Counties send requests to legislators

North Carolina’s 100 counties adopted 54 legislative proposals at its Legislative Goals Conference in late January by which county governments hope state representatives will consider if not champion during upcoming legislative sessions.

County Commissions’ representatives – Vice Chairman Ronnie Beale is Macon County’s representative — formulated five priority goals and accepted 10 issues identified at the Association’s Youth Summit. The top five and the majority of the other 49 proposals center around money — basically keeping the state from further raiding county coffers either directly or indirectly.

By Abigail Hewins

Instead of the dusty smell of chalk, markers and paper lunch bags, the fragrance of freshly baked bread fills the hallways of Highlands School lately, sometimes creeping through the cracks of busy classrooms.

On Feb. 9, Highlands School Life Skills Instructor, Paula Gray with The King Arthur Flour Company from Norwich, VT demonstrated the art of making bread during an assembly for 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th graders and a group of high school students from FACS instructor Mrs. Cashion’s classes.

During the time spent with Gray, the students learned the tricks of making yeast breads. Following the assembly, each group went on to the foods lab to make their breads.

Photo by Stephanie McCall

Students bake for those in need

By Abigail Hewins

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By Ryan Potts

It was a moment that the Lady Highlander seniors had looked forward to for four years, as they first defeated Blue Ridge 65-21 before facing archrival Hiwassee Dam on their home floor with a chance to win a Little Smoky Mountain Conference title. Following a thrilling JV Championship game in which the JV Highlanders prevailed over Hiwassee Dam, the crowd was hot as the Lady Highlanders faced off in what would be another fantastic chapter in the HD-HHS rivalry.

In what would be a back and forth affair, the Lady Highlanders used a 1-3-1 zone to attack the shooters.

As the Lady Highlanders continued to battle the Lady Eagles, foul difficulty began to plague the hometown squad as two starters fouled out in the fourth quarter after Highlands had built a slim 6-point lead. Despite the foul troubles, the Highlanders were able to...

Photo by Stephanie McCall
Control of Highlands government still an issue

Even though the majority of people who spoke during the Feb. 2 Public Hearing on revising the Town Ordinance for Consistency with Town Charter Amendment for Council-Manager Form of Government were against changing the ordinance, the issue is back on the March 2 agenda.

Due to the issues and opinions put forth by the citizens, who clearly didn’t want to give the Highlands Town Manager ultimate power, and due to the discrepancies outlined by Commissioner Amy Patterson in the proposed amended ordinance, those pushing for the change – Commissioners Gary Drake, Dennis DeWolf, Larry Rogers and Mayor David Wilkes – agreed the issue deserved further consideration.

Since the ordinance wasn’t amended, Attorney Bill Coward said the process has to start over from scratch. Wednesday night, March 2, will be the first step in the “new process.”

So citizens have another chance to show support for or against changing the ordinance and to speak on the issue during the Public Comment period of the meeting.

A state-mandated Public Hearing prior to an ordinance change is powerful, but so is the Public Comment period of any Town Board meeting.

In the past, particularly during the heated Performing Art Center lease discussions between the Town Board and the PAC board and its supporters, Commissioner Drake told the audience that the Town Board takes the comments of those who turn out for Town Board meetings very seriously and “we’re apt to do what they want because they came to the meeting and voiced their opinions.”

Time will tell if he and those in his corner will be true to those words.

Arguments for changing the ordinance to give the Town Manager power over everyone and everything include “That’s the way it’s done elsewhere,” and “That’s how it’s done in corporate America” – two arguments that don’t hold water in Highlands.

Citizens say Highlands is not like anywhere else, and they like it that way. Furthermore, very little in Highlands is done as in “Corporate America.” People in Highlands have either shed the mantle of corporate America or have never worked under that yoke and never will.

Taking power away from the Town Board, which is elected by the people, and giving it to one person who can then confer with whom ever he or she wants without guidance or knowledge of the people or the board they elected is not democratic.

Democracy is messy but we in America like it that way. Town Board members who think “messy democracy” is too much work, should step down.

Citizens who want to retain control via their Town Board should step up on March 2. Even if talking in public isn’t their thing, a show of hands is a strong picture.

My note of gratitude & thanks

My heartfelt thanks for the many prayers, cards, flowers, visits, calls, gifts and well-wishes during my recent illness and hospital stay.

I send my sincere gratitude to my doctors: Dr. Lindsay, Dr. Noell, Dr. Stewart and Dr. David Wheeler for your care of my extreme condition. I cannot ever thank my nurses enough for their compassion and their prompt response to my needs during my hospital stay!

My deepest appreciation to Pastor Paul and Beth Bowser for your comforting presence on your visits to me. Enlightenment!

Thank you also to my girls at Images for carrying on for weeks. You are so special!

Thank you Dennis for your nourishing care in the hospital and during my on-going recovery!

We Highlanders and all who ever have to experience a need for hospital care here in our little village should be grateful we have such an awesome little hospital! I am very impressed by the medical staff we have, the quiet days and nights (for healing rest) and last but definitely not least, the cleanliness!

Blessings,

Jean Smith

Overwhelmed!

Dear Editor,

The family and I would like to say “Thank You” to the Presbyterian Church for the funds provided and to the Construction Ministry Team in fixing up the homeplace.

We had slightly neglected the repairs while taking care of my wonderful wife and mother up until her passing. With all trials and tribulations that came afterwards we were quite overwhelmed and we appreciate all the time and effort put forth in making it our comfortable and cozy cabin again.

We especially want to thank our friends and good neighbors, Duncan and Ann Greenlee, who anxiously stepped forward to help in our time of need. Together with Don Fisher, Martha MacMillian, Hillrie Quin, Dale Sticka, Skip Taylor, Simon Lake, Bob Tietze, Marshall Buck and Bob Wright, they gave up their weekends, braved the weather and worked hard at putting it all together.

What an inspiration it has been for us to see such a friendly group come together and help others as they do.

We also want to thank the volunteers who intended to help but were hindered by the weather. Just the thought means as much to us as being there. May God Bless you all.

Frank Derreberry and family

Highlands, NC
Hudson Tilley was born to Ross and Rachel Tilley on Feb. 21 at 5:06 p.m. He was 8 lbs 8 oz. and 21 1/2 inches long. Hudson is the grandson of Jim and Kim Lewicki of Highlands and Dale and Gayemell Shepherd of Seven Lakes, NC., and the great-grandson of Clara Lewicki of Highlands; of Bob and Delores Shepherd of Morganton, NC, and Rosser and Grace Campbell of Sanford, NC.

**Grades and academic honors**

**UNC-Greensboro**

Bachelors Degrees — Claire Elizabeth Frederick, daughter of Allen and Deliah Frederick of Highlands, graduated with a Bachelors Degree magna cum laude from UNC-Greensboro in December, and was named to the Chancellors List for the Fall 2010 semester.

To make Chancellor’s List, full-time undergraduates must have a cumulative grade-point averages of at least 3.65 of a possible 4.0. To be eligible, students must be enrolled in at least 12 semester hours of course work.

**Southwestern Community College**

Southwestern Community College announced the President’s and Dean’s lists for Fall 2010. To earn the honor of President’s List students must achieve and maintain a 3.85 Grade Point Average. Students with a GPA between 3.50 and 3.84 earn the honor of the Dean’s List.  

From Highlands on the Dean’s List were Caden Brown, Aaron Burton, Eva Romero, Bobbi Talley, and Sayward Thompson.  

From Highlands on the President’s List were Karen Dyer, Anna Ramos, and Justyne Reese.

**Western Carolina University**

Justin Gene Taylor, son of Jerry and Sharon Taylor, all of Highlands, graduated in December with a Bachelor of Science degree in Psychology.

**UNC-Chapel Hill**

Brice Jenkins, 2010 Highlands School graduate, makes Dean’s list for the fall semester at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Brice is pursuing a double major of Economics and Religious Studies.

Chase Jenkins, 2007 Highlands School graduate, ends the fall semester on the Dean’s list. Chase will graduate this spring from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill with a double major, one in Political Science and one in Asian Studies: Chinese.

**What’s for Dinner?**

Your 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** Roasted Meatloaf, homemade mashed potatoes, and a large salad $14.95
- **Fri** Wild fried shrimp, baked potatoes, handmade hush puppies, and coleslaw $18.95
- **Sat** In-house smoked BBQ, coleslaw, apple and bacon baked beans, and yeast rolls $16.95
Fred Wooldridge worked four years as an undercover narcotics officer. This true story occurred in the early '70s. Drug lords from Mariel, Cuba, would not take over Miami's drug traffic for another eight years. Most of the bulk drug business coming into Miami was run by Colombians. The names in this story have been changed but little else. I'm able to write of these events because I was an active participant. These were some of the most frightening times of my career. As always, the language was atrocious but has been cleaned up for print. Note: Not suitable for children.

Just after ten o'clock on a busy Friday evening, two black limousines pulled in front of Miami Beach's famous Piccolo's Restaurant on South Beach. The attending valets had been directed by restaurant management not to approach either car.

I looked out through the dark tinted windows of the limo while pulling my hair back into a short ponytail, holding it in place with a rubber band. Glancing into a small lit mirror, I noticed my scruffy beard was beginning to grey. Pulling my nine millimeter automatic Smith & Wesson from my waist, I slid the slide back just far enough to identify a round in the chamber, then closed it and shoved the weapon back into my pants, covering it with my dinner jacket. I always checked the chamber out of nervousness... and mostly for reassurance. Tonight's event could easily turn into a bloodbath. And now it was showtime.

I pushed the intercom button and asked the limo driver, “Have you heard from Peter? I'm ready when he is.”

“He's sitting in the limo behind us. He and his people have been waiting on us. Let's do it,” the driver replied.

The two of us stepped out of the limo and, as I reached to open a rear passenger door, it swung open. A well dressed, burly man stepped out but didn't speak.

“They're ready for Mr. Gallo,” I said.

Two other well dressed men exited from the other side and walked to the rear of the limo. A wheelchair was removed and opened. The burly man reached into the limo and lifted a frail, small figure of a man from the backseat, placing him in the wheelchair.

“Good evening, Mr. Gallo,” I said, stooping to lift his feet onto the folding foot rests.

“Are they here?” he asked.

I smiled, grabbed the handles of the wheelchair and headed for the restaurant entrance. “Yes sir. As planned, everyone is here.”

Peter Gallo turned in his wheelchair as I pushed him toward the large round table, we saw Carlos Martinez, a Colombian drug lord, and two of his armed gunmen sipping wine and chatting together. The three men stood simultaneously as Peter Gallo rolled his wheelchair toward the table. The leader, Carlos Martinez, smiled and spoke, “Ahhhh, Mr. Gallo, we meet again, this time I pray under more pleasant circumstances. And you are, once again, late for your appointment, I might add. I am a punctual man, Mr. Gallo. I must...
When Social Security was adopted in 1935, the life expectancy was 61.7 years. White males, who made up the bulk of the labor force, were expected to live just under 60 years. Babies of both sexes and all races born in 2005 had an expected 77.8 years of life.

One way at looking at those numbers is that we've done a terrific job keeping people alive longer. Another way is that the social security system is doomed.

Back in 1935, a retiree could expect a gold watch, his first Social Security check, and a lovely funeral spray in rapid succession. At the inception of Social Security payouts, the retirement age was 65. We've added 16 years to our life expectancy while increasing the primary goal of elected federal officials to reelection. I use the term "elected officials," rather than the more commonly applied "elected leaders," because I'm not seeing any sign of leadership.

None of this is a problem for me. I've been collecting benefits for just over four years while continuing to enjoy a reasonably lucrative medical practice. When I applied for benefits at 65 years and 8 months I had no idea of the bonus the government had in store for me. My son, then 10 years old was entitled to benefits as a minor child of a retiree, even though I wasn't, and am still not. Lizzie benefited as well. She has also received benefits equal to Bull's, apparently for caring for him while I drool my oatmeal, chase nursing home attendants, or play cribbage in the park. I haven't sent any of it back, but I wouldn't vote for a guy who introduced the system, probably a congressman from a state with a large retirement population.

My Dad died at 52 an left two young daughters, aged 6 and 8. The payments Mom received helped her immensely. She was able to stay home and raise them. As I recall, the checks continued even after my sisters attended college, after which Mom endured a brief hiatus until she reached retirement age and returned to the doldrums.

I don't know the answer to the problem, but it is pretty clear there is a looming catastrophe in the foreseeable future. Raising the retirement age seems like a good place to start, trimming benefits, especially for guys like me might be a good second step. Even cutting off Bull doesn't seem unreasonable. It would cost some congressmen some votes. It might even cost them their cherished jobs. But unless the Social Security administrators can sniff out, and invest in, the next Google, Microsoft, or eBay, there's little chance the system can ever regain financial security.

We shouldn't feign surprise. The statisticians have provided all the information we need. Each year we delay, each congressional term we bow to the gray and salt-and-pepper panthers, we inch closer to the collapse of a safety net that has served the American people well.

It is a shame that our politicians can't read the tea leaves when they are printed in bold face print. It's a shame to burden our kids. Social Security won't be around to provide for their needs. Taxes they pay today will evaporate in the dry desert of an aging America.

It could be worse. I could have decided to tell you about the future of Medicare.

Dr. Henry Salzarulo
Feedback is encouraged.
email: hsalzarulo@aol.com
While not literally taken from the Bible, the above is cobbled together from phrases taken from Genesis and Job and refer to man’s cycle of life. Lately, I’ve been seriously thinking about where we all stand in the greater scheme of things.

It is not a pretty picture.

I have come to the conclusion that the world has become so complex that it is beyond man’s capacity to manage it. The civil unrest in the Middle East prompted me to think about what caused it to happen. The greed of the tyrannical ruling class has kept things more or less together until now, with some exceptions.

Look at Egypt, since it has become relatively transparent. Mubarak has suppressed his people, most of whom live in a constant state of poverty, and have done so for decades. While we have pumped aid to Egypt for years, ostensibly some of which was intended to help the people, their plight seems not to have improved much. At the same time, Mubarak has amassed a personal fortune in the billions.

Technology entered the scene and, through the social media, notably Facebook and Twitter, the people learned how some of the rest of the World lives, and wanted some of it. They became unmanageable, at least for now.

The future holds anything much better for them? I doubt it. If Democracy is not instituted, another oppressive form of government will descend to rule the people. We can only hope. This general scheme of things pervades nearly all of countries of Northern Africa and the Middle East. Rulers are losing their grip; the people are becoming more and more unmanageable.

Let’s look closer to home. Take the way we are governed. What is mantra of those who wish to govern you? I’ll fight for you this; I’ll fight for you for that. Whatever happened to reason? The way I figure it, fighting is at best a zero sum game. Even the winner in a fight has suffered some damage. No wonder most experienced politicians appear to be punch drunk, with them fighting all the time.

For the moment, forget about the government protecting us from outside forces. How about the total lack of SEC enforcement action against Bernie Madoff as he was scamming investors of billions? Aside from the fact that it was impossible to return 22% to investors, year after year, as any sensible and person would know, there were whistle-blowers presenting proof of the scheme for years. Were the government folks really that stupid, or were they on the take?

Shorty after Madoff’s prosecution, Allan Stanford, another multi-billion dollar scammer was arrested for a similar scheme. Yes, they were finally caught, but only after costing others billions. We didn’t manage that well, did we? How about the Mexican Border? Tens of thousands have been killed because we are unwilling or unable to manage the situation.

Ashes to ashes, dust to dust.
...TITLE continued from page 1

Last Thursday was a good night all around for Highlands School. The JV Boys beat Hiwassee Dam for tournament and conference champs and the Varsity Girls won against Hiwassee for tournament champs and #1 in conference.

Photo by Stephanie McCall

make nine free throws in the fourth quarter and finish off Hiwassee Dam with a 51-47 victory, much to the joy of the home crowd. Said Highlands coach Brett Lamb after the game, “It feels real good, these seniors have worked hard and battled for four years and their hard work paid off tonight. It shows the value of persistence to our younger players.”

Beating Hiwassee Dam in the finals was also sweet for Lamb and his girls, “Six years I have been here and all six years we have played them in the championship game, so we are glad that we got them this year.” Senior Taylor Buras scored 13 points and Emily Munger scored 21 for the Lady Highlanders.

The Highlander men looked to complete a championship sweep as they faced off against the Eagles in the LSMC men’s finals. Things looked bleak early as the Highlanders came out flat and trailed 11-0 early. Despite the early deficit, the Highlanders battled back to close the gap at halftime and set up what looked like a fantastic finish. The second half saw both teams play some terrific basketball, with each team making a run that would then be countered by the other squad.

The fourth quarter featured the Highlanders taking their first lead of the ballgame, but the Eagles responded in a back and forth affair. Unfortunately, several questionable calls against the home squad (including a technical foul) marred what was an extremely well played half by both teams.

The Highlanders trailed by three with three seconds left and had a chance to tie, but a long three-pointer rimmed out and the Eagles clinched the tournament championship in a 73-70 victory. Senior Josh Delacruz scored 18 points for HHS, Logan Schmitt added 17 and sophomore Taylor Osteen followed a stellar 23-point performance in the semifinals with 12.

Photo by Stephanie McCall

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Photo by Stephanie McCall
Coach's Corner

Live Blog ...

... on this day

Feb 24, 1709

Birth of Jacques de Vaucanson, inventor credited with creating the first true robots, the first automated loom, and the famous Digesting Duck, with over 400 parts. It could flap its wings, drink water, eat grain, and defecate.

... from the History Guy

Lady Highlanders advance in State Playoffs

By Ryan Potts

Lady Highlanders coach Brett Lamb has a short memory. It was just two years ago that the Lady Highlanders defeated Hendersonville and advanced to the second round of the NCHSAA playoffs. Monday night, the Lady Highlanders provided déjà vu, defeating the Rosman Lady Tigers 57-48 to advance to the second round.

Highlands used a series of zone presses and a 1-3-1 zone to rattle Rosman early, but never seemed to be able to put the Lady Tigers away despite building a 9-point lead on three separate occasions. “We knew it would be tough,” said Lamb, “they are a young team but one with a lot of potential and a bright future. We made some runs and they responded, but we showed some toughness despite some foul trouble.”

Junior Emily Munger provided some excitement for the hometown fans as she hit buzzer beating three-pointers at the end of the first quarter and just before halftime. Munger and Senior Sarah Power also hit some crucial free throws late in the fourth quarter to help preserve the victory. Munger scored 22 for Highlands, Power finished with 11 and Taylor Buras added 10 points.

The Lady Highlanders hosted the Hayesville Lady Jackets in the second...
Dealing with Macular Degeneration

In the United States nearly 10 million people 55 years and older will be affected by Macular Degeneration according to the American Macular Degeneration Foundation. This disease is being seen in epic proportions and causes blindness more often than cataracts and glaucoma combined.

Macular Degeneration is caused by the deterioration of the central portion of the retina which is located inside the back of the eye. The retina records the images we see and then sends them to the brain via the optic nerve. The central portion of the retina is known as the macula and is responsible for focusing central vision which enables our ability to read, drive, recognize faces/colors and see fine detail.

There are two types of Macular Degeneration: Dry Macular Degeneration or dry AMD / ARMD and wet macular Degeneration or wet AMD.

Dry AMD is much more common than the wet form and affects 80%-90% of all AMD patients. Dry AMD can be caused by the aging and thinning of macular tissues, deposits of pigment in the macula or both. Gradual central vision loss may occur but is not as severe as in wet AMD.

In about 10% of AMD patients, this condition progresses to wet AMD which is a much more advanced and damaging form of this disease. With wet AMD, new blood vessels grow beneath the retina and leak blood and fluid causing permanent damage to light-sensitive retinal cells which then die off and create blind spots in the central vision.

Macular Degeneration is an eye disease where early diagnosis and treatment can make all the difference in the prevention of loss of eyesight. Regular eye exams play a significant role in the detection and treatment of this disease.

Since a patient affected with this condition is typically unaware of any symptoms until the disease is advanced, early detection with OCT imaging used by Blue Laser Group is key. This device is so sophisticated it takes into consideration your individual age and the possible presence of a cataract.

Another invaluable use of this technology is that your images are saved in the computer for future comparison making it possible to detect very subtle progression over time and preserve your eyesight. Our Cirrus OCT is one of only several in the state providing unprecedented accuracy and detail.

Dr. Blue has the ability for some, to treat wet AMD with laser therapy. Although this treatment will not restore lost sight, it can prevent further damage and sight loss. This quick typically painless procedure is performed in-office and is covered by medical insurance and Medicare.

...PLAYOFFS from 8

round on Wednesday evening, but results were not available at press time. If Highlands wins, they will host another NCHSAA playoff game Friday evening at 7:00 PM.

Highlanders season ends vs. Swain

In what has been a tumultuous season for the Highlands Men's Basketball team, Monday night provided an early ending as the Highlanders fell 61-52 to Swain County. The Maroon Devils were able to jump out early thanks to some hot shooting from Cody Booher, and the Highlanders trailed...
On going and Upcoming Events

Ongoing

• At Health Tracks at Highlands-Cashiers Hospital, various exercise classes all week long. Call 828-526-1FIT.
• Mondays & 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. 828-482-2128. $10/hour. (12/31)
  • 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. 8-9 a.m. $10 per class or $50 a month.
  • 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.

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.

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. Call 828-524-6777 or 706-746-9964.

Thursdays

• Al-Anon meeting, noon at the Episcopal Church on Main and Main streets.

Through Saturday, March 5

• Calling All Baseball Players! Highlands Little League Registration will be held at the Highlands Recreation Center. Fee is $50 for the first child and $45 for each additional child and includes a shirt and hat. Ages 5 through 14. Please call Jerry Moore at (828) 482-2032 with any questions.

Thursdays through March 10

• At The Bascom, “Paint Like a Master,” 3:15-5 p.m. After school art classes for middle and high school students. Each class will introduce a different artist and painting technique. Students will complete paintings in various artist’s styles. The students’ own style will be explored for the final painting. Class size is limited, pre-registration is required. Sixth through twelfth grade. $80 for an eight-week session. To register or for more information, visit www.thebascom.org or call 828.526.4949, ext. 100.

Fridays through May 27

• At The Bascom, “Highlands High School Ceramics,” 8-9:30 am. Ceramics for high school age students desiring to learn the art of ceramics. The curriculum follows NC state guidelines and develops valuable skills. Free. To register contact Highlands School, 828.526.2147.

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.

Last Sat.of the month through May 28

• At The Bascom, “Friends Around the Globe,” 1-3 pm. Fun, creative, educational activities to build skills through the visual arts. Lessons will include a variety of media including drawing, painting, clay and other media. A collaboration with the International Friendship Center. Free. To register or for more information, visit www.thebascom.org or call 828.526.4949, ext. 100.

Saturdays

• At Paoletti’s Restaurant, intimate Wine Tasting at the bar at 1 pm. Great inexpensive wines from around the world, available for retail sales daily. Cheese and Crackers are served. Cost: $20 per person refundable with case purchase.

Through - April 2

• At The Bascom, view Regional Art League’s annual exhibition.

Harlem Ambassadors tour coming to Highlands again!

The internationally-acclaimed Harlem Ambassadors will be visiting Highlands for a game at Highlands Civic Center March 7 at 7 p.m. – thanks to the Rotary Club of Highlands – Mountaintop to help raise funds for local and international Rotary Projects.

The Ambassadors have worked extensively with organizations such as Habitat for Humanity, Boys & Girls Clubs, Big Brothers Big Sisters and American Red Cross as well as Rotary, Lions and Kiwanis clubs in communities throughout the U.S., and perform more than 200 shows a year. Those shows have helped raise millions of dollars – an accomplishment of which Ambassadors President Dale Moss is very proud.

“It feels good to be able to provide quality entertainment and create memories that the fans will take with them,” Moss explained. “We’re able to give even more when we can help provide funding for a Habitat for Humanity house or new computers for the school library, and that feels great.”

Doors open at 6:30 pm; tickets are $5 for students and seniors; $7 in advance for adults or $10 at the door.
On going and Upcoming Events

Thurs-Sun, Feb. 24-27
- The Highlands-Cashiers Players present “You Know I Can’t Hear You When The Water’s Running,” at the Martin-Lipscomb Performing Arts Center at 7:30 p.m. and 2:30 on Sunday. Call 526-4121 for tickets.
- Sat., Feb. 26
  - At The Bascom, Winter Barn Dance honoring police, firefighters and EMS from 7-10 p.m. Tickets are $5. Featuring the Wild Hog Band. Call 526-2112 for more information.

The Nantahala Hiking Club will take a moderate four-mile hike, with an elevation change of 800 feet, to Turtleback Falls/ Rainbow Falls/ Stair Step Falls. Mostly gentle slopes, but also a couple of steep ascents of 100 yards or so. Meet at Cashiers Wachovia Bank (in back) at 9 a.m. drive 16 miles round trip. Bring water, lunch, a camera if you wish; wear sturdy shoes. Call leader Walker Taylor at 743-6977 for reservations.
- Tuesday, March 1
  - At The Highlands Dialogue’s Tuesday discussion, Robert E Smith: “Exploiting Doubt” from Merchants of Doubt by Naomi Oreskes and Erik Conway (2 copies available through the Fontana Regional Library) at the Civic Center from 10–11:30 a.m.
  
  For more information please e-mail at John Gaston john@gaston@aol.com or Karen Hawk hwkncrw@earthlink.net.

Thursday, March 3
- Rotary Bingo from 6:30-8:30 at the Civic Center. The cost is $1 per card per game. There are 15 games, so 15 chances to win money. Half the proceeds go to Highlands Boy Scout Troup 207.

The winner could be you ...

Harry Norman Realtors ready to award $10,000 at upcoming Harlem Ambassadors event

From left Elizabeth Salzarulo owner/Broker Harry Norman, Realtors® with Harlem Ambassadors event coordinator for the Rotary Club MountainTop, Carol Mathews.

There is a new twist to this Basketball Show this year at the Harlem Ambassadors tour at the Highlands Civic Center March 7 at 7 p.m. — Harry Norman, Realtors is sponsoring Basketball Shot Contest to be held at Half Time and one lucky winner has the opportunity to try to win $10,000 in CASH.

Raffle Tickets are $5 each, one ticket will be drawn. There is no limit to the amount of entries. The contest rules will be divulged after the winner is picked. Advanced tickets may be purchased at Harry Norman, Realtors® and at the Basketball Show.

“We are delighted to be a part of this great event and we hope someone truly deserving wins the cash prize,” said Harry Norman, Realtors @ owner Elizabeth Salzarulo. “The Highlands Rotary Club -Mountaintop is to be applauded for bringing a wholesome event for the families of the area to enjoy. Harry Norman, Realtors® has long history of community service and we feel it is a privilege and honor to contribute to the well being of our local families and businesses.”

Harry Norman, Realtors ready to award $10,000 at upcoming Harlem Ambassadors event

Winter Barn Dance at The Bascom
Honoring police, firefighters and EMS

The second Bascom Winter Barn Dance of the season is on Saturday, Feb. 26, from 7-10 pm. Celebrate the service of our police, firefighters and EMS to the community. Gather with friends and neighbors and relive the memories of a great Highlands’ tradition. Enjoy the music of Cashiers’ “The Wild Hog Band” sponsored by Jon and Bobbie Golden.

Tickets are $5 per person and can be purchased at the door. Admission for honorees is complimentary. Food and beverages will be available for purchase. Don’t miss it.

Also, this Saturday at 2 pm, sit back and enjoy our feature Art/Cinema presentation, Elbert Hubbard, An American Original. Elbert Hubbard founded the Roycroft artisan community in East Aurora, NY after he threw away his lucrative career at the forefront of business and advertising. Through evocative cinematography and compelling storytelling, explore Elbert Hubbard’s extraordinary life and its important reflection of this uniquely fascinating time in American history. Admission is free.

Sponsored by Synergy Films.

Check out the exhibitions at TheBascom. Admission is free.

Regional Art Leagues, Selected Works, through April 9th. This exhibition initiative is to show our support for the work of individual artists and arts organizations in the region surrounding our mountain plateau. Plan to join us as we celebrate this inspiring endeavor, and the art and artists who enrich our communities.

Out Back and Down Under, through March 25. Recent works by photographer Greg Newington are featured. Works included will be from his recent Aussie tour down under images from out back on our mountain plateau.

The Bascom is open year round. Winter dates are from January 7 to April 2. The galleries and The Shop are open Fridays and Saturdays from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. For more details on all Bascom winter activities, visit www.thebascom.org or call 526-4949.

Winter Barn Dance at The Bascom
Honoring police, firefighters and EMS

This Saturday, celebrate the service of our police, firefighters and EMS to the community and relive the memories of a great Highlands’ tradition at The Bascom’s Winter Barn Dance. For information, call (828) 526-4949 or visit www.thebascom.org.

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### Monument to the unknown citizen

Archbishop ++John Erbelding  
Senior Pastor, Chapel of Sky Valley  
Sky Valley, GA

W e have made special days of remembrance and erected obelisks and structures in their honor. It seems few towns are without some sort of memorial structure to remind us of some important date or happening in that community, but I feel we have unjustly forgotten to construct a monument, and I would like to bring this forgotten unknown citizen to our attention.

The patriotic people of America, after building monuments to honor those military leaders who distinguished themselves on the battlefield in various conflicts and wars, set up one more altar — to the Unknown Soldier — a monument to those who fell unknown, whose names and faces were anonymous, but whose courage and sacrifice were the stepping stones to this free and democratic society.

Perhaps there is a need for another monument of this same type, an altar to the Unknown Citizen, an enduring tribute to the little guy, to John Q. Public, to the man who pays the bills, but never gets his name in the newspaper, a monument to the Unknown Citizen, both male and female, who fights the daily battles with the demands and pressures of surviving in a free society.

For it is, after all, this Unknown Citizen, this unsung hero, who keeps the system alive.

Without him, those who are elected would have no one to elect them; without him, those who govern would have no one to govern; without him, those who raise taxes would have no taxes to spend.

Without the Unknown Citizen, there could be no known citizens.

And so, a monument to this nameless supporter of governments, preserver of freedoms, builder of cities, I would place this inscription at its base.

To the steel worker, whose sweat is mortar to the steel which is used to frame the bridges and skyscrapers of a modern nation.

To the carpenter, whose skill houses the inhabitants of that nation.

To the mother, who gives life to it; to the teacher, who educates it; and to the businessman, who risks and dreams for it.

To all the people who lay the bricks, plant the corn, and bake the bread, who pay the taxes to build the roads, educate our children, protect the safety of our people, care for the elderly and infirm, and to provide for the military and the government process; to all who quietly, good-naturedly, and almost always anonymously play out their supportive roles in the drama and dreams of America; to these, this day, a tribute — a monument of word and gratitude with this brief inscription: To the Unknown Citizen — founder, builder, benefactor of nations.

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### PLACES TO WORSHIP

**BLUE VALLEY BAPTIST CHURCH**  
Rev. Oliver Rice, Pastor  
(706) 782-3965  
Sundays: School - 10 a.m., Worship - 11

**BUCK CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH**  
Sundays: School - 10 a.m.; Worship - 11

**CHAPEL OF SKY VALLEY**  
Sky Valley, GA  
Church: 706-746-2999  
Pastor’s residence: 706-746-5770  
Sundays: 10 a.m. - Worship

**CHRIST ANGLICAN CHURCH**  
Rector: Jim Murphy, 252-671-4011  
Worshiping at the facilities of Whiteside Presbyterian Church, Cashiers

**CLEAR CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH**  
Pastor Everett Brewer  
Sundays: School - 10 a.m.; Worship - 11  
Prayer - 6:30 p.m.

**COMMUNITY BIBLE CHURCH**  
www.cbcbighills.com  
526-4685  
3645 Cashiers Rd, Highlands, NC  
Senior Pastor Gary Hewins

**CLEAR CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH**  
Pastor Everett Brewer  
Sundays: School - 10 a.m.; Worship - 11  
Prayer - 6:30 p.m.

**COMMUNITY BIBLE CHURCH**  
www.cbcbighills.com  
526-4685  
3645 Cashiers Rd, Highlands, NC  
Senior Pastor Gary Hewins

**FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH**  
Dr. Charles Harris, Pastor  
526-4153

**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**  
Dr. Lee Bowman, Pastor  
526-3175  
Sun.: Worship - 11 a.m.; Sun. School - 9:30

**HIGHLANDS ASSEMBLY OF GOD**  
Sixth Street  
Sun.: School - 10 a.m.; Worship - 11  
Wed.: School - 10 a.m.; Worship - 7

**HIGHLANDS CENTRAL BAPTIST CHURCH**  
Pastor Dan Robinson  
221 N. 4th Street  
Sun.: School 9:30 a.m.; Worship 10:45 a.m., Evening Worship, 6:30 p.m.

**MACEDONIA BAPTIST CHURCH**  
8 miles south of Highlands on N.C. 28 S in Satolah  
Pastor Roy Lowe, (828) 526-8425

**MOUNTAIN SYNAGOGUE**  
St. Cyprian’s Episcopal Church, Franklin  
828-369-9270 or 828-293-5197  
MOUNTAIN BIBLE CHURCH  
Pastor: Clayton Lopez  
828-743-9704  
Independent Bible Church

**OUR LADY OF THE MOUNTAINS CATHOLIC CHURCH**  
Rev. Dean Cesa, pastor  
Parish office: 526-2418  
Mass: 9 a.m.  
Sat., Thurs. & Fri  
Saturday Mass - Mem Day through Oct. at 4 p.m.

**SCALY MOUNTAIN BAPTIST CHURCH**  
Rev. Clifford Willis  
Sundays: School -10 a.m.; Worship - 11 a.m. & 7

**SCALY MOUNTAIN CHURCH OF GOD**  
290 Buck Knob Road; Pastor Alfred Sizemore  
Sundays: School - 10 a.m.; Worship - 10:45 a.m.;  
Evening Worship - 6 p.m.

**SHORTOFF BAPTIST CHURCH**  
Pastor Rev. Andy Cloer  
Sundays: School - 10 a.m.; Worship - 11  
Wednesdays: Prayer & Bible Study

**UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP**  
85 Sierra Drive  
828-524-6777  
Sunday Worship - 11 a.m.

**WHITESIDE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**  
Cashiers, Rev. Sam Forrester, 743-2122  
Sundays: School - 10 a.m.; Worship - 11
Knowing not all their concerns will be heard or even have a chance of consideration, the NC Association of County Commissioners settled on five top priority goals gleaned from topic categories. From the Intergovernmental Relations category: Oppose shift of state transportation responsibilities to counties; from the Public Education category: Reinstate ADM and Lottery Funds for school construction; from the Health and Human Services category: Ensure adequate mental health funding; and from the Agriculture category: Ensure adequate mental health funding and two of the top five priorities came from the Tax and Finance category: Preserve the existing local revenue base; and Authorize local revenue options.

At almost every Macon County Commission meeting lately a discussion has been had over revenue shifting – that is the state’s habit of shifting its responsibilities to the counties, including funding of teacher positions and maintaining roads, to name just two. County commissioners are basically asking that despite its $3.7 billion shortfall, the state not pass on additional financial burdens but if it does provide counties with the tools necessary to meet the needs of their citizens.

“The counties have to govern and take care of our own problems to make the burden as light as we can on our citizens,” said Commissioner Beale during the commission’s work session last month.

The No. 1 goal reflects state proposals to force county governments to maintain secondary roads and/or fund expansion projects have been floated in past legislative sessions. Some of the state’s more rural counties would have to increase their property tax rates by as much as 30 cents to generate the amount of revenue needed to maintain the same level of service currently provided by the Department of Transportation.

The No. 2 goal is to seek full reinstatement of lottery funds and ADM (Average Daily Membership) funds for school construction. For the 2009-11 legislative biennium, the General Assembly redirected all of the Corporate Income Tax proceeds that should have been allocated to the ADM fund to other general fund needs. This cost counties approximately $100 million each of the two years of the biennium. In 2010, the Legislature appropriated a fixed amount (less than $14 million) from lottery proceeds for the Public School Building Capital Fund, equating to only 25% of the budgeted lottery proceeds for the year.

The total loss for the past two years amounts to more than a quarter of a billion dollars in school construction funds.

Other priority goals adopted by counties are to ensure adequate funding for the mental health system, to protect the local revenue base from any further incursions by the state (such as the aid on school construction funds) and to authorize all counties to enact any revenue options such as prepared meals taxes or hotel taxes that have already been granted to at least one county.

“We aren’t seeking new revenue streams, but why do we need a vote by the General Assembly to get something done?” asked Commissioner Chairman Brian McClure.

County Manager Jack Horton agreed.

“As it stands now, not all counties have to go through the legislative process, in particular, some counties are not. “We just want all the counties to be treated the same way. We need the control here in Macon County without having to put it in a referendum,” he said. “It’s the Fairness Goal. Even if we don’t use it we want the option to be left to the county commissioners to decide if it’s something they want.”

The complete list of Legislative Goals, including the top five follow:

**Agriculture**

Support conservation of working lands and farmland preservation – Support legislation to promote and preserve working farmlands and forestlands by including these lands in the state tourism plan, by retaining the current authority for the present use value system, by maintaining funding for the Ag Development and Farmland Preservation Trust, and by authorizing counties to implement transfer of development rights; Fund agricultural research and extension services – Support legislation to increase agronomic research and extension services and maintain existing research stations at current levels; Support Sustainable Local Food Advisory Council recommendations – Support legislation to implement the Sustainable Local Food Advisory Council’s recommendations including a prohibition against municipal involuntary annexation or regulation of farms or forestry activities within a voluntary agricultural district or conservation district and support state funding to maintain and enhance the North Carolina Transition Network; Maximize availability of adoptable animals – Support legislation to increase adoption opportunities for county animal control facilities by clarifying ownership proof and increasing shelter director discretion.

**Environment**

Enhance river basin monitoring and streamlinerule-making – Enhance monitoring for all river basins in North Carolina and review the rule-making process to enhance regional cooperation; Streamline water supply reservoir permitting – Seek legislation to streamline local water supply reservoir permitting without sacrificing the scientific rigor of Environmental Impact Assessment and ensure adequate opportunities for public and local official comment; Authorize county oversight of bio-solids disposal – Support legislation to authorize counties to regulate, but not prohibit, bio-solids application activities, including the acceptable “classes” of bio-solids for application and the prohibition of bio-solids application in certain environmentally sensitive areas; Clarify yard waste facility runoff statutes – Seek legislation to clarify that runoff from yard waste staging areas at county landfills does not require wastewater treatment; Create study commission on horizontal drilling, hydraulic fracturing and uranium mining – Seek legislation to create a Study Commission on horizontal drilling and hydraulic fracturing for shale gas deposits and uranium mining.

**Health and Human Services**

Ensure adequate mental health funding; Seek legislation to ensure adequate capacity of state-funded acute psychiatric beds; Oppose legislation to close state-funded beds until there is adequate capacity statewide; Seek legislation to maintain the existing levels of state funding for community mental health services; Retain state aid to counties – Seek legislation to retain the State Aid to Counties; Retain federal matching funds; Allow county flexibility to organize local human services; Seek legislation to allow counties to organize human services based on community need, including the removal of the population threshold in 153A-77; Oppose legislation that would mandate consolidation of social services functions; Maintain childcare subsidy funds and allocate to counties; Seek legislation to allocate all childcare subsidy funding directly to counties; Oppose legislation that would reduce childcare subsidy funding; Maintain TANF funds to counties – Seek legislation to maintain existing levels of county TANF funding to support and fund county TANF programs; Maintain childcare subsidy administration – Seek legislation to maintain the Child Care Subsidy Administration funding at 5 percent; Increase state/city special assistance residency requirements – Seek legislation to increase the number of days to establish residency for Special Assistance from 90 to 180 days, except for persons who have entered the state to be supported by a close relative; Require back-up generators for adult-care homes – Seek legislation to require all new adult-care homes to have back-up generators prior to receiving certificates of occupancy and require all existing adult-care homes to be equipped with back-up generators within three years; Expedite NCFAST automation and policy simplification – Seek legislation to expedite the implementation of NC FAST and ensure automation builds on program and policy simplification and includes interface protocols; Retain “electing” counties’ financial incentives – Seek legislation to retain financial incentives for counties to be “electing” counties.

**Intergovernmental Relations**

Oppose shift of state transportation responsibilities to counties – Oppose legislation to shift the state’s responsibility for funding transportation construction and maintenance projects to counties; Modernize annexation laws – Seek legislation modernizing the annexation laws as follows; Requiring the development of joint utility service plans for urbanizing areas, requiring cities to reimburse counties for the loss of sales tax due to an annexation; Increasing the degree of urbanization required to annex property; Allowing the Board of Commissioners to request a referendum on any proposed involuntary annexation; Requiring the direct provision of municipal water and sewer services to customers within three years of an annexation; Providing that counties have the option of continuing to provide utilities to annexed areas; Setting the effective date for involuntary annexations to be June 30 following the date of adoption or final resolution of an appeal; Prohibit municipalities from annexing across county boundaries without prior consent of the Board of Commissioners of the affected county. In an instance where a municipality has already annexed across county lines, further annexation cannot occur without consent of the affected county; Oppose collective bargaining for public employees – Oppose legislation to authorize local governments to enter into collective bargaining agreements with public employees, or to mandate dues check-off programs; Implement combined motor vehicle registration and property tax collection system – Seek legislation to ensure that the combined motor vehicle registration and property tax collection system is implemented within the statutory deadline; Protect local control of ABC system – Seek legislation to protect local control of ABC systems.
many people were present, unarmed, on a military base? Bad management.

Are we too stupid to manage the world we’ve created? Are we too crooked? Do politicians give up trying to manage because society has created problems that can’t be solved? Do we remember Jeff Immelt (CEO of GE) and Obama yukking it up before the election? What do you suppose they were plotting? Does it surprise you that GE makes the heavy equipment that goes into high-speed rail systems, the huge expense that nobody wants, except Obama and Immelt?

Stupid? Crooked? What difference does it make? The outcome is the same.

If hope and change is your thing, you might think about putting your hope in the Creator, and, if you need to, change your way of living to please Him. He really is the only answer.
reading through the recipe, a perfect culinary creation. Small things that make a loaf of bread into other half home. Bread made will be donated to the local community who are less fortunate than others. The school and ultimately those in the community of sale. “Thank you for your weapons we confiscated this morning,” Senor Martinez.” Peter laughed, trying to remove some of the tension that filled the air. No one laughed.

As attendants began to fill the remaining water glasses and waiters began to take our orders, I couldn’t help but notice from my vantage point that there were only a few of their weapons. Martinez leaned forward and spoke. “This is a surprise and it answers some questions I was going to pose to Mr. Gallo this evening. Tell him I will speak with him again soon.”

At that moment the maître d’ approached our table and said, “Gentlemen, under the circumstances, it would be best if you would leave the restaurant. Now.”

Peter Gallo rolled forward to his place at the table and looked over his dinner guests. “Before we begin to enjoy our evening together, Mr. Martinez, I want to put you on notice that if you ever have your goons shove a gun in my face and pull me from my chair to the floor to check my identification, you’re a dead man. Do you understand that? A dead man… and you’re right, I’m not punctual. Get used to it.”

Well, so much for everyone remaining cool, I thought to myself. Mr. Gallo had ratcheted up the tension so thick you could cut it with a knife.

Ignoring the harsh threat and still smiling, Martinez, realizing he would not get a handshake, slowly lowered his arm and sat. At that moment, everyone’s bodyguards sat.

Turning the pages of his large bookmarked menu without looking at it, Peter stared into Martinez’s eyes and spoke, “I recommend the veal or scallops over angel hair. They offer a magnificent wine and portobello cream sauce. A killer’s choice, if you’re excuse the expression, Senor Martinez.” Peter laughed, trying to remove some of the tension that filled the air. No one laughed.

As attendants began to fill the remaining water glasses and waiters began to take our orders, I couldn’t help but notice from my vantage point that there were only a few of their weapons. Martinez leaned forward and spoke. “This is a surprise and it answers some questions I was going to pose to Mr. Gallo this evening. Tell him I will speak with him again soon.”

At that moment the maître d’ approached our table and said, “Gentlemen, under the circumstances, it would be best if you would leave the restaurant. Now.”

I purposely waited until I was the last at the table. Then I walked from the restaurant alone and stood outside in the drizzling rain, looking for either limo. They were both gone. I had a valet signal for a cab, got in quickly and asked the driver to take me to the nearest pay phone.

• Part two will be presented next Thursday.

Note: Coming soon, look for Fred’s new mystery thriller, Deceived, at your local bookstore or e-book.
to-work efforts; Oppose contributory negligence tort reform – Oppose tort reform legislation that would overburden county budgetary constraints, unfairly shift fault to counties, or increase demand for court facilities; Promote utilization of 911 centers by protecting confidentiality – Seek legislation to promote the reporting of criminal activity by protecting the confidentiality of callers by using either transcripts or voice-altered recordings to prevent recognition and to make appropriate amendments to public records laws.

Justice and Public Safety
Seek legislation to protect the fiscal viability of the county jail system by reinstating the reimbursement rate for state inmates housed in county jails and increasing the reimbursement rate for state inmates awaiting post-trial prison transfer; Oppose legislation to increase time counties are mandated to house state misdemeanants; Improve inmate medical care cost containment – Seek legislation that would authorize medical care providers to charge the state and counties no more than the rates set in the Medicaid or Medicare schedule of charges for inmate medical care; Maintain funding for gang prevention and adolescent substance abuse prevention, intervention and treatment programs; Allow court facility fee flexibility – Seek legislation to allow counties to collect additional fees to support specialty courts and help fund capital, operational and other needs associated with increasing demands on our judicial system; Authorize inmate electronic monitoring cost reimbursement – Seek legislation to authorize counties to seek reimbursement from defendants for electronic monitoring, based on ability to pay.

Public Education
Reinstate ADM and lottery funds for school construction – Seek legislation to fully reinstate the Average Daily Membership funds and Lottery proceeds to the Public School Building Capital Fund; Authorize county use of lottery funds for technology – Seek legislation to authorize counties to use lottery funds to address school technology needs; Increase high school graduation rates – Support legislation that encourages students to complete their high school education by recognizing alternative graduation methods and by excluding from the definition of dropouts those youth enrolled in high school equivalency programs at community colleges.

Tax and Finance
Preserve the existing local revenue base; Authorize local revenue options – Seek legislation to allow all counties to enact by resolution or, at the option of the Board of Commissioners, by voter referendum any or all revenue options from among those that have been authorized for any other county; Recover costs through in rem foreclosure fee – Seek legislation to increase the reimbursement rate for in rem foreclosure collection efforts to recover actual costs, including legal expenses; Set property tax relief application deadline at June 1 – Seek legislation to establish June 1 as the statutory deadline for exemption, deferment and other property tax relief applications; Clarify centralized listing and assessing of cellular and cable...
...REQUESTS continued from 16

companies – Seek legislation to implement the central listing and assessment of cellular and cable companies; Clarify definition of charity eligible for property tax relief – Seek legislation to clarify the definition of charity and set a cap amount for hospitals, facilities financed through Medical Care Commission bonds, and continuing care facilities, and require that any property valuation exclusion formula provide for a higher test of charity; Allow hospital authority access to setoff debt collection – Seek legislation to authorize hospital authorities to participate in the setoff debt collection program; Require sales tax reported at zip+4 – Seek legislation to require that large vendors report sales tax by the 9-digit zip code; Simplify register of deeds fees – Support legislation to require that all real estate recording fees charged by the Register of Deeds be set at appropriate flat rates, with a single rate paid to a single state agency, provided that implementation of this legislation not reduce any revenues to any county; Standardize local vehicle fees – Seek legislation to require that all local vehicle fees be adopted at the time the tax rate is adopted and impose the fees on all registered and unregistered vehicles; Allow solid waste authority access to setoff debt collection – Seek legislation to authorize solid waste authorities to participate in the setoff debt collection program; Manufactured home taxes paid before transfer – Seek legislation to require that all taxes levied on manufactured homes be paid before the home may be moved, repossessed or sold on site.

– Kim Lewicki

Jury finds Picklesimer guilty of murder in first degree

Monday, Feb. 21, a Jackson County jury found James Keaton Picklesimer, 66, guilty of first-degree murder in the 2007 shooting of George Gunter, 73, who authorities found dead from a gunshot wound to the back of the head in a cottage in Whiteside Cove.

After the two-week trial, it took the jury 2 ½ hours of deliberation before handing down the guilty verdict. Judge Gary Gavenus sentenced Picklesimer to life in prison without parole.

In closing arguments, Assistant District Attorney Reid Brown said Picklesimer shot Gunter in the back of the head with a Winchester rifle.

However, all along Picklesimer has said he acted in self-defense and his attorney, Jack Stewart recounted his story in court.

But the prosecution claimed though a loaded gun was found in Gunter’s pocket, it was in a holster and did not have a bullet in the chamber.

Stewart said his client went for a 30-30 Winchester to his gun from view just as Picklesimer fired.

Picklesimer will serve his term in a Raleigh, NC penitentiary.
Recently elected Sen. Jim Davis and newly appointed Commissioner Kevin Corbin were the featured speakers at FreedomWorks monthly meeting. A full house showed their appreciation for their fine presentations with frequent applause. Their stands on many pertinent issues were in line with the group’s conservative values and attendees were pleased to hear the speakers’ views.

Photo by Don Swanson

Corbin and Davis speak at FreedomWorks meeting

Boys Varsity Team

Girls Varsity Team

Boys JV Team


Boys JV Team

#2 Tim Fogle, #4 Temba Lama, #12 Tyler Munger, #13 Collin Taylor, #15 Isaac Beaversm, #20 Parker Sims, #21 Austin Baty, #23 Clayton Creighton, #25 Clayton Dunn and #32 Cai Roman. Coaches: Ryan Potts and Jesse Munger.