Mat. Stung by my
rejection, I chose to attend a women’s
college, where hopefully my grades
would reflect the field of knowledge
– not the field of play.
When John and I were dating, in the
early 1970s, he was a real football junkie.

• See HIS & HERS page 16
Feeling ‘Super’

A t around 9:29 pm on Sunday night, my phone exploded. The bartender after he jumped into my arms before settling down and reminding myself that there were five minutes left and they had Peyton Manning. Yes, Manning did drive the Colts down to the goal line, but the Saints D held once again and at that point I was noticing the smoke coming out of my Blackberry and contemplating whether my next child will be named Tracy or Drew. (I’m thinking Tracy, mainly because it’s more versatile). Throw in the fact that the Rib Shack was full of Saints fans (mostly from New Orleans and in tears) and I had a smile that would need to be surgically removed for the rest of the evening.

A couple more quick thoughts from the evening:
1. I inadvertently blurted out my feelings about Sean Payton in front of the tremendous onside kick to start the first half. To all that were there, I apologize for giving you my opinion of the size of Coach Payton’s...um...guts.
2. I really hope the Saints don’t get rid of Reggie Bush this offseason. I know that he is overpaid, but the guy is such a lightning rod that he takes the heat off of his teammates, and is also a huge threat to the offense.
3. People can talk about history, destiny, etc. However, on Sunday night, the Saints were just flat out the superior team. After the first quarter jitters, the Saints outscored the Colts 31-7, outgained them, stuffed their offense, and dominated them on special teams.

Speaking of special teams, how great was it to see a kicker finally make a long field goal in these playoffs. Garrett Hartley was 3-3 from deeper than 40 yards and had a huge impact on the game.

4. Drew Brees. The guy was told he was too short to make it in the NFL. He was cast aside by the Dolphins. He has been consistently great for 3 seasons but overlooked by most of the mainstream media. His Saints were picked to finish 25th out of 32 teams in Sports Illustrated’s preseason poll. The guy is the consummate underdog, and he earned the respect of millions on Sunday night. But to me, the lasting image of Brees from the Super Bowl will be him holding his son in tears before accepting the MVP trophy. For as great as a football player Brees is, he’s an even greater human being. Some folks in New Orleans jokingly refer to him as Breesus, and while he is just a man ... his place in history will not be as merely a man, but as a Saint.

Remember the ones you love on Valentine’s Day!

Beginning mid-March: Class for families dealing with mental illness

NAMI Family-to-Family education program, a 12-week class for relatives and friends of people suffering from mental illness, is being offered by NAMI Appalachian South in Franklin. The class provides up-to-date information about schizophrenia, bipolar, depression, panic disorder, and other mental illnesses. Trained family members teach the course that balances education and skill training with self-care, emotional support and empowerment. The curriculum, developed by a clinical psychologist with an ill family member, has been presented in 44 states to 80,000 people and is recognized as a best practice model. This extensive curriculum also covers:
• Coping skills, and handling crisis and relapses.
• Listening and communication techniques.
• Problem solving, setting limits and rehabilitation.
• Understanding the experience of living with a mental illness.
• Medications and their side effects.

This weekly class will start mid-March. Class size is limited. There is no charge but pre-registration is required. Contact: Ann 369-7385, Debbie (912) 481-2339, or Carl (706) 746-5139.
Let it snow, let it snow, let it snow

Here sit, watching a winter wonderland room, I'm in my view for the nth time this winter, trying to think of something to boost my sagging spirits. The Dow was down 200-today, football will forever when you read this, baseball hasn't started yet, March Madness is a month away and gloom looms. Wa wa wa.

Perhaps the unravelled Al Gore would like to pay my heating bill, which is twice as high as last year's for January, proving once again that climate (or at least weather) does change. I've already had my quickie trip to Florida, the beneficial effects of which lasted for about three days.

You may have gathered that I'm filling space with innocuous stuff, because even though he is in my face 24/7, I refuse to mention his name or talk about him at all. The bad girls of the Hall of Shame continue to provide nothing in the way of worthwhile gossip. I certainly hope that this dearth of smutty news is not the new normal.

In my search for alternative issues to discuss, it occurred to me that the Muslim agenda has been ignored while we concentrated on our domestic deva-tation. I started my research by googling in Islam and the first item on the list was a Wikipedia site titled “Timeline of Muslim History.” I found it very interesting.

Each century, starting with the seventh century with the ascendency of Muhammad, the site lists significant events (the seventh century had 80 or 90 individual bulleted items); the article states “this particular chronology is almost entirely of military and political nature.” There is such and entry at the end of every century? There was, and what it disclosed was an amazing revelation. With each successive century, the percentage of Muslims to the total world population increased by one. As I paged through the screens, I was really in disbelief as the progression continued. Are these numbers rigged? Even if the powers behind Islam wanted to, they couldn’t achieve such orderly growth.

As unlikely as it seemed, the relentless march continued through the 19th century when, “By the end of this century, global Muslim population had grown to 13 percent of the total.” It was clear that most of the growth resulted by conquest and then the world powers eventually overpowered their military dominance.

It was the next entry, and the last in the series, that blew me away. “1999 – By the end of this century, global Muslim population had grown to almost 15% of the total, driven by improved healthcare infrastructure.” Really?

Evidently, healthcare had to do with accelerating Muslim birthrate, because, with a considerably lower base, worldwide, Muslims are producing almost the same absolute numbers as are Christians. Islam conversions, although widely discussed, are only about a third of Christians. It also seems to have a direct effect on death rate. When I looked this up, I was astonished. From the lowest on the list of facts really fascinated me.

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Ongoing and Upcoming Events

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

Mondays
• Closed AA meeting, 5:30 p.m. at the Episcopal Church at Fifth and Main streets.

Tuesdays
• Tuesday After School Classes for grades K-6 are held weekly at The Bascom in Highlands. To register or for more information, visit www.thebascom.org or call (828) 526-4949 ext. 100.
• Clogging Lessons at the Rec Park. Park, 5 p.m. Leather shoes recommended and tap shoes can be ordered. For more information, call Joyce Doer- er at 877-6618. $30/month.
• Highlands Rotary Club meets at noon at the Highlands Conference Center.
• Closed AA Women’s meeting, 5:30 p.m. at the Episcopal Church at Fifth and Main streets.

Tuesdays & Wednesdays

Wednesdays
• Wednesday Preschool Creativity Classes for Parent and Child (ages 2-12) are held weekly at The Bascom in Highlands. To register or for more information, visit www.thebascom.org or call (828) 526-4949 ext. 100.
• A FREE After School Program at Highlands United Methodist Church. Children are picked up at school, taken to the church, have a snack, helped with homework time and supervised playing on the playground and participate in a music program. Children are dismissed at 5:30 pm in time for dinner in the fellowship hall. For information, call 526-3376.
• The Highlands Mountaintop Rotary meets at Ruka’s Table at 163 Main Street in Wright Square in Highlands at 7:30 a.m. Visitors are welcome. If you are new to the Highlands area we invite you to join us for breakfast and our meeting.
• 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.

Wednesdays & Fridays
• Open AA meeting at noon at the Episcopal Church at Fifth and Main streets.

Every 3rd Wednesday
• Study sessions at the Universal Unitarian Fellowship Hall in Franklin. A $5 soup-supper will be served at 5:30 p.m. Study sessions will begin at 6:30 p.m. For more information call 828-524-6777 or 706-746-9964.

Thursdays
• Al-Anon meeting, noon at the Episcopal Church on Main and Fifth streets.
1st & 3rd Thursdays
• NAMI Appalachian South (National Alliance on Mental Illness) will have a support group meeting the first and third Thursday of each month. It is for people coping with serious mental illnesses (bipolar disorder, depression, schizophrenia, panic disorder, etc) and/or their family members. We also do advocacy and educational programs. 486 W. Palmer St., Franklin, NC, 2-7 p.m., with snacks afterwards. For information contact Carole Light, Ph.D. at 828-526-9769 or Ann Nandea at 828-369-7385.

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.
• Every Fourth Saturday
• Friends of Panthertown work days, are the fourth Saturday of each month. (Time and location varies). Volunteers needed to maintain trails. For more information, contact Nina Elliott at 828-526-9938 (ext 258).

Saturdays
• Saturday Art School for grades K-8 is held weekly at The Bascom in Highlands. To register or for more information, visit www.thebascom.org or call (828) 526-4949 ext. 100.
• At Cyprus 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. $19 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 888-764-0365.

Thursday, Feb. 11
• Town Board Budget Worksession at 4 p.m. at the Community Building.
• The League of Women Voters of Macon County will host a program on the 2010 U.S. census. At the census information meeting, County Manager Jack Horton and County Planner Derek Rolland will explain the importance of the census to Macon County, how it will be carried out, and will explain the role of the CCC (the Complete Count Committee), a committee comprised of community and government leaders dedicated to building awareness of the 2010 census. Pat Bonard will discuss census jobs. There will be a question and answer period. The meeting will be held at Tartan Hall in Franklin. Lunch is available at noon by reservation. Call 524-5192.
• The Western North Carolina Woodturners Club will meet at 6 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. Listen to WHLC (104.5 FM) at 5 p.m. for cancellation due to weather.

• The Needlers’ Needlework Club will meet on, at 3:30-5 pm at the Ag Center. Our members are currently making some challenging projects. Anyone (ages 5-18) interested in crocheting, knitting, or embroidery is welcome to attend.

Friday, Feb. 12
• Begin your day with homemade buttermilk pancakes topped with fresh fruit and covered with hot butter nut maple syrup. Whiteside Mountain Café and Grill at Highlands-Cashiers Hospital will be offering a “Sweetheart” Pancake Breakfast, open to the community, on Friday. The Pancake Breakfast will begin at 7:45 a.m. and will continue through 10 a.m. Fare is only $3 per person for pancakes, sausage or bacon. Tea and coffee will be included. The Whiteside Mountain Café and Grill is located in the hospital’s cafeteria. Please call ahead for large parties or orders 828-526-1419.

Saturday, Feb. 13
• The Nantahala Hiking Club will take a moderate 4-mile hike from Rock Gap to Winding Stair

• See EVENTS page 10

NEW POLICY

For-Profit Businesses and NonProfit Organizations requesting Promotional or Press Release space, must agree to an advertising arrangement. Without an arrangement, only a listing in the upcoming events calendar will appear for NonProfits but no listing will be accepted for For-Profit Business events.

To request ad rates and a publication calendar, email highlandseditor@aol.com

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: Mondays at 5 p.m.
Ongoing and Upcoming Events

Highlands-Cashiers Players preparing for ‘The Dixie Swim Club’

Mary Adair Leslie and Lee Lyons rehearsing for “The Dixie Swim Club” on stage Feb. 25-28 and March 4-7.

In addition to the natural beauty of the area, one of the things making Highlands an attractive place to live is the emphasis in town on fine arts. In the summer especially, almost daily, there is an opportunity to hear music. There is something for everyone: chamber music, bluegrass, the men’s chorus, hymn sing-a-longs and opera. Outstanding art galleries as well as antique shops line the downtown area.

Lectures on current events and philosophy are offered, as well as courses on learning to paint, becoming a better photographer or studying the history of the area. The Highlands Playhouse and the Highlands Cashiers Community Players are important to the community and perform everything from cabaret music to light comedy to cutting edge drama. With so much offered, it is no surprise that another treasure of Highlands is the libribrarian, involved citizens who make it all happen.

One such resident is Mary Adair Leslie, owner of Summit One Gallery.

In addition to knowledge of art, she is also a performer with dance and stage background. Currently she is playing the role of Jeri Neal in the Highlands Cashiers Players production of The Dixie Swim Club, a play about the relationships of five women. They are members of their college swim team. It’s an unlikely grouping of women: Sheree is the efficient, health conscious former team captain; Lexie, the complex, self-centered vamp; Dinah, the successful attorney with a dry wit and a martini glass; Vernadette, who counts every penny and deals with a deadbeat husband and disappoainting children; and Jeri Neal, a sweet, unworldly nun with a secret, who loves to quote her Granny McFeely.

When the play opens, the women are in their early forties; when it closes, they’re in their late 70s.

When asked about the play and her character in particular, Mary Adair replied… “Jeri Neal is a sweet, charming and innocent woman; fun to play. Being in the Dixie Swim Club has given me the opportunity to be on stage with Jenny King and Carla Gates, whom I have directed before but have never had the chance to act with. Also, a time to be on stage again with Lee Lyons, we were in Crimes of the Heart together; and a chance to meet a new friend, Betsy Miller. It has been a special time. Working with new director, Rick Sedge has been great fun also. As a community theater group it is important to bring new people into the group and to foster new talents in all who want to participate. Rick is doing a great job; he has a vision and is open to suggestions. I’m trying to concentrate on acting and not directing. That’s his job!”

The play runs February 25-28 and March 4-7 at the Highlands Performing Arts Center. The Box Office opens Thursday, February 18th for Season Subscribers and on Saturday, February 20th for the public. For tickets or more information call: 828.526.8804.
### Ongoing and Upcoming Events

**Registration begins for several spring art workshops at The Bascom**

The Bascom will offer several new early-season art workshops in sculpture, painting, fabric printing and more, and registration is now open.

In addition to a February/March photography workshop by Greg Newton, newly announced workshops include the following:

- **Pat Dews watermedia workshop**
  - “Creating Pattern on Fabric: Block Printing”
  - May 14-15, All levels. $175 Bascom members; $195 non-members
- **Barbara Zaretsky fiber art workshop**
  - “Creating Pattern on Fabric: Block Printing”
  - May 14-15, All levels. $175 Bascom members; $195 non-members
- **Karen Weins oil painting workshop**
  - All levels. $400 Bascom members; $425 non-members
- **Marc Chatov’s oil painting workshop**
  - “Creating Pattern on Fabric: Block Printing”
  - May 14-15, All levels. $175 Bascom members; $195 non-members
- **Joe Frank McKeever’s ceramics workshop**
  - “Advanced Throwing Techniques,” May 25-28
  - Non-beginner to advanced. $450 Bascom members; $475 non-members
- **Elder G. Jones sculpture workshop**
  - “Creating Pattern on Fabric: Block Printing”
  - May 25-28, All levels. $400 Bascom members; $425 non-members
- **Marc Chatov’s sculpture workshop**
  - “Creating Pattern on Fabric: Block Printing”
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- **Elder G. Jones sculpture workshop**
  - “Creating Pattern on Fabric: Block Printing”
  - May 25-28, All levels. $400 Bascom members; $425 non-members

**Pre-registration is required and is going on now. To register or for more information, visit www.thebascom.org or call (828) 526-4949 ext. 100.**

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Event Details</strong></th>
<th><strong>Dates</strong></th>
<th><strong>Information</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Nantahala Hiking Club will take an easy 1.5-mile hike on the Taylor Lake Loop Trail in Black Rock Mtn. State Park in GA near Clayton. Meet at the Smoky Mtn. Visitors Center in Otto at 2 p.m. Call leader Kay Coriell, 369-6820, for reservations.</td>
<td>Tuesday, Feb. 23</td>
<td>Call leader Kay Coriell, 369-6820, for reservations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Sharp Shooters will be meeting 7 p.m. at the Community Facilities Building. If you are between the ages of 9 and 18, with interests in shooting sports, you are welcome to attend.</td>
<td>Thursday, Feb. 25</td>
<td>Call leader Kay Coriell, 369-6820, for reservations.</td>
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<tr>
<td>An American Red Cross Adult CPR/AED and First Aid Basics course will be conducted by the Macon County Public Health Center. The course will be held on Thursday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m at the Macon County Public Health Center at 1830 Lake Drive. Participants must pre-register and pre-pay at the Macon County Public Health Center before Monday, Feb. 22. Call Jennifer at 349-2439.</td>
<td>Thursday, Feb. 25</td>
<td>Call Jennifer at 349-2439.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An acclaimed author, storyteller, humorist and musician, Keillor will take center stage in WCU’s Fine and Performing Arts Center at 7 p.m. Reserved seat tickets for “An Evening with Garrison Keillor” are $25.</td>
<td>Tuesday, March 9</td>
<td>Call (828) 227-2479 or online <a href="http://www.wcu.edu/fapac">www.wcu.edu/fapac</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highlands’ Hiking Club will take an easy 1.5-mile hike from Rock Gap to Rock Gap in the Standing Indian area. Meet at Westgate Plaza in Franklin, opposite Burger King, 2:00 p.m. Drive 22 miles round trip. Call leader Kay Coriell, 369-6820.</td>
<td>Tuesday, March 9</td>
<td>Call leader Kay Coriell, 369-6820.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An acclaimed author, storyteller, humorist and musician, Keillor will take center stage in WCU’s Fine and Performing Arts Center at 7 p.m. Reserved seat tickets for “An Evening with Garrison Keillor” are $25.</td>
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<td>Call (828) 227-2479 or online <a href="http://www.wcu.edu/fapac">www.wcu.edu/fapac</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Elder G. Jones will teach a sculpture workshop, “Wet Carved Concrete - Planters for the Garden,” at The Bascom for all levels. Cost is $295 Bascom members, $320 non-members. Registration is going on now. To register, call (828) 526-4949 ext. 100 or visit <a href="http://www.thebascom.org">www.thebascom.org</a>.</strong></td>
<td>Tues.-Fri., May 25-28</td>
<td>Call (828) 526-4949 ext. 100 or visit <a href="http://www.thebascom.org">www.thebascom.org</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Collective Spirits wine festival at The Bascom. Proceeds benefit art education and exhibition programs. Events include private wine dinners, grand wine tastings with both value wines and rare bottles, a gala dinner, live and silent auctions, a culinary sampling by local chefs, and symposiums conducted by leading wine specialists. Tickets are on sale now at <a href="http://www.collectivespirits.com">www.collectivespirits.com</a> or by calling (828) 526-4949.</strong></td>
<td>Tues.-Fri., May 25-28</td>
<td>Call (828) 526-4949 ext. 100 or visit <a href="http://www.thebascom.org">www.thebascom.org</a>.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The miracle of Cana-Grace

Weddings are accidents waiting to happen. I know. I perform a lot of them. Something always goes wrong at the service of Holy Matrimony. Something went wrong at that famous wedding in Cana of Galilee where Jesus performed his first miracle, turning water into wine.

In those days the bride and groom celebrated the marriage, not with a honeymoon, but with a seven day wedding feast at the groom’s home. This celebration is in big trouble because the wine has given out before the party is over. The situation is a crisis for the family who has the responsibility for hospitality, probably the bride’s side.

It is the mother of Jesus who notices. She provides the leadership for this miraculous sign by taking action to help. Jesus is hovering in the background as one who has responsibility for hospitality, probably the bride’s side.

When his mother tells the servants to “do whatever Jesus tells them,” it appears he reluctantly performs one of his most understated mighty acts. The best wine is served to keep the party going. Everyone seems to sense that the joyous feast has been saved.

Sometimes the church has forgotten that our Lord once attended a wedding feast and said Yes to gladness and joy. What a way for Jesus to begin his public ministry in the Gospel of St. John! It’s called Cana-Grace, and it’s worth thevariable because it shows the glory of God, the very God who wants — even now — for the community of faith to be a celebration of people, brothers and sisters in Christ, eating barbeque on the back porch and laughing until the sun goes down. Christian women turning the church fellowship hall into a festive tea party as they share gospel and good food together. A new members’ dinner that ends with folks hugging one another and giving thanks to God for the welcome they have received at the church.

It’s called Cana-Grace and we should celebrate it. Give thanks for everyone in every church in every denomination and in your life who has learned the knack for throwing a holy party!

Cana-Grace. Use it. No, better, live it.

What better way to start your life in 2010. Thank God for Cana-Grace.
Junior Courtney Rogers going for a layup against Swain.

Photo by Stephanie McCall

Highlanders prepare for ‘Mini-Tournament’ to close regular season

By Ryan Potts

After a couple of dominating victories at Tamassee-Salem last week, the Highlander basketball teams will prepare for what amounts to a mini-tournament run through the conference in the last three days of the regular season.

Both teams traveled to South Carolina last Wednesday to face the Tamassee-Salem Eagles. The girls came out strong immediately, led by sophomore guard Emily Munger. After building an early lead, the Lady Highlanders finished strong in a game where every player earned valuable experience and the girls finished with a 56-30 victory. Munger was the story, finishing with a rare triple double of 17 points, 10 assists, and 10 steals. Taylor and Julianne Buras also added 10 points each in the victory.

The Highlander boys were not able to start with the same momentum that their female counterparts did, but after a close 1st half Highlands found their rhythm and ran the Eagles out of their own gym in the second half in a 77-42 victory. Robbie Vanderbilt, Josh Delacruz, Samuel Wheeler and Logan Schmitt all scored in double figures for the Highlanders.

This weekend, Highlands will host conference games Thursday with Hiawassee Dam and Friday with Blue Ridge (senior night) before traveling to Nantahala on Saturday. With both teams still in the mix for conference championship, the Highlanders will need as much local support as possible as we close out the regular season.
... SCHOOL CALENDAR continued from page 1

cult and frequent no-win decisions such as utilizing a Saturday school option or possibly revoking Spring Break holidays to make calendar accommodations for days missed due to inclement weather.” This is an issue dear to the heart of Macon County School Board member Stephanie McCall who has two children in Highlands School.

“The state is dictating to us what we have to do from Raleigh as to weather, our circumstances in the mountains are different than elsewhere in the state,” she said. “Furthermore, we don’t feel the decisions the state makes in regards to this issue are made in the best interest of the students; instead, the decisions are based on what’s best for businesses catering to the tourist trade.”

In the past, teacher workdays could be used as makeup days or “snow days” but now not only has the state mandated a teacher workday follow each nine-week grading period, it specifically says those days cannot be used as makeup days.

The result is student makeup days are taken wherever they can fit in, many times far from the semester in which they were missed.

“Again, that policy is not in the students’ best interest because making up days in different semesters results in the loss of continuity of class content,” said McCall.

Currently, Highlands School will have school on Memorial Day with days subtracted from Spring Break the next option.

“Because of the stipulation on the state puts on makeup days, our students have to go to school on a federal holiday which has been set aside to commemorate U.S. men and women who died while in military service which, as is Spring Break, traditionally a time to spend with family,” she said.

In its petition to the NC General Assembly, the MC Association of Educators has adopted the language in Madison County Representative Ray Rapp’s bill introduced last year which calls for flexibility but within reasonable limits.

The bill calls for school to start no earlier than the second Monday in August and end no later than 42 weeks later. “We feel that those limits and the flexibility are prudent and would best serve the interests of Macon County students and our communities as a whole,” said de Ville.

Macon County Superintendent Dan Briganman has tried to get the calendar decision reversed since he came on board.

“Local Boards of Education must have the authority to develop school calendars based on the needs of students within each district,” said Macon County Superintendent Dan Briganman. “In addition, weather patterns vary greatly from Murphy to Manteo.”

To help reach the calendar change goal, the North Carolina Association of Educators, are undertaking a petition drive hoping to collect the signatures of every Macon County voter who supports this school calendar reform bill.

Petitions will be available at local businesses and gatherings over the next several weeks and will be delivered to Macon County representatives to the General Assembly.

Voters seeking to sign the petition may contact our local president Tracey Shumway at tracey.shumway@macon.k12.nc.us or John de Ville at john.devill@macon.k12.nc.us.

The petition reads: “We, the undersigned citizens of Macon County respectfully ask the members of the North Carolina General Assembly to re-write NC G.S. 115C-84.2 to allow North Carolina School Districts (Local Education Authorities or LEAs) the flexibility and local control to start school with the opening day for students as early as the second Monday of August and concluding no later than 42 weeks later. We make this request in order that school systems may adjust to the demands of dual-enrolled students, potential loss of days due to inclement weather, exam schedules for high schools on block schedules, and other local concerns which are focused on maximizing post-secondary educational opportunities, student achievement, and student safety.”

- Kim Lewicki

... ATTORNEY continued from page 1

im County Attorney on an as-needed, part-time, hourly basis.

“With the cooperation of Ms. Moxley, this will save substantial money in the legal department of the county,” said Beale.

Moxley has been the county attorney for three years and had an open-ended contract with the county. She was hired in October 2006 and her annual salary at the time of separation from the county was $134,316.

“We want to thank Ms. Moxley for the work she has done over the last three years,” said Beale. “She always displayed a vast knowledge of North Carolina law as it applied to county government. We are grateful for the work she performed during this period of tremendous growth in Macon County.”

Jones has worked as an attorney for Clay and Swain counties and has worked 20 years as a lawyer in Franklin.

County Manager Jack Horton said it’s likely the county will use Chester’s services for about 40 hours a month rather than 40 hours a week.

“The primary purpose of this move is to save the county money,” he said. “We decided to take a different direction concerning our attorney than in the recent past—a move that we believe will be beneficial to both of us.”

He said tough economic times have caused the county to look at personnel and ways to save money to offset the finances of the county.

He said he didn’t know if in the future the permanent attorney slot would be on a part-time, as needed, hourly basis or full-time as with Moxley, but said the cost of maintaining a full-time legal office is expensive.

Over the years, Macon County has used legal services on an hourly basis, but the last two attorneys were full-time positions.

A comment from Moxley didn’t arrive by press-time.

- Kim Lewicki
NEW POLICY

Non-Commercial Classifieds:
$5 for first 10 words; 20 cents per word thereafter.

Commercial Classifieds:
$6 for first 10 words; 25 cents per word thereafter.

Email Copy To:
highlandseditor@aol.com or FAX to 1-866-212-8913

No phone submissions.

Send check to:
Highlands’ Newspaper
P.O. Box 2703
Highlands, NC 28741
828-526-0782

VISA/MASTERCARD Accepted

DEADLINE:
Mondays at 5 p.m.

IMPORTANT NOTICE
All unpaid ads will be deleted.

HELP WANTED

CERTIFIED SCRUB TECH at Highlands-Cashiers Hospital. Immediate need. Will except RN with scrub experience in orthopedic, general, and plastic surgery. Pre-employment screening required. Call Human Resources at 828-526-1376 or apply online at www.hchospital.org

PRN-RNs at Highlands-Cashiers Hospital. Experienced Med-Surg and ER Nurses needed. Strong leadership skills is a must. Pre-employment screening required. Call Human Resources at 828-526-1376 or apply online at www.hchospital.org

RESPIRATORY THERAPIST at Highlands-Cashiers Hospital. Full-time position working 12 hour shifts and every other weekend. Must be on call at night and be within 20 minutes of the hospital. Intubation experience a must. Full benefits, or the option to opt out of benefits for an increase in pay, available after 60 days of full-time employment. Pre-employment screening required. Call Human Resources at 828-526-1376 or apply online at www.hchospital.org

CNA at Highlands-Cashiers Hospital. Our wage scale is $11.00 to $14.40 per hour with shift and weekend differentials. Pre-employment substance screening. Call Human Resources, 828-526-1376 or apply online at www.hchospital.org

LOST

LOST IN TOWN on Dec. 30 - black leather glove with silver buckle. Return appreciated. Michaela@aol.com

Classifieds

CUTE HIGHLANDS COTTAGE, 2BR/1BA. Remodeled kitchen and bath. Close to town, private, quiet. Deck, WD, DW, wood stove. No smoking. Pets negotiable. $900/month + utilities. 770-845-1577. (st. 10/22)

2 BED, 1 BATH HOUSE FOR RENT IN LAUREL FALLS. Few minutes from downtown Highlands and the hospital. fully furnished included w/d. Call 787-2472. (2/25)

FULLY FURNISHED 4 ROOM CABIN SUITE off Glen Falls Road atop Loma Linda Farm. New queen bed, kitchenette, large tlider shower, deck and view. Good for 1 person. $700/mo. includes electric, heat, satellite TV and wifi. Visit http://highlandscashiersrealestate.blogspot.com/ for virtual tour. Phone (828) 421-7922. (11/12)

APARTMENT FOR RENT - partly furnished 1BR/1BA - no dogs/smokers - Whiteside Cove - $100/week - week 787-1515 (4/15)

ROOM FOR RENT - furnished or not - no smokers - must love dogs - $50/week - call (828) 787-1515 (4/15)

APARTMENT FOR RENT - newly furnished one bedroom bath. A/C. Heat. Fantastic view. 5 min from Highlands. Adults only. No smokers, no pets. Utilities included. $705. Call 526-2694. (st. 7/30)

GREAT 2/1BATH APARTMENT - Main Street Highlands includes 9 foot ceilings, central heat & air, balcony, large laundry room with washer/dryer. $900 per month plus utilities. Lease and references required. Contact John Dotson - 526-5587. (st. 5/21)

COMMERCIAL FOR RENT/SALE

FOR SALE - BEST ‘COMMERCIAL BUY IN HIGHLANDS’ - 535 4th street. Zoned mixed-use, commercial and residential. Recent Remodel. Great retail/office and separate one-bedroom basement apartment. $389,000. Call 787-827-0450. (St. 11/5)

RESTAURANT FOR LEASE ON THE CASHIERS ROAD – Currently occupied by High Country Cafe. 6,300 sq. ft. Call Buddy or Sherry Kremser at 706-782-6252. (St. 11/5)

Rental space in Wright square – Half a building or two floors of one building. Call Harold Brammer. 526-5673. (st. 4/16)

Vacation Rental

RV Sites for Rent in Town - Short Walk to Main Street. Daily, Weekly or Monthly Rates Available. Contact Charlie @ (828)526-8645 e-mail: chestnutcottages@yahoo.com (st. 1/5)

Items for Sale

PIANO – Gorgeous Fully restored. Late 1900s upright owned by the Vanderbels and was in the Biltmore Estates Plays Beautiful $9,000 invested, worth way more Must sell. Will sacrifice for $2,800. OBO. 828-524-2723 or 828-371-2129 (st. 10/22)

COLEMAN 5000 ER ELECTRONIC GARAGE DOOR. $500. Call 526-5025. (st. 9/3)

Vehicles for Sale


Mid-Winter Community “Garage” Sale at Highlands Rec Park

Saturday, March 6

Come sell your household and yard items from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Call Cindy Batson at 526-9310 about booth space.

CADDILLAC DEVILLE 2002 – Silver, 85,300 miles. One owner, garaged. $8,950. See at 150 Shelby Circle, Highlands. 787-2310. (st. 7/9)

Services

HELPING HANDS will clean for you, no job too big. Excellent references. Pet sitting services available. Macon County resident. Call 443-315-8477. (1/29)

EXPERIENCED CHILD CARE – DAILY, EVENINGS, HOURLY AND AFTER SCHOOL. CALL 828-526-2536. (1/21)

HANDYMAN SPECIAL – Repairs and remodeling, electrical and plumbing, carpentry and more. Low prices. For free estimate, call 828-342-7864. (1/14)

THE HIGHLANDS HANDYMAN – Anything and Everything. Local References. Call a neighbor. Call Mark at 526-0031 (1/28)


EXPERIENCED Childcare daily, evenings, weekly, hourly and after school. Call 828-526-2536 (1/28)

ICE AND SNOW REMOVAL. Call 526-2251 or 342-6289. (3/31)

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. (2/1)

RELIABLE CHILD CARE IN MY HOME – Minutes from Highlands-Cashiers Hospital. Daily/Weekly. 12 years experience, references and Early Childhood credentials. $5 per hour for first child. $10 a day for second sibling. Call 743-2672. (3/31)

FIREWOOD “Nature Dried” Call 526-2251. (3/31)

TREESERVICE – Complete Tree Removal, Trimming, Stump Grinding, Lot Clearing, Under Brush- ing, and Hemlock treatment and fertilization for “Woolly Adelgid.” 828-526-2251 (3/31)

Police & Fire Reports

Dept. retirees, chief commended

At the Feb. 3 Town Board meeting, Mayor David Wilkes commended outgoing fire and rescue members Ricky Bryson and John Shearl for their service to the Highlands community. Chief James Manley was also commended for his 30 years and counting.

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

Feb. 3
- At 9:20 a.m., officers responded to an accident at NC 28 and Munger Lane.
- During the week, police officers responded to 2 alarms and issued 2 citations.

The following are the Highlands Fire & Rescue Dept. log entries from Feb. 3:

Feb. 3
- At 6:07 p.m., the dept. was first responders to assist EMS with a medical call at a residence on U.S. 64 east. The patient was taken to the hospital.
- At 5:04 p.m., the dept. was first responders to assist EMS with a medical call at a residence on Pine Point. There was no transport.
- During the evening, the dept. assisted with multiple minor accidents on area roads due to weather.

Feb. 7
- At 10:56 a.m., the dept. was called on a mutual aid call to Cashiers for a structure fire but it was canceled en route.
- At 4:58 p.m., the dept. was called on a mutual aid call to Cashiers for a structure fire but it was canceled en route.
- At 8:06 p.m., the dept. was called about a tractor-trailer truck that was stuck and blocking the road.

Feb. 8
- At 1:08 p.m., the dept. was responded to a carbon monoxide alarm at a residence on Many Road. It was canceled.
- At 11:27 p.m., the dept. was called to a residence on Glen Falls Road where a resident was lacerated. The patient was taken to the hospital.

Feb. 9
- At 9:58 p.m., the dept. was called to Western Rhodes Drive where a power line and a tree were on fire.

Council past and future discussed at worksession

It’s the ‘worksession’ time of year when county and municipal governments take a look at the past year in preparation of budgeting for the upcoming fiscal year which begins July 1.

At a six-hour worksession Saturday, Feb. 6, county commissioners went over the “done” list and discussed the ever present “to do” list for 2010-11.

County Manager Jack Horton opened the meeting with an update on the county’s capital projects – many of which began prior to 2009-10 but were finished this year.

District-wide school construction projects topped the list including additions, renovations and infrastructure revamping for the Early College High School, Macon Middle School, East Franklin School, the new 5-6 School and Highlands School.

The new Animal Control Facility opened and the number of animals picked up, adopted out, euthanized and costs associated with those procedures was discussed in length by Director John Hook.

The old library was transformed into the new Senior Services Center and the Hudson Library’s renovation began in Highlands.

Infrastructure improvements and expansions were also counted, namely easements for sewer connection lines from downtown Franklin to the Industrial Park, and water line extensions and the corresponding intergovernmental agreements between Franklin and the county.

Policy wise the county made a $1.4 million mid-year budget adjustment to offset revenue loss; it established a Help Line to direct citizens unaccustomed to needing help to the proper agencies; adopted the lowest budget in five years while maintaining 32% fund balance; began a mental health task force; began the state mandated drinking water permitting process; established a child care study committee that has gotten the attention of Raleigh; began an “abandoned mobile home” program to entice citizens get rid of dilapidated structures; revised the Tourism Development Commission guidelines, began a growth-transporation study which will put the county in the forefront for NCDCOT grant money; and adopted Economic Development Commission grant guidelines.

Macon County Planning Director Derek Roland and Planning Board Director Lewis Penland explained the county’s Comprehensive Plan was in the works and is derived solely from citizens via community meetings and the survey online at the county website. He encouraged everyone to fill it out.

He also said the 2010 Census will greatly affect how much money the county gets from state and federal factions over the next 10 years. The census will be mailed April 1, 2010 and citizens are encouraged to respond accurately and promptly.

Finance Director Evelyn Southard discussed the 2009-10 budget at length explaining how this year will affect the 2010-11 budget projections.

On Dec. 31, 2009, the budget was $43,136,744 with an adjusted unreserved fund balance of $13,946,315 – 32% — which gives the county a $3,162,129 cushion because its policy is to keep a minimum 25% fund balance.

Southard reminded the board that it’s OK to take out of the fund balance, but not consistently and not for long and definitely not for recouping expenses.

The good news is the outlook isn’t as bad as last year. The county budgeted $4 million in sales tax proceeds and as of Dec. 31, 2009 had received taxes through October 2009 totaling $1,381,930 — but that’s always four months behind. She said it looks like November’s sales tax revenue is $50,000, which is higher than October’s amount, but 5% lower than November 2008 sales tax proceeds.

Southard is hoping tax proceeds meet projections — including sales, property, and motor vehicle — and that if the case the county will be $250,000 over budget in that area.

However, even though there has been an upturn in the real estate and construction arena, which translates to more fees to the county, weather is the culprit now.

“Many of us have work, but the ground is so saturated we can’t do it,” said Chairman Ronnie Beale.

Southard said if that trend continues, coupled with a low return on investments, the county could be short $479,505 by the end of June.

— Kim Lewicki

... HIS & HERS from page 6

Let me rephrase that. He was a real Baltimore Colts junkie, complete with season tickets on the 50-yard line. Unfortunately for him, he could not have been saddled with a less enthusiastic partner. I had absolutely no interest in football. Still, I tried to be a good sport, patiently sitting in the stands, eating over-priced hot dogs while over-enthusiastic fans yelled in my ears and spilled their drinks on me.

Flash forward to life in Highlands, North Carolina. The first time I heard the question, I knew I was doomed. “What’s your team?” the lady asked. “What team?” I replied. “You know, football. Which football team do you root for?” I looked at her blankly. It seemed un-American to admit to her that I wasn’t the least bit interested in football, that, in fact, when it came on the TV, I usually left the room to do laundry, or read a book. It amazed me to go to parties here where most folks showed up wearing casually elegant clothing, and the rest — male and female — showed up dressed for a tailgate party, wearing casual gear in unfortu-nate color combinations. It wasn’t fun to realize you’d never quite fit in.

The Big Day arrived — Super Bowl Sunday. I hadn’t fixed special food — we’re both watching our weight. We sat down to view the game, I always cross my fingers for the National Anthem. Why do so many singers want to mess up a torch song? Carrie Underwood did a pretty good job (both live and a cappella) until the end. John tried patiently to explain some of the finer details of the game to me, but I was soon lost in a swirl of first downs and defenses veepays. I enjoyed the commercials, though. Finally, it was half time. Oh, my, the Who have aged so much! Were we ever that young? Then I re- membered. They were rebroadcasting The Turtles.

For the second half, we parted ways. John watched the Saints, while I watched the sinners. Oh, well. There’s always next year, I suppose. Now, if only I could get John to watch the Winter Olympics. ...
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HighlandInfo.com had a record-breaking year for visitors coming to our Internet Directory in 2009 and now there have been more visitors in Jan. 2010 than any other Jan. recorded since 2003. Good news for Highlands... 2010 is looking like it’s going to be great from early indications.

Many restaurants will be open for Valentine’s Day/President’s Day weekend including on the Verandah and Paoletti’s which are opening the weekend for the season. (See page 4 for all participating restaurants.)

HighlandInfo.com has also added videos to its Internet Directory Waterfalls & Area Events. Soon we will be adding a Highlands “Things To Do” video.

Any business or organization wanting to participate should contact: the Publisher of Highlands’ Newspaper 828-526-0782 / HighlandsEditor@aol.com

Our Internet Directory also has links to many Highlands Lodging, Dining & Real Estate professionals. It’s no wonder HighlandInfo.com has been the most used Internet Directory about the Highlands area since 2003. There is no other place on the Internet that can offer more useful information about Highlands then HighlandInfo.com.

GOOGLE Highlands or Highlands NC or Highlands North Carolina and see where you would go if you were a visitor wanting to know more about beautiful Highlands.