

Highlands Newspaper

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Thurs. Dec. 27/Jan. 3, '12-'13

2012 Year-in-Review of Highlands and county

Looking back at the year that was is always fun in addition to being informative. It's easy to forget what happens week to week and month to month. So the 2012 year-in-review is meant to jog the memory and put the year in perspective.

January

• Electric rates may go up 12% -25% in January bill. Residents and business owners are already reeling under the incremental rate hike initiated over the last two years and it's about to get worse. At a special called Town

Board meeting, Monday, January 9 at 7 p.m., commissioners will decide whether to raise rates incrementally over the next two years or whether to raise them in one fell swoop this year. The outcome could be somewhere between 12% and 25% - 12% if

done incrementally, 25% if done all at once. Since Duke has already raised its rates to Highlands, the board must make a choice.

• Wayfinding costs OK'd. Tuesday night, the Town Board agreed to spend \$27,450 toward

• See YEAR IN REVIEW page 20

• Inside •

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What 2012 RE sales mean for the county, citizens

Those who have been keeping up with the real estate market this past year know that sales are on the upswing over the previous year. Our contributing real estate writers who offer their take on the market each week in "Investing at 4,118 Ft." have explained the ups and downs of the market from a professional's point of view.

While looking over the real estate transactions for 2012, readers will notice that in the majority of the transactions, the price a piece of property sold for is less than its last appraised value, which was in 2007.

Because of that discrepancy, citizens are likely to expect the new reval - which will take

• See RE TRANSACTIONS page 9

11th Air Force airman from Highlands documents Operation Christmas Drop for the world

The U.S. Air Force's 60th anniversary of Operation Christmas Drop - the longest running humanitarian effort in the world - took place Dec. 11-18.

For the first time ever, the event was documented - not just the drops which have been photographed from the belly of the plane - but the result of the drop.

"I thought it was important for us to see what the recipients on the ground see," said MSgt. Cameron Leslie, 37, Highlands School graduate Class of 1994. "In 60 years, no one has ever seen the other end and I thought if I could capture that it would be pretty noteworthy."

Little did MSgt Cameron Leslie know that a hobby of his would take him across the Pacific Ocean and establish him as the first photo journalist to document the longest running

humanitarian airlift mission in the world.

Operation Christmas Drop was first conducted by accident in 1952. The aircrew of a WB-29 aircraft assigned to the 54th Weather Reconnaissance Squadron, formerly assigned to Andersen Air Force Base, Guam, was flying a mission to the south of Guam over the Micronesian atoll of Kapin-gamarangi. When they saw islanders waving to them, the crew gathered items they had on the plane, put them in a container, tied a parachute to it and dropped it to the islanders as they circled overhead. A witness to the first drop on the island of Agrigan said "We saw these things come out of the back of the airplane and I was yelling: "There are toys coming down."

At that time, the island had no electricity or running water and the islands were periodically hit by typhoons. Some of the first con-

• See DROP page 2



Cameron Leslie with islander.

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... DROP continued from page 1



How a drop looks from the air.

terested in helping out. But this time, he helped by doing one of the things he loves to do best — photo journalism.

The President of Operation Christmas Drop, Captain Francine Kwarteng wanted to get the word out to the world about the importance of the operation.

She felt this would be best by sending someone to several of the islands where relief supplies were being dropped to document it. That person was MSgt Leslie.

Sponsored by Operation Christmas

• See DROP page 6

• OBITUARY •

William Berg, Jr.

Berg, William A. Jr., died Sunday, December 16, 2012 at the age of 86 at his home in St. Louis, MO. Beloved husband of Cynthia R. Berg (nee Chambers). Loving father of Karen (Brian) Dubrule and the late Bruce F. Berg. Grandfather of Katherine, Joseph, Benjamin and Elizabeth Dubrule. Beloved by many.

Mr. Berg proudly served his country during WWII as a signalman, third class in the U.S. Navy. He was a graduate of Beaumont High School and St. Louis University. William owned Greene Golf Products until his retirement in 1980.

Mr. & Mrs. Berg also have a residence at the Highlands Country Club, Highlands, NC.

Services: No services will be held, however, if desired, contributions may be made to Operation Food Search, 6282 Olive Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63130-3300. A service of Schrader Funeral Home and Crematory. Friends may sign the family's on-line guest-book at Schrader

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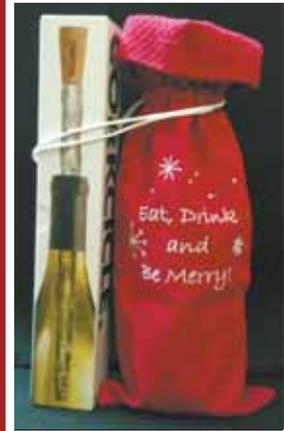
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• LAUGHING AT LIFE •

Where does an angry old white man hide?

Darn tootin' I'm angry. I don't like being a minority in my own country. For whatever time I have left on this sick planet, I want to live with my own kind. Call me a racist... I don't care! Why are we the only species that demands we cohabitate outside our own kind? Do zebras mingle with horses? Do vultures soar with eagles? Even rats don't hang out with mice. In today's New America, these kinds of questions are, of course, totally racist. I know, I know, the thought police will soon be knocking on my door. Ask me if I care.

I'm sure Highlanders understand this need to be with

my own kind more than most because in our perfect little town high in the mountains the white male still dominates. In Highlands, living only with other white males is OK and not racist. Why is that? A puzzlement. So why don't I just head back to Highlands, you ask?

My problem is I'm a winter wimp extraordinaire. If it gets below 50 degrees I freeze up and cease to function. Everything shrinks. I get the sniffles 24/7 and really weird stuff pours from my nose...in a variety of colors. I have samples if you're interested. Write me at snot.com. Who wants to live with that? What's an angry old white male to do?

I'm convinced the United States will eventually crash financially, causing misbehavior to flair up among the com-



with Fred Wooldridge

mon people, which includes li'l ole me. Hey, you can't get more common than me...right? Soooo where do I hide?

Flash back to last Thanksgiving. The li'l missus and I grabbed her recently baked homemade desserts and we headed for Jacksonville, FL to visit our daughter, her Navy Commander husband and their four small children Well, I take that back. Her oldest daughter is 12 going on 23. I'm sure some readers know what I mean. Also, we brought our youngest son and his wife who were visiting us from Dubai. It was almost perfect except our oldest son took his family and headed for Auburn, AL to celebrate Thanksgiving with in-laws. That's OK; 90% is good.

Anyway, it was the perfect time to discuss what each family would do if the pushing and shoving started among frightened Americans who are not on the political gravy train. Where do we hide when the country collapses and street fighting starts?

Our Navy son-in-law will move his family onto the naval base at Mayport. Hey, ya can't get safer than that. My other son and his wife will continue to live in Dubai, a disgustingly wealthy land where misbehavior is dealt with in the harshest of terms. One does not misbehave in Dubai. And my firefighter son thinks we're all nuts and says he doesn't have a plan 'cause it ain't happening. I hope he's right...but I don't think so. But last but surely not least, where does that leave the li'l missus and li'l ole me, the last of the angry white males?

My youngest son had the best idea. "Dad, you've got to band with the cops you worked with years ago," he said. "You guys were some of the scariest people in Miami Beach back in the '60s and '70s. Form a union, write a constitution, arm yourselves to the hilt and wait it out. You still have the skills and the mentality but not the badges of au-

•See WOOLDRIDGE page 13

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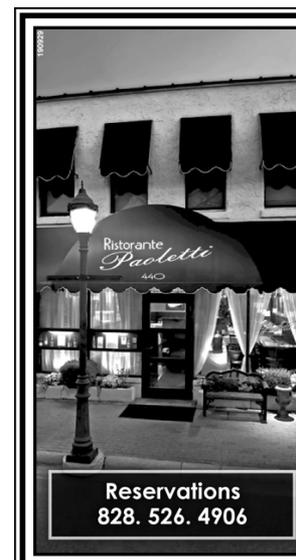
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• THE VIEW FROM HERE •

We as Americans have the power to shape our destiny

When does the act of governing begin? When will ideological purity and self interest become less important than the well being of the United States of America and the economic security of her some 350,000,000 residents?

Why doesn't the electorate, who by now has figured out their Congressman's primary goal is reelection, deny them their gravy train, and chuck them out of office? When Congressional approval hovers below 20%, when Americans clamor for action on the fiscal front, when the President and Rep. Boehner circle around like two hyenas eyeing a rotting carcass, when we are mere days from a vivid demonstration of governmental impotence, why do Americans send nearly all of them, every two years, back to Washington?

Where will we find honest, selfless patriots to lead us to compromise and economic sanity, guys who can sit down, respectfully disagree without rage or rancor, gals who can put aside narrow ideology and self interest, and work out a deal, that is unsatisfactory to both sides, seen as deeply flawed, but ones that give the USA a fighting chance to get back on track?

We can't afford our present commitments, let alone an expansion the Democrats seem to favor. The math, as they say, doesn't work. With a shrinking body of workers supporting a growing aging population, and with the extension of largess to more and more Americans, the money just won't be there. It seems like turning back the clock to a crueler time.

Maybe we could start by turning the clock back just far enough to return to a time when their was a rough balance between compassion and self responsibility. America has never been perfect, and never will be. Depending of which side of the political fence you live on, we were at our best somewhere between 1776 and 2012.

I don't know where you stand philosophically on the

question of a graduated income tax, and it doesn't matter because right now, to get the deal done, the wealthy and near wealthy must accept a tax increase. And I think it's fair.

We face an extraordinary debt and staggering interest payments. Even if we don't issue one more food stamp, extend a helping hand to another unemployed worker, and permanently freeze the poverty level, even if the government doesn't take on one more job, without prompt action, we'll pass along crippling debt to future generations.

We need a deal and compromise is the only path to reach it. Everyone knows it, has for years, but in the nation's capitol elected politicians consider their interests above the people who pay them to do a job, the health of America has been of secondary importance.

None of us wants to pay higher taxes. The reason might be purely economic or completely philosophic, but it's a fact. Higher taxes are a bitter, but necessary medicine. Maybe, someday, in some shining America in the future everyone will pay lower taxes, because everyone will have a job and contribute. Everyone will have enough to eat, a decent place to live, and adequate healthcare. The government may find a way to identify the truly needy and help them, while providing inspiration and opportunity for the rest to care for themselves.

Today we have a crisis. Unless we act, and act decisively, we need look only at our European neighbors today to see our future tomorrow.

We can't grow our way out of this hole, and we certainly can't tax our way to solvency, but working together, Left and Right, Democrat and Republican, we can begin the task of making America once again the model for the rest of the world, better than in earlier decades.



Dr. Henry Salzarulo

**Feedback is encouraged.
email:**

hsalzarulo@aol.com

We can have the world's most advanced health care, but make it available to all. We can add to the nation's wealth, narrow the gap between rich and poor, not by tearing down one, but by elevating the other. All our citizens will have equality, but will be advanced on merit alone.

We will learn that we can't impose our religious beliefs on our fellow citizens, because we are not Saudi Arabia, and because we are not a Christian nation, a Jewish country, a mainstream Protestant, or evangelical state. We are Buddhists and atheists, Catholic and Muslim. We cannot enjoy tomorrow if we refuse to act not as left and right, but as

Americans.

Happy New Year.



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... DROP continued from page 3

Drop, he took leave, packed up his personal photography equipment and jumped on a commercial plane to the island of Yap. From there, his travels became more of an adventure.

Boarding a small aircraft owned by a missionary organization he headed for the outer islands.

At their first stop, the aircraft

had a major maintenance problem. MSgt Leslie had to lean on his training as an Air Force aircraft mechanic to fix the aircraft himself. While waiting for parts to arrive so he could finish repairing the aircraft, he ventured out in small boats to islands even further away from civilization. This boat island-hopping campaign lasted for 10 days.



A typical home on the islands of Micronesia and where Leslie lived when the 3-day jaunt was extended to a 14-day excursion.



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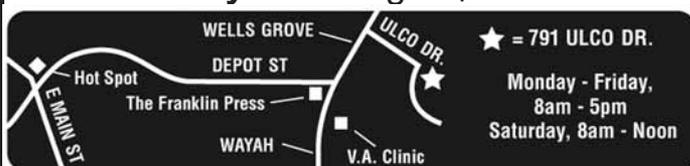
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During those 10 days, MSgt Leslie lived like the natives. He fished for his food, ate locally grown fruits and even scaled coconut trees for something to drink due to the lack of fresh water. Living in simple huts, MSgt Leslie found out firsthand what it was like to live in such an isolated community. Over the course of his journey through the islands of Micronesia, MSgt Leslie captured over 2,000 photos.

“This is the soft side of what we do,” he said. “We don’t just position for war. We have the logistical power to be able to help and this shows we aren’t just big and bad but soft, too.”

Leslie joined the Air Force and left Highlands three weeks after the Saturday he graduated

from Highlands School.

His first stop was boot camp in Oklahoma, then it was on to Fayetteville, NC. In his 18 years of service, he’s been deployed all over the world and has worn many hats in the Air Force. While in the force, he has earned a BA in Education Development, associate degrees in law, aviation maintenance, IT and is currently working on his Masters in Community Leadership.

He said it was his small town upbringing in Highlands that propelled him to see the world, and his ticket was the Air Force.

“Being from a small town really contributed to my curiosity about the rest of the world,” said Leslie. “I wanted to branch out and see and do everything.”

Though he misses Highlands, round trip airfare from Guam is about \$2,200 per person so he and his family don’t get back here much..

Christmas is all about giving and that’s what Operation Christmas Drop has been doing for 60 years. MSgt Leslie not only gave to others, he shared a story that will energize more to do the same for years to come.

The operation is the oldest ongoing U.S. Department of Defense mission which remains in full operation and is the longest running humanitarian airlift in the world.

– **Kim Lewicki in collaboration with the US Air Force writers**

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• COACH'S CORNER •

New Year's Resolutions

Every year at this time many Americans look forward to a new year by making some resolutions to follow during the new year. In that respect, I am looking forward to a terrific 2013 and have made the following resolutions to adhere to.



Ryan Potts
ryanpotts@hotmail.com

I resolve to continue hating the Yankees with every fiber of my being. (and by hate I mean "sports hate" not "I hope something bad happens to them" hate) Not only did they completely embarrass themselves this year with their lackluster performance on the field, but they also continue to spend money like water. Same goes for the Angels and Dodgers.

I resolve to no longer feel empathy for UNC fans, despite the fact that they have been slaughtered by the only three decent teams they have played. Note to self UNC fans: you aren't supposed to throw Roy under the bus until AFTER he goes 8-20 like Matt Doherty did. UNC will be a force by the end of the year, and most of the bandwagoner UNC fans will jump back on the high horse-but the ones who stuck by their team all along will be the ones who feel most vindicated. (And rightly so.)

I resolve to watch as much of Blake Griffin as possible. Seriously, do yourself a favor and go youtube some of Blake Griffin's highlights. The man is not just a dunking machine (although he is on par with guys like Vince Carter and Dominique Wilkins in that department) he plays with an energy that is not often seen in the NBA these days. Griffin has the Clippers in a must see category on national television, and they have won 12 straight games as of this writing.

My final New Year's Resolution is to continue to hate on the BCS with

every fiber of my being as it fades into Bolivian (to quote Mike Tyson). It is absurd that a team like Alabama can play three decent teams all year, only beat two of them, and still play for a national championship. I mean, I guess it could be worse, you could be Florida State and only play one decent team

all year at home and lose to them (and lose to a horrible NC State team as well). Still, it seems pretty ridiculous that Alabama has crapped the bed in their toughest home game in each of the last two seasons and still managed to end up in the National Championship. Even more ridiculous are the circles that Nick Saban has managed to turn himself in explaining this special brand of "luck" to the media.

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... RE TRANSACTIONS continued from 1

place in 2014 and will be reflected in the 2015 tax rate – to mean a decrease in property taxes.

However, Macon County Tax Appraiser Richard Lightner says there is a lot that goes into a devising a tax rate.

“What citizens will see in this year’s real estate transactions is the difference between the market conditions in 2007 (assessed value) and present conditions (sale price). Normally, the assessed value would be lower than the sale price, this late in an assessment cycle. However, the recession has taken a toll on pricing and also on the number of foreclosures. Many sale values are the results of forced sales and thus are not arm length market sales as defined by all appraisal standards.

“What does all of this indicate? The market values have dropped on vacant land the most and next on moderately expensive homes. This decrease in value by law cannot be recognized in the assessed value until the reassessment of 2015. At that time we will consider all of the qualified market sales through 2014 and apply them to the values for 2015.

“Many people believe that a drop in value equals an equal drop in taxes; that may or may not be true. By law, the county has to have a balanced budget and in order to get that, the county adds all of the revenue up from all sources and subtracts it from the needed revenue. The difference is then divided by the total assessed value and a tax rate is determined. Once the tax rate is applied to each individual property, a tax bill can be calculated. If the change in an individual property is less than the median property change, the property will have an increase tax bill. The opposite is true. If the change is more than the median value change, the property will have a lower tax bill. If the overall assessed value of the county drops, the new revenue neutral tax rate will be higher than the present tax rate, as defined by general statutes,” he said.

The following transaction are from Jan. 1, 2012 through Dec. 6, 2012 for the Town of Highlands and the townships of Highlands and Flats/Scaly.

Town of Highlands

Jan. 1, 2012 - Dec. 6, 2012

PIN, PROP_ADDR, OWNER_NAME, DATE_REC'D,
SALES_PRICE, ASSED_VAL

- 7530930482, 335 MOUNT LORI DR, RENTAL PR. OF HIGHLANDS LLC, 8/31/2012, 0, \$373,010
- 7449143876, BRUSHY FACE RD, BELL GRIFFIN B JR TRUSTEE, 5/29/2012, 0, \$300,000
- 7540753594, 238 SHERWOOD FOREST, EPISCOPAL CHURCH, 1/17/2012, \$574,000, \$862,510
- 7530826491, 248 THISTLE DR, KISSEL JAMES ELMER JR TR, 8/9/2012, 0, \$1,053,190
- 7449180792, 151 SHELBY CT, MALTSEV VITALLY P, 5/9/2012, 0, \$40,000
- 7449491979, 326 S 4TH ST, CRAIG THOMAS H.W., 2/20/2012, 0, \$626,540
- 7449164246, 280 CHEROKEE DR, EDWARDS FRANK D, 2/6/2012, 0, \$390,790
- 7449496193, S 5TH ST, OLD HIGHLANDS PARK CONDO AO, 1/6/2012, 0, \$146,300
- 7449054959, BRUSHY FACE RD /, BRUSHY FACE MTN CON. LLC, 5/29/2012, 0, \$440,000
- 7449588648, 1006 WILSON RD, POTTS W TERRY, 1/26/2012, \$390,500, \$417,260
- 7449588748, WILSON RD, POTTS W TERRY, 1/26/2012, \$390,500, \$43,560

• REAL ESTATE SNAP-SHOTS •

Properties for Sale

2BR/2BA Charmer in Mirror Lake



A 2BR/2BA, Mirror Lake area cottage loaded with charm, character, custom details and unique features. Covered and open decking, hardwood flooring, custom doors and carpentry. Completely rebuilt in 2006 (new pillars, kitchen w/handmade cabinets, siding, double pane windows, as well as new plumbing & electrical service). New roof in 2003. Turn-key! Offered at \$274,000. MLS #73401.

In-Town, Pristine Gem



3BR/3BA less than mile from Main St.! Upstairs master suite or retreat for grandchildren! Open living/dining room and granite-countered kitchen. Large deck in canopy of trees with outdoor dining. New roof, floors, paint & updates. Lower level for storage/more living space. Offered at \$369,000. MLS #75156.

Historic Highlands Estate



Escape to this 1920s Highlands private estate on 7.27 +/- acres, a short walk to Main Street. The 4 BR/3 BA main house features gorgeous woodwork, stone fireplace in the living & dining rooms, large country kitchen, and library. The charming, 2 BR/1 BA guest house has wood floors, a claw foot tub/shower in the bathroom, and an open deck. Expansive slate patio, walking trails, perennial gardens, and lawns. Offered at \$2,650,000. MLS #75971.

Ideal Harris Lake Cottage



2 BR/1.5 BA cottage with Old Highlands charm and view of Harris Lake. This lake cottage features a granite fireplace (wood burning), pine walls, open floor plan, eat-in kitchen, tile countertops, new appliances, metal roof, and outdoor living space. A short walk to Main Street. Offered at \$645,000. MLS #75970.

Please contact Susie deVille at (828) 371-2079 or Mal Phillips at (828) 200-2642.



Susie deVille,
Broker-in-Charge
susie@WhiteOakRG.com

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- 7449765234, RAVENEL RIDGE RD, 655 PARTNERS LLC, 8/6/2012, 0, \$650,000
- 7550405858, 690 SPLIT RAIL ROW, SEAY CATHARINE AVENT, 1/11/2012, \$685,000, \$1,594,660
- 7540217296, 125 MAIN ST, THORNTON PAT.MILES STRAHAN, 2/27/2012, 0, \$1,335,350
- 7540235238, 484 FOREMAN RD, GROSS THOMAS, 8/2/2012, \$500,000, \$688,160
- 7540056160, 186 CULLASAJA DR, POOLE EDWIN H TRUSTEE, 9/21/2012, 0, \$851,630
- 7540118658, 260 FRANKLIN RD, FAULKNER HIGHLANDS LLC, 6/4/2012, \$865,000, \$199,820
- 7540118887, 260 FRANKLIN RD, FAULKNER HIGHLANDS LLC, 6/4/2012, \$865,000, \$475,480
- 7540137526, 229 RAOUL RD, RALSTON JOHN HODGES TR, 2/6/2012, 0, \$453,620
- 7540351697, 43 HEMLOCK RDG, BONEY DOROTHY LESLIE, 10/5/2012, 0, \$591,590
- 7540402709, 388 MAIN ST, HFA CORP, 9/20/2012, \$1,050,000, \$1,105,760
- 7540050678, 932 HICKORY HILL RD, BAILEY RAYMOND HOWARD, 6/15/2012, 0, \$267,010
- 7540419779, 523 LAUREL ST, VIDMAR JEFFREY L, 6/15/2012, 0, \$141,500
- 7540530079, 219 POPLAR ST, RAMEY JAMES & MAXINE, 7/5/2012, 0, \$162,480



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828-508-9952.

... RE TRANSACTIONS continued from page 9

- 7449577215, 439 SATULAH RIDGE RD, SLAUGHTER VIRGINIA B TR., 8/9/2012, 0, \$582,380
- 7449585475, 758 WILSON RD, HAVRON RICHARD D, 3/30/2012, \$50,000, \$142,490
- 7449697960, 850 SMALLWOOD AVE, RALSTON JOHN HODGESTR, 2/6/2012, 0, \$253,350
- 7540218501, 131 N 1ST ST, TOWN OF HIGHLANDS, 10/17/2012, \$700,000, \$483,150
- 7540417587, 466 SPRUCE ST, MOUNTAIN FINDINGS INC, 10/15/2012, \$250,000, \$358,780
- 7540418154, 468 CAROLINA WAY, CLARK TOMMY, 4/4/2012, \$230,000, \$424,120
- 7540446721, 50 NORTH DR, MONTANA JILL W, 4/11/2012, 0, \$1,059,530
- 7540510483, 510 N 5TH ST, SHAFFNER PROPERTIES LLC, 6/15/2012, \$191,000, \$205,580
- 7540548010, 661 CENTER DR, BUCHANAN PATRICIA E, 3/28/2012, 0, \$905,260

Highlands Township

Jan. 1, 2012 - Dec. 6, 2012

PIN, PROP_ADDR, OWNER_NAME, DATE_REC'D, SALES_PRICE, ASSED_VAL

- 7540665494, 93 ROLLING WOODS DR, JONES BARBARA E, 5/3/2012, \$512,500, \$514,830
- 7540760630, ROLLING WOODS, FISHKIN STEVEN L TR, 4/4/2012, 0, \$107,440
- 7540760703, 112 ROLLING WOODS DR, FISHKIN STEVEN L TR, 4/4/2012, 0, \$467,450
- 7520355475, TURTLE POND RD, MACON BANK INC, 7/24/2012, \$55,000, \$73,380
- 7520396155, DENDY ORCHARD RD, NIMMONS KENNETH M, 4/30/2012, \$265,000, \$67,320
- 7520397294, DENDY ORCHARD RD, NIMMONS KENNETH M, 4/30/2012, \$265,000, \$46,910
- 7540966024, 28 WINTERBERRY CT, AMAN SALLIE S., 10/5/2012, 0, \$578,210
- 7459178636, 3380 HORSE COVE RD, LEIZE R SMITH REV'BLE TR, 3/26/2012, 0, \$283,880
- 7520540985, MOUNTAIN BROOK WAY, REDDICK TATE, 6/1/2012, \$10,000, \$77,630
- 7520541686, MOUNTAIN BROOK WAY, FRYE ROBERT AJR, 5/3/2012, \$345,000, \$438,750
- 7520541766, MOUNTAIN BROOK WAY, REDDICK TATE, 6/1/2012, \$10,000, \$77,630
- 7520541865, MOUNTAIN BROOK WAY, REDDICK TATE, 6/1/2012, \$10,000, \$77,630
- 7520550037, 48 MNT BROOK WAY, MACON BANK INC, 7/24/2012, \$200,000, \$468,860
- 7429976078, 3061 DILLARD RD, EUSTIS HERBERT LEE, 4/12/2012, \$23,000, \$934,180
- 7520451900, 2792 TURTLE POND RD, ADAMS JOHN S, 5/16/2012, 0, \$250,840
- 7540939763, 1050 FALLS DR W, CHITTY, RICHARD L. TR, 9/7/2012, \$630,000, \$1,094,670
- 7520543867, TURTLE POND RD, DUPUIS, MICHAEL L, 4/4/2012, \$10,000, \$68,400
- 7520552073, TURTLE POND RD, DUPUIS, MICHAEL L, 4/4/2012, \$10,000, \$72,960
- 7530785569, 206 HAMMOND RD, DANGIOLELLA

- FRANK, 5/23/2012, \$212,500, \$390,360
- 7449005198, 1384 CLEAR CREEK RD, BUNNELL BRUCE THOMAS, 5/14/2012, 0, \$315,570
- 7449006074, RD 1613, BUNNELL BRUCE THOMAS, 5/14/2012, 0, \$31,250
- 7541035949, HEDDEN LANE, CHAMBERS OVERTON II, 4/5/2012, 0, \$231,270
- 7551318425, APPLE MTN CIRCLE, DEVRIES ROGER WILLIAM, 9/26/2012, 0, \$142,040
- 7530890496, 715 VIEW POINT RD, WILLIAM G HAMMOND REVOC TR, 7/20/2012, 0, \$805,420
- 7459376807, HILLCREST DR, MANGUM MICHELE, 10/15/2012, 0, \$102,000
- 7551414129, OFF HWY 64 1404, WEAVER HERBERT B. JR TR, 8/27/2012, 0, \$712,800
- 7520199852, 111 ANCIENT WAY, MANGASARIAN JUDITH W, 10/25/2012, 0, \$555,510
- 7550894549, RD 1600, THOMPSON MARY N, 4/24/2012, 0, \$398,560
- 7540781528, 2437 CASHIERS RD, CHEN C H, 2/15/2012, \$435,000, \$880,470
- 7520357540, TURTLE POND RD, MACON BANK INC, 7/24/2012, \$55,000, \$82,450
- 7520359905, TURTLE POND RD, MACON BANK INC, 7/24/2012, \$55,000, \$67,320
- 7520399089, 119 DENDY KNOB, NIMMONS KENNETH M, 4/30/2012, \$265,000, \$352,840
- 7551139923, 276 HIGHLAND MEAD. RD, FERRIS KELLY ELIZABETH, 4/3/2012, \$120,000, \$390,210
- 7541040188, HEDDEN LANE, CHAMBERS THOMAS T, 3/28/2012, 0, \$1,112,760
- 7459277607, 14 & 38 COUNTRY SQ LN, MCCRORY RICHARD J, 10/29/2012, 0, \$787,940
- 7459278547, 172 HILLCREST DR, YOUNT BRADLEY, 5/15/2012, \$75,000, \$169,460
- 7438889968, CHEYENNE DR, HOUSTON BARBARA A. TR, 8/17/2012, 0, \$92,570
- 7520721030, TURTLE POND RD, KILLEBREW ROBERT BRUCE, 10/12/2012, \$40,000, \$77,520
- 7459374480, 29 HILLCREST DR, MANGUM MICHELE TRUSTEE, 10/15/2012, 0, \$405,630
- 7540678496, 44 ROLLING ACRES DR, FIRST CITIZENS BANK & TRUST CO, 9/12/2012, \$37,000, \$388,910
- 7551012599, 3645 CASHIERS RD, COMMUNITY BIBLE CHURCH, 8/6/2012, 0, \$6,110,580
- 7540788284, 36 ROCKY RIDGE RD, REED GERALD, 6/25/2012, \$464,000, \$759,520
- 7551052931, 290 FOREST TRL, BRADWELL PROPERTIES INC., 8/22/2012, \$450,000, \$504,700
- 7540882091, 282 SKY LAKE RD, HOLLOWAY PATRICIA W TR, 3/12/2012, 0, \$461,050
- 7551212072, LOT 272 CULLASAJA CL., BBW OF CASHIERS LLC, 8/28/2012, \$56,000, \$302,050
- 7438773982, 777 CHEYENNE DR, INTERNATIONAL GREEN LABS LLC, 6/7/2012, \$143,500, \$230,330
- 7541047543, HEDDEN LANE, CHAMBERS OVERTON II, 4/5/2012, 0, \$241,430
- 7530893561, OFF RD 1544, THE WILLIAM G HAMMOND REV TR, 9/6/2012, \$100,000, \$225,840
- 7438898438, 313 CORNET LN, BUNNELL KARLA E, 2/3/2012, 0, \$247,390

Five new log cabins nestled in the hemlocks on 25 acres flanked by National Forest at the base of Whiteside Mountain. Even "a river runs through it."

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Highlands View. Affordable home with a mountain view. 3BR, 2BA with a bonus room. Vaulted living room with fireplace, deck, lower level bonus room. Paved and only minutes from town. Offered at \$299,000. MLS#60760



Two acres in neighborhood just two miles from Main Street. 3BR 3BA, open living area with wood burning fireplace and screened-in porch. Broker owned and offered at the substantially reduced price of \$545,000. Owner wants offers!



Commercial office. Great location on Harris lake features reception and waiting area, with 2/3 offices and bathroom. Room for expansion and a wonderful setting. Offered at \$550,000. MLS#67077



Stone house. 3 BR 4 BA, stone fireplace, updated kitchen with granite and stainless appliances, renovated baths. One mile from Main Street. Large 1.4 acre level yard with mature landscaping. Offered at \$985,000. MLS#71611



Great family retreat with large rooms, loads of outdoor living spaces, southern exposure, ponds, creeks, well established organic garden. Includes apartment with both inside and outside entrances. Offered at \$285,500. MLS#70915



Long range mountain views. Post and beam construction. Concrete kitchen countertops, twig railings. Golf and tennis available. Offered at \$599,000. MLS#64547



Mirror Lake. 2BR, 2BA summer cabin on Cullasaja River. Close to town. Offered at \$195,000. MLS#75232



Great open plan with passive solar heating, large stone fireplace, and native landscaping. Kitchen and master suite totally renovated in 1999. 3 bedrooms, 2.5 baths, with a wrap-around deck to enjoy mountain views. Garage with workshop and storage. Within walking distance of trout fishing lake, and tennis courts. Offered at \$375,000. MLS#74035.



Priced to sell! Spacious living, dining, kitchen, 3BR; 3 sets French doors to deck; 2011 new roof; granite countertops; 2-car garage with shop area. \$299,000 mls #75684



Three BR, 3BA with two half baths and an apartment above the 2 car garage. Beautiful grounds, mountain views. Furnishings available. Offered at \$950,000. MLS#73147



3+/- acre parcel gated Cowee Ridge. 5BR/4 BA. Light, airy, high ceilings. Lower level has 2BR/1BA w/small kitchen, big work space/play room, and is Handicap Accessible. MLS#70237 Reduced to \$590,000. Bring Offers!



15-acre kingdom with log home, barn, pond, meadow, views of Shortoff and the mountain vistas backs up to USFS lands. Recent kitchen renovation. 3 bedrooms and 1 1/2 baths. RV hookup in barn. Offered at \$1,596,000. MLS#65910



Historic Highlands home circa 1937 3BR/ 2.5 BA home at the base of Satulah Mountain on 1.53 acres. Clear chestnut paneling and a granite stone fireplace. Craftsmanship throughout. One-car garage, and a spring fed pond. MLS# 76313 Offered at \$975,000.



Updated 2,500 sq. ft. home close to town & Mirror Lake. Private Cul-de-Sac. Ridge line view from deck. 3BR/ 3.5BA. Finished basement w/ studio, half bath & additional rooms. New architectural roof. Price \$409,000. MLS#75905



Renovated cabin. Cathedral ceiling, fireplace. Screened porch with a mountain view. Custom kitchen with stainless appliances. Hardwood floors, heat and air, generator, master suite with 2 guest areas. Offered at \$399,000. MLS#66120



Cabin in Mirror Lake on three lots. Good view! Large screened porch. Kitchen with wormy chestnut cabinets. 2BR/2BA in the main house and 1/1 in the large guest suite. Stone fireplace in great room. Offered at \$369,000. MLS#73272



On a pastoral lot in town. 3BR/3BA home on one floor. Vaulted ceiling, wood floors, central heat and air, walk in closets. Large partially covered and screened porch. Totally updated. Fully furnished. Offered at \$449,000. MLS#75793



Ravenel Ridge. Spacious home with glass enclosed staircase; open floor plan. 4 fireplaces, master bedroom and bath suite on the main floor, 2 guest BR with private baths and more on the upper level. Lower level workshop and storage. 2-car garage. View of Whiteside. Offered at \$3,500,000. MLS#66858



Cullasaja Club Fairway Cottage on the 10th tee. Loaded with upgrades. Soaring, vaulted ceiling in the great room. Stone fireplaces in great room and on screened porch. Huge master bedroom suite. Offered at \$795,000. MLS#65523



2 BR/2 BA cottage on Oak Lane. Open kitchen/dining/living area, stone terrace with outdoor fire place, two levels of decking. 7-year rental record. Offered at \$299,000. MLS#75486



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• JUST HERS •

A cat named Weasel

Weasel's two week reprieve was bittersweet. Faced with a tuna diet, her appetite improved. She ate slowly, and it was an adventure finding new places to feed her. Otherwise, Orion would push her out of the way, and take her food. Orion's actions were disappointing. I hoped he'd be loving and supportive of Weasel, but he found each hidey hole, chasing her away and stealing her spot. The law of animals is the survival of the fittest. Yet, that last night, something changed. I watched in amazement as Weasel and Orion crept toward each other. They touched noses, and nuzzled, trading a few tentative licks. The cats nestled down in front of the fireplace, basking in its warmth, and each other's company. It was a bittersweet moment.

Two weeks after Dr. Brad's sad diagnosis, I loaded Weasel back into her cat carrier. This time, she was quieter, perhaps because she knew the routine, perhaps she was simply resigned. I held the carrier on



Michelle Mead-Armor
michiemead@aol.com

my lap, speaking quietly to my sweet girl, as my friend Jane drove us to the vet. A call to Animal Wellness Clinic had alerted them to our arrival. We were the first appointment. What a way for those poor employees to start the day!

I was ushered into the examination

room, and opened the cat carrier. Lindsay sat down at the computer, briefly typing in Weasel's details before she left the room. Weasel walked over to the computer. There it was, written on the screen: Weasel (deceased): euthanasia. I rushed to hide the screen from Weasel. "What if she reads it?" I thought, and then stopped myself. "Of course she can't read. She's a cat!" Dr. Brad came in, and explained the procedure. First, he'd give Weasie an anesthetic, as if he were preparing Weasel for surgery. I could hang out with her as long as I wanted. Then he would administer the second shot, which would stop her heart. It was all sadly simple. I knew how much my crying distressed the cats after John died, and vowed to be strong for Weasel's sake.

Dr. Brad asked if he could take Weasel into the back for her first shot. I agreed. He returned shortly, praising my sweet girl for her bravery. Neither of my cats liked being held, so I waited until Weasel became groggy before picking her up. I held her as you'd hold a baby, cradling her in my arms. I talked to her softly, telling her how much I loved her, how much happiness she'd given to John and me. "You have a bad booboo, Weasie. You're not going to get better. Mama doesn't want you to hurt anymore, Sweetie." I stroked her beautiful fur, kissed her forehead, and hugged her to me. And then, as I'd done hundreds of times before, I told her the story I'd made up just for her, when I have just arrived in Highlands.

"Once upon a time, there was a beautiful princess named Louisa, but her family called her "Weasie." She was the most gorgeous princess in the whole kingdom, with her marvelous hair and big green eyes. Princess Weasie was as smart and clever as she was beautiful, and everyone loved her. Everyone, that is, except for a wicked witch, who was jealous of her. In her rage, the witch turned her into a cat, an exceptionally wise and pretty cat. At first, the princess had trouble getting used to walking on all fours, and licking her food from a bowl, but she was so kind and gentle that eventually the other animals took pity on her, befriending her." The great part about this story is that you could make as long or as short as you wanted, depending on how much time you had.

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NC skiing off to record-breaking start

After the unusually warm 2011-12 winter, North Carolina skiing got off to a great season this year when two of the state's six ski areas opened on Halloween!

The NC mountains feature the coldest climates and highest elevations in the South, with temperatures dropping three-to-four degrees with every 1,000-foot rise in elevation. Even when temperatures at lower elevations are hovering in the 50s, NC's ski areas can often make snow.

There are six full-service ski areas with 89 slopes for all abilities, from beginner to Black Diamond, as well as freestyle terrain parks, ice skating, tubing and more. Most North Carolina resorts include conveyor belts and handle pulls to help newbies as they learn to navigate the slopes.

Here's North Carolina's ski areas and other winter sports resorts.

- Appalachian Ski Mtn. – Blowing Rock.
- Beech Mountain and Beech Mountain's Buckeye Recreation Center
- Cataloochee Ski Area – Maggie Valley.
- Sapphire Ski Valley Ski Area – Sapphire.
- Sugar Mountain Resort – Sugar Mountain.
- Wolf Ridge Ski Resort – Mars Hill.
- Hawksnest Snow Tubing and Zipline Course – Seven Devils.
- Jonas Ridge Snow Tubing Park Jonas Ridge.
- Moonshine Mountain Snow Tubing Park – Hendersonville.
- Scaly Mountain Outdoor Center – Scaly Mountain.

... WOOLDRIDGE continued from page 4

thority. But in a state of chaos, who needs badges of authority?"

I liked his idea, so when we finally got back to North Palm Beach after a three day feast-a-thon, I looked over my roster of retired cops and picked out the toughest of the toughest guys. Fortunately, we have a strong organization of retirees who share ideas and old war stories regularly so it was easy for me to pick through the roster.

I picked 12 of my closest allies. Criminals were actually terrified of these guys if you can imagine and I'm proud to have associated with them. The first on my list was my old partner I worked undercover narcotics with. When I called, he was in his hot tub, was weighing in at just under 300

... JUST HERS continued from page 12

Weasel seemed to listen as I told her story, perhaps because she enjoyed hearing her name spoken over and over. By the way, the story ends when a cure comes up for restoring Princess Louisa to human form, but she enjoys being a cat so much, she chooses to stay one. Some women will do anything to avoid dealing with Prince Charming.

I concluded Weasel's story as Dr. Brad came in. He asked if I was ready, and I was. I picked up Weasie's little white paw, held it in my hand, and kissed it. "Oh, Weasie. I'm so sorry. If it's not your time, please forgive me." Dr. Brad shaved a section on Weasel's arm, put on a tourniquet, and gave her the second injection. Shortly after, he leaned over and placed his stethoscope on my precious cat's chest. "She's gone," he said, simply. It was so quiet you could hear a heart breaking. "Go find Papa, Weasel," I said, kissing her one last time. "It's time to go find Papa." I stood up, and handed Weasel over into Dr. Brad's gentle care. I walked out into the waiting room, and threw myself into Jane's arms, sobbing. Her eyes were already red. I checked with the front desk about picking up Weasel's ashes, and walked out into the bright sunlight with my empty cat carrier.

I got home, finding Orion asleep on the couch. He looked up, yawned, and then smelled the front of my sweatshirt. I hadn't realized that Weasel had peed on it. His eyes opened in horror, and he bolted off the sofa, hiding for hours until nightfall. For days, Orion slunk around, either clingy and affectionate, or sullen and aloof. He looked for his Sissie everywhere, exploring every hidey hole, sniffing for any trace of her, in vain. I went to the kitchen, and put Weasel's bowls in the dishwasher. Running the vacuum cleaner on the porch, I found Wea-

sel's favorite toys, and burst into tears. It was awful finding the toy mice, the El Gato catnip cigar, and the plastic balls with the jingle bells inside. "How do you survive the death of a child?" I thought. How does anyone come home to a child's empty room, a bike ridden only days before, a beloved doll propped up on a pillow? If losing a beloved pet is so hard, how does one ever cope with the loss of a child?

Friends have been kind and supportive. No one has said to me, "Oh, she was just a cat." I don't know if I could forgive them if they did. To make me feel better, folks have assured me that just as John is now in a big celestial pub, sharing a pint with Ben Franklin, Weasel is now chasing mice in heaven. Well, it's hardly heaven for the mice, is it?

It's going to be a sad Christmas. Every year, I get a special ornament to remember the year by. I have my Paris Eiffel tower, my New York Statue of Liberty, my wooden buffalo from Colorado. For 2012, I have a special ornament, which just arrived by mail. It's a little angel girl, holding a cat in her arms. I checked out the box to see if the cat has a name. It doesn't, but I'll bet you all the catnip in the world that her name is Weasel.

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pounds. He laughed and said, "I sold my guns." When I hung up, he was still laughing. The second guy I called was the point man on my old SWAT teams. This guy ate nails for breakfast. Now he's eating pabulum in a nursing home.

So look out Highlands 'cause you are it. I'll have to arm myself with antihistamine, probiotics, a dozen hot water bottles and many, many blankets. If you'd like to help with sandbagging around my house, give me a call.

• Note: you can read this silly stuff online all winter. Just go to the newspaper's web site www.highlandsinfo.com and click on local news.

John 3:16

PLACES TO WORSHIP

Proverbs 3:5

BLUE VALLEY BAPTIST CHURCH

Rev. Oliver Rice, Pastor (706) 782-3965
Sundays: School – 10 a.m., Worship – 11
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Wednesdays: Mid-week prayer meeting – 7 p.m.

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Wednesdays: 9 a.m. Healing and Prayer w/Holy Communion

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Rector: Jim Murphy, 252-671-4011

Worshipping at the facilities of Whiteside Presbyterian Church, Cashiers
Sun.: Holy Communion - 9 a.m.; Adult Forum - 10:45 at Buck's Coffee
Cafe, Cashiers

Mon.: Bible Study & Supper at homes - 6 p.m.

Wed.: Men's Bible Study - 8:30 a.m., First Baptist Church

Thurs.: Women's Prayer Group - 10 a.m., Whiteside Presbyterian Church;
Healing Service at noon

CLEAR CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH

Pastor Jim Kinard

Sundays: School – 10 a.m.; Worship – 11

Wednesdays -- 7 p.m.

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Senior Pastor Gary Hewins

Sun.: 9:30 am: Adult Sunday School

10:30 am: Middle School; 10:45 am: Children's Program, . Worship

Service. 12:30 pm Student Arts Group, 5 p.m. HS

Wed.: 6pm: CBC University Program

EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF THE INCARNATION

526-2968 • Reverend Bruce Walker

Sunday: Education for children & adults and choir rehearsal beginning at
9am. Holy Eucharist Rite I-8a; Holy Eucharist Rite II-10:30am in the Main
Nave of the Church.

Monday: 4 p.m. Women's Cursillo Group

Tuesday: 8 a.m. Men's Cursillo Group; Bible Study 10:30 a.m. Reverend
Howard L'Enfant

Thursday: 10 a.m. Holy Eucharist (Chapel)

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

Dr. Charles Harris, Pastor • 526-4153

Sun.: Worship 10:45 a.m.; School – 9:30 a.m.

Wed.: Men's Bible Study 8:30 a.m., Prayer Meeting – 6:15 p.m., Choir – 5
p.m.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Dr. Lee Bo wman, Pastor • 526-3175

Sun.: Worship – 11 a.m.; Sun. 8:30a communion service June-Labor Day;
School – 9:30

Mondays: 8 a.m. – Men's Prayer Group & Breakfast

Wednesdays – Choir – 7

GOLDMINE BAPTIST CHURCH

(Off Franklin/Highlands Rd)

Rev. Carson Gibson

Sunday School – 10 am, Worship Service – 11 am

Bible Study – 6 pm

HIGHLANDS ASSEMBLY OF GOD

Randy Reed, Pastor

828-421-9172 • 165 S. Sixth Street

Sundays: Worship – 11

HIGHLANDS CENTRAL BAPTIST CHURCH

Pastor Dan Robinson

670 N. Fourth Street (next to the Highlands Civic Center)

Sunday: School 9:30 a.m.; Morning Worship 10:45 a.m., Evening
Worship, 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday: Prayer Service, 6:30 p.m.

HIGHLANDS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Pastor Paul Christy 526-3376

Sun: School 9:45a.; Worship 8:30 & 10:50.; Youth Group 5:30 p.
Wed: Supper; 6; 7:15 – children, youth, & adults studies; 6:15 – Adult
choir (nursery provided for Wed. p.m. activities)

Thurs:12:30 – Women's Bible Study (nursery)

HOLY FAMILY LUTHERAN CHURCH – ELCA

Chaplain Margaret Howell

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Sundays: Sunday School and Adult discussion group 9:30 a.m.;
Worship/Communion – 10:30

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Pastor Roy Lowe, (828) 526-8425

Sundays: School – 10 a.m.; Worship – 11

Choir – 6 p.m.

Wed: Bible Study and Youth Mtg. – 7 p.m.

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Wednesdays: Prayer Mtg. – 7 p.m.

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Sundays: School – 10 a.m.; Worship – 10:45 a.m.; Worship – 6 p.m.

Wed: Adult Bible Study & Youth – 7 p.m.

SHORTOFF BAPTIST CHURCH

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Sundays: School – 10 a.m.; Worship – 11

Wednesdays: Prayer & Bible Study – 7

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WHITESIDE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Cashiers, Rev. Sam Forrester, 743-2122

Sundays: School – 10 a.m.; Worship – 11

• SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING •

There is darkness and light



Pastor Paul Christy
Highlands United
Methodist Church

It is hard for me to believe that Christmas 2012 has arrived and we are standing at the eve of another New Year. So I guess we will talk about what we did or didn't get for Christmas, and we may even begin talking about what we are going to differently in a New Year.

Whatever the case might be, the fact is simple, we are going to talk about what could have been or what will be. As I write this article, the country has just witnessed the horror and tragedy of the events in Newtown, Connecticut, and I want to focus on some lessons we can learn and take into a New Year.

First of all, I know that we still are in shock over the events of a gunman walking into a school and killing 27 people, and 20 of them children who had not yet lived life to their potential. We ask ourselves how this can ever happen in our country? There are no words really to write or to say that will ease the pain for hurting families. But I want to reflect on that event and hopefully remind myself of those things that are important and real in life as we move into a New Year.

One of the first questions we always ask is "Why?" "Why did this happen?"

"How could a loving God that preachers talk about all the time allow this to happen?" "Why are so many innocent children taken away from loved ones before they even began to live their lives?" "Where was God when the gunman was shooting?"

Now let me assure you there is no easy answer to the question "Why?" They did not teach me the answer to this at Duke, and I really wish they had. But what I do know is this. We live in a world where we are given the freedom to make choices, and we live in a world where there is darkness and light. And for years we in the church have equated darkness with evil and light with good. (The proverbial good versus evil.)

There are times when it seems that darkness is overtaking the light, but there was a book written long ago that proclaims that darkness can never overtake the light, and that book is the Bible.

On December 14th, for a few minutes darkness was all around in the town of Newtown, and in our country, but that darkness did not last. In fact, when light came it came fast, and it came with grace, comfort and peace.

Again, I firmly believe that God gives us the choice to do good or to do bad. God gives us the choice to love or to

• See SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING page 15

... RE TRANSACTIONS continued from page 10

- 7530991315, VIEW POINT, BROWNE JAMES S, 5/31/2012, \$37,000, \$120,640
- 7551548853, 11 RIDGE LN, STUTZMAN PAMELA, 5/1/2012, 0, \$372,680
- 7551613970, 566 LAKE VILLAS WAY, ANDES JERRY M., 7/27/2012, \$430,000, \$752,060
- 7551518730, OFF 64 & 1404, GRIFFIN HIGHLANDS PR LLC, 10/9/2012, 0, \$534,600
- 7541305576, FLAT MOUNTAIN, MCKENZIE CARRILL D. TR, 8/16/2012, 0, \$102,000
- 7439075291, KETTLE ROCK RD, SULLIVAN CLAUDET, 10/17/2012, \$196,500, \$539,780
- 7439075965, 421 KETTLE ROCK RD, SULLIVAN CLAUDET, 10/17/2012, \$770,000, \$1,116,290
- 7449319485, 335 SATULAH FALLS LN, MOYE WILLIAM A., 10/9/2012, \$560,000, \$737,800
- 7551627520, 21 HEMLOCK LN, GOOGE ELISE WHITAKER, 1/10/2012, 0, \$647,330
- 7541410620, HENRY WRIGHT DR, KENT PETER E, 6/20/2012, 0, \$376,990
- 7541412134, LOT 10 PRIMEVAL EST, TAYLOR NANCY B TRUSTEE, 8/30/2012, 0, \$158,060
- 7541420196, 365 HENRY WRIGHT RD, KENT STEPHEN W, 6/20/2012, 0, \$2,064,860
- 7449421623, SATULAH FALLS RD, HARBISON ANN, 10/5/2012, 0, \$753,840
- 7459674546, HORSE COVE RD, MCCALL CAROLYN, 3/12/2012, \$125,000, \$241,130
- 7459675949, 400 COVE DR, MCCALL CAROLYN, 3/29/2012, \$135,000, \$217,290
- 7551717594, 396 AZALEA LN, FRANKLIN ANDREA W., 7/12/2012, \$300,000, \$340,190
- 7551301178, 330 CRESCENT TRL, BOLLINGER PATRICIA S TR, 5/7/2012, 0, \$1,050,530

• See RE TRANSACTIONS page 16

... SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING continued from 14

hate, and God gives us the choice to help others or to be self serving. The point is we have a choice, and there are those who will choose to bring harm to others and those who choose to bring healing. That gunman chose to bring harm, but there were many who chose to bring healing.

I do believe that I saw a lot of light in the midst of darkness in Newtown when I saw people willing to risk their loves to save others. I saw light in a teacher who when interviewed said she gathered all her children in her class and told them she loved them and their parents loved them, and she would be there with them, no matter what. She told a news reporter that if that was the last thing those children were to hear, she wanted them to know they were loved.

I saw light in the face of a first-grader who, when interviewed, said, "I didn't know what was happening, but trusted the teacher knew what to do;" then she smiled and was missing her two front teeth.

I saw light by all the people who came to help, fire fighters, officers, EMS workers, doctors, counselors and clergy, who

were willing to be there with hurting families and offer support and comfort.

What this tells me is simply this: darkness does not have the final word. It may seem that evil is winning for a moment, but the human spirit and the light out shines any darkness.

What lessons can we take into the New Year from this tragedy? I hope that in a New Year filled with new potential and possibility that we will choose to live our lives bringing hope and grace to others.

I hope that in a New Year we will choose to tell others we love and appreciate them. I hope that in a New Year we will take every opportunity to bring light and love to others. because it is easy to look at the world and say, "there is nothing we can do to overcome darkness." But there is. We can make a difference one person at a time. Remember, we all have a choice to bring hope or to give up, we have the choice to love or hate, and we have a choice to bring light or darkness.

Who knows, maybe some time when others may ask "Why?" you might just be the light that shines in darkness.

I wish you all a Happy New Year and may we all be a light to others we meet.

This is the end of year combination issue for Dec. 27/ Jan. 3. The next edition for Highlands Newspaper will be on the streets and on the web at www.highlandsinfo.com click Local News on Jan. 10.



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... RE TRANSACTIONS continued from page 15

- 7551301623, LOT 286A CULLASAJA CL, HOTT STEPHEN DOYLE, 8/7/2012, \$11,000, \$213,840
- 7551506367, 285 GARNET ROCK TRL, BUCHANAN MICHAEL R TR, 2/27/2012, 0, \$1,272,670
- 7551517711, 80 LAKE CT, GRIFFIN HIGHLANDS PR LLC, 10/9/2012, 0, \$1,908,480
- 7541310889, 175 KENRIDGE LN, FLOWER WALTER C III, 3/8/2012, \$1,710,000, \$2,018,070
- 7541320104, 157 KENRIDGE LN, MOORE HELEN WHALEY, 2/14/2012, \$400,000, \$808,610

- 7541328246, HENRY WRIGHT DR, KENT STEPHEN W, 6/20/2012, 0, \$27,200
- 7541418734, HENRY WRIGHT, SMITH WILLIAM RICHARD SR., 6/28/2012, 0, \$185,570
- 7459672193, 144 COVE DR, MCCALL CAROLYN, 8/15/2012, \$390,000, 766,640
- 7551714240, ON RD 1600, PURDUM ROBERT, 7/3/2012, \$450,000, \$32,440
- 7531265054, FLAT MOUNTAIN RD, RHODES MICHAEL B, 8/24/2012, \$48,000, \$266,790
- 7439265672, 11 RUSSELL RDG, WALSH ANTHONY P, 10/19/2012, 0, \$932,650
- 7541523148, CHENEY LN, CALLOWAY JAMES L, 8/14/2012, 0, \$72,030
- 7551414353, 131 RAVENEL PT, WEAVER HERBERT B. JR TR, 8/27/2012, 0, \$2,023,070
- 7551445871, OFF RD 64, LAVIN PATRICK J, 8/8/2012, \$50,000, \$150,660
- 7551454073, 15 E FOREST WAY, MORRISON MICHAEL R., 7/27/2012, \$400,000, \$544,560
- 7438983882, CLEAR CREEK RD, HOUSTON BARBARA A. TR, 8/17/2012, 0, \$196,580
- 7449229105, 191 VALENTINE LN, BENNETT SHERRY D., 9/21/2012, 0, \$451,330
- 7551515769, LOT 7 CULLASAJA CLUB, GRIFFIN HIGHLANDS PR LLC, 10/9/

• See RE TRANSACTIONS page 17

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... RE TRANSACTIONS continued from page 16

2012, 0, \$510,300

- 7459559965, 4265 HORSE COVE RD, RICHARDS CHARLES E JR, 6/1/2012, 0, \$1,481,700

- 7551616103, 206 LAKE VILLAS WAY, WILLIAMS LAGENE C, 6/28/2012, 0, \$1,103,190

- 7449401705, 444 OLD ORCHARD RD, COPELAND JAMES R, 6/15/2012, \$450,000, \$667,370

- 7459661753, HORSE COVE RD, MCCALL CAROLYN, 2/17/2012, \$135,000, \$211,410

- 7531260085, FLAT MOUNTAIN RD, CURRY PAULINE D, 9/18/2012, \$315,500, \$359,100

- 7439250282, 480 MOON MOUNTAIN RD, BMO HARRIS BANK NA, 8/28/2012, \$974,000, \$1,333,180

- 7541413155, FLAT MOUNTAIN, TAYLOR NANCY B TRUSTEE, 8/30/2012, 0, \$120,930

- 7541414156, FLAT MTN RD, TAYLOR NANCY B TRUSTEE, 8/30/2012, 0, \$117,400

- 7551711517, 394 LAKE VILLAS WAY, BLUE SKY WAY LLC, 4/27/2012, \$400,000, \$914,130

- 7551713133, 214 OAK PT, PURDUM ROBERT, 7/3/2012, \$450,000, \$441,710

- 7550063688, 105 RIVER CT, LANIER JAMES A JR, 2/29/2012, 0, \$861,930

- 7550161834, 2075 CULLASAJA CL. DR, MAXWELL ANITA K, 3/7/2012, 0, \$4,303,610

- 7439452024, 41 CARDWELL EATON RD, EUBANK JAMES O. II, 7/24/2012, 0, \$920,510

- 7541745771, 420 SHORTOFF RD, EDWARDS MOZELLED, 1/4/2012, 0, \$421,940

- 7541756416, 137 NORTON RIDGE RD, JWM PROPERTIES INC., 8/16/2012, \$1,800,000, \$2,063,460

- 7541774798, 65 EAGLE RIDGE DR, LAMM DIANE TRUSTEE, 6/12/2012, 0, \$686,130

- 7541786940, 1584 SHORTOFF RD, WATSON JACQUELYN P, 4/17/2012, 0, \$576,190

- 7541799157, OFF RD 1540 SHORTOFF, WATSON JACQUELYN P, 4/17/2012, 0, \$225,700

- 7541606809, 84 HOMER POTTS RD, SUTTON NANCYN, 2/8/2012, 0, \$340,250

- 7551864501, EASTOVER DRIVE, RBC NEXGEN LLC, 9/14/2012, 0, \$102,490

- 7541649076, 205 SHORTOFF RD, BENZ HOWARD MCSHAN, 9/25/2012, \$420,000, \$708,270

- 7439447995, 310 CARDWELL EATON, SMITH GENA LATIMER, 6/26/2012, 0, \$2,315,910

- 7439458970, 124 WHETSTONE DR, MOSSLANDS INC, 9/18/2012, 0, \$505,180

- 7541744137, 365 SHORTOFF RD, SICKINGER CHARLENE F TR, 1/3/2012, 0, \$717,950

- 7448028547, 315 BLUE VALLEY RD, MCALL ROBERT EDWARD IRA, 8/15/2012, 0, \$81,270

- 7541782739, SHORTOFF, WATSON JACQUELYN P, 4/17/2012, 0, \$323,990

- 7541824270, 3340 CASHIERS RD, SIBLEY QUINTUS W, 1/25/2012, \$300,000, \$398,020

- 7439579299, 76 LOG BRIDGE CIR, DYKES BROOKS CUNNINGHAM, 9/7/2012, \$397,500, \$619,230

- 7541834156, BUCKBERRY, CHANCY MARK A., 8/17/2012, \$64,000, \$123,380

- 7541835049, BUCKBERRY, CHANCY MARK A., 8/17/2012, \$640,000, \$118,890

- 7439589094, 200 UPPER CAR HILL DR, BONHAM JAMES D., 10/29/2012, \$1,750,000, \$1,113,350

- 7551739665, 240 HICKORY LANE, WILDCAT CLIFFS CC INC, 1/13/2012, 0, \$10,135,310

- 7439279810, 31 CABE P, FREEMAN CENTER CONDO ASSO, 3/12/2012, 0, \$108,400

- 7550046817, 1427 FALLS DR E, ELLIOTT RONALD E, 2/24/2012, \$750,000, \$1,284,210

- 7550047565, 1441 FALLS DR W, NEALE CHARLES A., 9/4/2012, \$425,000, \$592,730

• See RE TRANSACTIONS page 18



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... RE TRANSACTIONS continued from page 17

- 7550158567, 1513 FALCON RDG, HAMRICH ROBERT H, 6/27/2012, \$625,000, \$1,003,110
- 7550177110, 115 FALLS CT W, RAJCZAK WILLIAM MICHAEL, 9/28/2012, \$725,000, \$1,671,510
- 7439464363, 59 THORNHILL RD, CHAMPION THOMAS DALLIS, 4/3/2012, \$385,000, \$701,980
- 7541750432, 188 NORTON RIDGE RD, NAYLOR KEVIN M, 8/28/2012, 0, \$1,867,670
- 7550272345, 150 RIVERVIEW CT, RAYMOND CRAIG W. TRUSTEE, 9/21/2012, 0, \$878,980
- 7541780493, 1322 SHORTOFF RD, ROYAL CHARLES A, 6/12/2012, \$607,500, \$918,220
- 7448055529, 2797 CLEAR CREEK RD, HOUSTON BARBARA A TRUSTEE, 8/17/2012, 0, \$234,010

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- 7531607185, 500 COTSWALD WAY, FIRST CITIZENS BANK & TRUST CO, 8/14/2012, \$774,000, \$1,483,310
- 7541836033, 336 BUCKBERRY RD, CHANCY MARK A., 8/17/2012, \$640,000, \$1,287,290
- 7541902801, 1100 CLAIRE LN, COLEMAN BRIAN, 5/14/2012, \$225,000, \$393,310
- 7541902964, CASHIERS RD, LUSK EDWIN L, 5/2/2012, \$51,000, \$173,500
- 7541903978, 304 WOODLAND RIGE RD, LUSK EDWIN L, 5/2/2012, \$500,000, \$780,810
- 7541911194, 268 WOODLAND RIGE RD, BRADSHAW CHARLES A, 6/29/2012, \$630,000, \$910,890
- 7541911657, CASHIERS RD, DYER CHRIS TOWNSEND TR, 8/8/2012, \$45,000, \$174,170
- 7429449697, BLUE VALLEY FALLS DR, REPLOGLE MARK, 1/13/2012, \$227,500, \$251,600
- 7531705136, OFF 1544, HELMS RAY DOUGLAS JR, 5/25/2012, \$100,000, \$274,720
- 7550489549, 95 WEST VIEW WAY, LATHAM WILLIAM C, 9/7/2012, 0, \$1,102,750
- 7541977896, SHORTOFF RD, CRISP JUDITH ELIZABETH, 9/26/2012, 0, \$103,460
- 7541978567, 2075 SHORTOFF RD, CRISP JUDITH ELIZABETH, 9/26/2012, 0, \$290,180
- 7448253269, GALAXY DR, DOUCETTE TODD, 7/11/2012, 0, \$295,750
- 7531803573, 579 FLAT MNT EST. RD, EUSTIS HERBERT L. III, 8/24/2012, 0, \$1,048,700
- 7541536528, 104 CHENEY LN, ARNOLD DAVID G, 9/14/2012, \$221,000, \$295,460
- 7449540996, 900 SATULAH RD, BALDWIN BRYAN L, 2/16/2012, 0, \$7,704,750
- 7439377488, 445 GLEN FALLS RD 22, WILLOUGHBY KATHERINE S, 2/14/2012, \$120,000, \$190,750
- 7550153940, 193 FALLS CT, BRANCH BANKING & TRUST CO, 6/15/2012, \$1,000,000, \$1,141,560
- 7550163930, LOT 230 CULLASAJA CLUB, MAXWELL ANITA K, 2/15/2012, 0, \$253,600
- 7541689682, 1304 SHORTOFF RD, SCHIFFLI SUSAN DEVILLE, 8/22/2012, 0, \$103,460
- 7439443775, 79 PEACE MOUNTAIN RD, RING CARL D, 5/4/2012, \$575,000, \$530,430
- 7439462224, BROADVIEW CIR, CONEY ROBERT D, 2/23/2012, \$45,000, \$198,100
- 7551943001, 111 WHITESIDE MTN RD, MCGARITY JOHN MICHAEL, 10/8/2012, \$295,000, \$808,460
- 7448094342, 1555 CLEAR CREEK RD, WAISANEN TARA TR, 5/21/2012, 0, \$189,430
- 7439660647, 608 HOLT RD, PODZINSKI JACQUELINE, 6/8/2012, \$310,000, \$508,370
- 7550483003, 229 WEST VIEW WAY, DENBESTEN KRIS A, 5/25/2012, \$670,000, \$1,223,770
- 7541807843, 70 OAK RD, PITTMAN MARCUSH, 10/15/2012, \$200,000, \$413,060
- 7439563673, 415 HOLT RD, LARD LAWSON A III, 9/14/2012, \$600,000, \$1,151,100
- 7448092989, 1439 CLEAR CREEK RD, HAMMOND A CULLEN, 6/5/2012, \$113,500, \$149,490
- 7540198302, JACK WILCOX RD, SNYDER DONNA LOUISE, 10/5/2012, 0, \$1,059,030
- 7541966252, 184 FOREST TRL, COLLETTE JOHN, 4/30/2012, \$12,500, \$697,950
- 7541975597, SHORTOFF, CRISP JUDITH ELIZABETH, 9/26/2012, 0, \$88,630
- 7550496935, 709 CULLASAJA CLUB DR, MCLAUGHLIN EDWIN JOSEPH, 8/14/2012, \$446,500, \$1,454,780
- 7550497022, 864 CULLASAJA CLUB DR, MANGUM CHRIS D, 7/30/2012, \$1,250,000, \$1,215,500
- 7540272831, 386 BONNIE DR, GAMBLE JAMES E TRUSTEE, 10/25/2012, 0, \$463,000
- 7458512272, ROCK HOUSE RD, WAY, T JAMES T., 9/25/2012, \$23,000, \$193,310

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... RE TRANSACTIONS continued from page 18

- 7448427882, MACK WILSON RD, SCHIFFLI JOHN ROBERT JR, 10/3/2012, 0, \$148,480
- 7540483006, 25 RUSSELL LN, TAYLOR JULIA RUSSELL, 10/23/2012, 0, \$404,260
- 7520055612, 221 SHADOW CREEK LN, COLLINS JIMMIE L., 10/8/2012, 0, \$255,030
- 7540195021, 165 JACK WILCOX RD, SNYDER ALAN NEWELL, 10/5/2012, 0, \$92,530
- 7541971289, FOREST TRAIL, C, RISP MICHAEL A., 9/26/2012, 0, \$389,540
- 7550493142, 909 CULLASAJA CLUB DR, YEARY RICHARD C JR TR, 5/1/2012, 0, \$755,010
- 7448258133, ELM DR., CLAXTON JOSEPH Z, 4/2/2012, \$13,000, \$47,730
- 7550594574, LOT 59 CULLASAJA CLUB, PALMISANO ANTHONY P, 10/16/2012, \$95,000, \$171,080
- 7540379803, 22 RUSSELL LN, KIRKLAND JOHN R, 3/22/2012, 0, \$210,350
- 7540392632, JACK WILCOX RD, ALLEN JACKSON M., 10/11/2012, 0, \$2,659,050
- 7531913780, 155 STRAWBERRY LN, BLOOM E MARTIN, 3/22/2012, \$180,000, \$347,100
- 7458638194, 1640 ROCK HOUSE RD, BAREFOOT OF HIGHLANDS LLC, 1/3/2012, 0, \$994,610
- 7458721626, ROCK HOUSE RD, DEAKLE JOHN M., 1/3/2012, 0, \$32,780
- 7530310311, VISTA CT, BENNETT RICHARD A, 3/2/2012, 0, \$400,000
- 7530311067, VISTA CT, WARNER C WILBUR, 3/2/2012, 0, \$400,000
- 7530311568, VISTA CT, HINES W JACKSON, 3/2/2012, 0, \$250,000
- 7542314492, 8789 BUCK CREEK RD, HAMMOND JOHN C, 7/16/2012, 0, \$224,720
- 7542315054, 8875 BUCK CREEK RD, CL BARBER & C BARBER LT, 1/3/2012, 0, \$143,920
- 7520183395, 18 MCCALLUM ALL. RD, ALLISON RICHARD A TR, 6/14/2012, 0, \$1,289,800
- 7448319912, 95 JENKINS LN, TEW DONNA HULL, 8/7/2012, \$58,000, \$233,410
- 7530200903, 44 FALLING WATER DR, RICHARDSON WILLIAM T, 3/29/2012, \$15,000, \$912,680
- 7531905460, 91 BEARFOOT LN, FINE CLARK D, 3/30/2012, \$605,000, \$845,530
- 7531906093, 360 VIEW POINT RD, BRODSKY NEIL M TRUSTEE, 9/27/2012, 0, \$582,030
- 7531924106, 80 FLAT MTN EST RD, RAY ZONA K, 2/2/2012, 0, \$194,880
- 7542227731, 80 LOST HORSE TRL, ROBERT ALICE BIRNEY WALKER, 9/21/2012, \$135,000, \$134,460
- 7540566116, 509 CROWE DR, STRATTON DAVID, 10/1/2012, \$140,000, \$262,040
- 7542304781, BUCK CREEK RD, CL BARBER & C BARBER LT, 1/3/2012, 0, \$61,800
- 7448579380, 68 HIDDEN SPRINGS WAY, YOUNG STEPHEN T, 4/30/2012, \$130,000, \$283,000
- 7542316924, BUCK CREEK RD, PHILLIPS GEORGE TR, 8/16/2012, 0, \$199,300
- 7448327178, 400 CARL CHASTAIN LN, MCCALL DANIEL L, 8/24/2012, 0, \$51,000
- 7448346947, 5281 WALHALLA RD, DLJ MORTGAGE CAPITAL INC, 4/20/2012, 0, \$244,180
- 7540376637, 22 MTN MOORINGS DR, SLAGLE JOHN., 10/19/2012, \$70,000, \$187,030
- 7540376639, MT MOORING DR, SLAGLE LAURA SEYS, 7/25/2012, \$75,000, \$184,850
- 7540377512, 66 MTN MOORINGS DR, CHANDLER NANCY P, 4/30/2012, 0, \$483,810
- 7531902179, OFF RD 1544, KEENER DON ALLAN TRUSTEE, 10/23/2012, 0, \$183,600
- 7530216148, HIDE AWAY HL, SCBT NA, 9/5/2012, 0, \$125,000
- 7530218093, HIDE AWAY HL, SCBT NA, 7/27/2012, \$165,000, \$125,000
- 7530218164, HIDE AWAY HL, SCBT NA, 7/27/2012, \$165,000, \$125,000
- 7530218206, HIDE AWAY HL, SCBT NA, 7/27/2012, \$165,000, \$125,000
- 7530218498, VISTA CT, HINES W JACKSON, 3/2/2012, 0, \$400,000

- 7542227012, 608 COLE MOUNTAIN CIR, DANIEL RALPH L., 8/28/2012, 0, \$353,660
- 7540564607, 90 NANTAHALA LN, NORICALA PROPERTIES LLC, 4/30/2012, \$183,000, \$574,510
- 7530312414, VISTA CT, BENNETT RICHARD A, 3/2/2012, 0, \$250,000
- 7530323270, VISTA RD, WARNER C WILBUR JR, 3/2/2012, 0, \$200,000
- 7540582970, 1180 HICKS RD, MCCORMICK MEGAN, 7/24/2012, \$5,000, \$945,350
- 7448573159, 130 HIDDEN SPRINGS RD, MARXER HUGO E, 7/16/2012, 0, \$422,840
- 7542320590, BUCK CREEK RD, PHILLIPS GEORGE TR, 8/16/2012, 0, \$70,560

Flats/Scaly Township**Jan. 1, 2012 - Dec. 6, 2012****PIN, PROP_ADDR, OWNER_NAME, DATE_REC, SALES_PRICE, ASSED._VAL**

- 7408127253, CREEKSIDE COVE, DELTA SOURCE TRADING INC, 6/7/2012, 0, \$100,000
- 7408127472, CREEKSIDE COVE, CREEKSIDE CV PRPTY OWNRS, 9/28/2012, 0, \$30,600
- 7418558992, 956 LAKESIDE RD, GIMBY IRMGARD E, 4/2/2012, 0, \$514,340
- 7408727560, OFF RD 1626, JOLLAY THOMAS L, 3/12/2012, 0, \$51,380
- 7419006551, 227 DRYMAN RIDGE RD, COURTNEY PAMELA L, 1/25/2012, \$50,000, \$85,900
- 7408790692, 230 RAVEN RIDGE RD, FERRARA DEBRA ANN, 4/20/2012, 0, \$269,980
- 7419138159, 148 BELLWOOD DR, BETANCUR JUAN DAVID, 6/5/2012, \$180,000, \$320,730
- 7419164220, 357 MILLER RD, MCKEE DAVID W, 1/4/2012, \$152,000, \$186,300
- 7419279332, BOB LONG MOUNTAIN RD, BROOKS JESSICA RENEE, 8/28/2012, 0, \$25,670
- 7419314340, 280 EASTSIDE DUCK MTN RD NEFF FREDERICK, 1/9/2012, 0, \$137,860
- 7419412589, 97 CHAPIN RD, HEEKIN JAMES F JR, 7/24/2012, 0, \$145,780
- 7419412886, 70 EASTSIDE DUCK MTN, HUDSON JERRY, 9/18/2012, \$140,000, \$140,620
- 7409238674, 22682269 HIGHLAND GAP, NEELY ALAN SANDERS, 2/16/2012, 0, \$1,271,100
- 7418010931, 274 NIX RD, NIX TRAVIS ALLEN, 5/16/2012, 0, \$267,370
- 7418023351, NIX RD, NIX JEFFREY NEAL, 5/16/2012, 0, \$112,050
- 7409749926, 207 SHOAL CREEK RD, MARSHALL SHELLEY M., 8/2/2012, \$155,000, \$251,590
- 7409750115, 326 CHESTNUT MTN RD, ELEANORS RETREAT LLC, 5/14/2012, 0, \$573,360
- 7408125406, CREEKSIDE COVE, B&D INDUSTRIAL & MINING INC, 8/24/2012, \$180,000, \$409,970
- 7408126431, 74 CREEKSIDE COVE N, B&D INDUSTRIAL & MINING INC, 9/27/2012, 0, \$100,000
- 6498331257, CHASTAIN RD, SILLER-BILLINGSLEY RES. TR, 7/9/2012, 0, \$41,310
- 6498341097, 1262 CHASTAIN RD, SILLER-BILLINGSLEY RES. TR, 7/9/2012, 0, \$1,204,290
- 6498428067, 436 CHASTAIN RD, BILLINGSLEY CHARLES DARRELL, 3/8/2012, 0, \$185,080
- 7500601778, 654 EVANS CREEK RD, THOMAS MYCHAEL, 9/21/2012, \$70,500, \$304,840
- 7408828331, OFF 1626, FRANKLIN BARBI COLEMAN, 8/28/2012, 0, \$154,210
- 7419303063, 141 ROCKLEDGE RD, HARPER DONNA MARIE, 8/28/2012, 0, \$71,270
- 7419439482, 21 EAST VIEW RD, LADD CHRISTINE ROBITSCHER, 9/21/2012, 0, \$341,600

... YEAR IN REVIEW continued from page 1

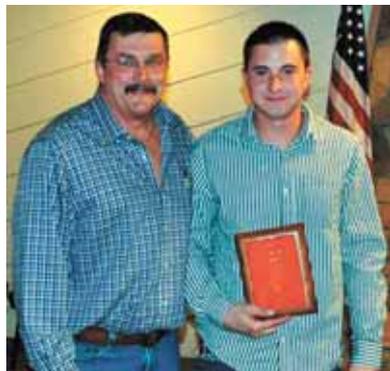
the improvement of Highlands' Wayfar-ing signage system.



• Form of government discussed ...again. At the Tuesday, Jan. 3 Town Board meeting, the issue of Highlands' form of government was brought up again, almost a year after it was first brought up in 2011. Based on the information presented by Carl Stenberg with the UNC-Chapel Hill School of Government at the Jan. 8 special Town Board meeting, the easiest way to align Highlands' current form of government – hybrid Council-Manager – with the state charter, was through a Local Act. The board takes the information under advisement and asks Town Attorney Bill Coward to investigate further.



- Board OK's 21% electric rate hike effective immediately.
- USFS closing Dry Falls for repairs April-Sept 2012
- Saturday, Jan. 21, was the annual Fire & Rescue Dept. Awards Dinner held at the Community Building and catered by The Sports Page. Fire Captain Matthew Wilson, was named Fireman of the Year and also recognized for perfect attendance.



- 7-Station Dialysis Unit OK'd for Macon County
- Signature Properties joins Meadow Mountain Realty
- A Greenway boardwalk is proposed through Mirror Lake. Hillrie Quin, the face and voice of the Highlands Plateau Greenway, proposed a boardwalk complete with "classroom" hubs, a canoe dock and storage area constructed along the part of Mirror Lake surrounded by Cullasaja Drive. He

gets tepid response from the Town Board.

• The NC Small Town Main Street Program for Highlands is asks for public participation in its Branding and Wayfinding project for the Town. Participation involves filling out questionnaires.

February

• After 7 years USFS decides to allow boating on Upper Chattooga corridor. This begins a year-long volley between those for boating and those against boating.



• Saturday night, Highlands School Basketball and Golf Coach Butch Smart was thrown a community-wide retirement party in between the girls and boys basketball game in Highlands School gym. Current and alumnae players and coaches were there to honor him, as were players and coaches he worked with in Louisiana prior to coming to Highlands 16 years ago. Smart is retiring at the end of this school year and he and his wife Judy will move to Ruston, LA, where they are building a house to fit the leather recliner the Highlands School

Booster Club gave him as a parting gift – an easy chair.

• Conservation groups claim Chattooga River at risk from U.S. Forest Service decision about boating on Upper Chattooga, and so the debate goes.

• A passionate discussion initiated by Commissioner Amy Patterson, asked why the subject was being discussed 11 months after the 3-2 vote on March 16, 2011 to keep the hybrid form of the Council-Manager where the Police Chief and Zoning/Planning Director were hired and fired by the board rather than the manager. Commissioner Gary Drake, who has made no bones as to which form of government he wants, said the reason the issue was being discussed again was because the town is operating illegally under the town's current charter. On Commissioner Drake's motion, the board voted 3-2 to repeal the amendments made to the town's ordinance concerning the Police Chief and Zoning/Planning Director so the ordinance is aligned with the state charter. Commissioners John Dotson and Patterson voted "no." At this point, the board must decide if it wants to keep the Council-Manager form of government. The final vote would be taken in March.

• Macon County Sheriff's officers were dispatched to a residence in Highlands on February 2 at approximately 6 p.m. regarding two unattended deaths. The bodies of Kenneth Simmons, age 71, and Frances Harriet Simmons, age 71, were discovered in the residence on Hog Back

• See YEAR IN REVIEW page 21

... RE TRANSACTIONS continued from page 19

- 7418026102, NIX RD, NIX JEFFREY NEAL, 5/16/2012, 0, \$112,050
- 7408114896, CREEKSIDE COVE, B&D INDUSTRIAL & MINING INC, 9/4/2012, \$55,000, \$100,000
- 7409958146, 881 BUCK KNOB RD, DRYMAN TIMOTHY WARREN, 6/19/2012, 0, \$55,580
- 7419010723, OFF BROWN LAKE RD, BARNASKEY JUDITH C., 8/17/2012, \$70,000, \$70,000
- 7419031602, ON RD 1622, BILLINGSLEY CHARLES DARRELL, 3/8/2012, 0, \$243,000
- 7419132383, OFF RD 1622, NEUMANN JEANNIE, 5/14/2012, 0, \$55,080
- 7409275671, NATURAL BRIDGE RD, SICILIANO GERARD M, 5/15/2012, 0, \$199,670
- 7419541760, 315 KING CIR, BARNETT C KEITH, 2/10/2012, \$580,000, \$788,810
- 7409338073, HIGHLAND GAP RD, SCOGGINS KENNETH W., 10/22/2012, 93,000, \$111,380
- 7409276789, NATURAL BRIDGE RD, KAB BENJIAN HOVANESS, 5/15/2012, 0, \$199,670
- 7419535128, 551 KING GAP RD, WALKER JANET T, 8/8/2012, \$560,000, \$955,020
- 7419554520, 66 GALAX CIR, GAFFEY JAMES E., 8/3/2012, \$283,500, \$357,900
- 7419644899, 1135 KING GAP RD, SCHENCK DAVID TUTTLE TR, 3/12/2012, 0, \$466,320

- 7409240887, 580 NATURAL BRIDGE RD, CAMPBELL CHARLES RAY TR, 8/16/2012, 0, \$1,336,720
- 7419480382, 555 BOB LONG MTN RD, LARSEN CHRISTIAN PETER, 8/30/2012, \$635,000, \$464,050
- 7409647472, ON RD 1622, JOHNSTON NAOMI, 8/21/2012, 0, \$88,880
- 7409711212, 724 BROWNS MTN RD, TUBRIDY DAVID B, 5/31/2012, \$237,000, \$181,690
- 7418249675, 515 HIGHPOINT DR, OUTSTANDING PROPERTIES LLC, 8/1/2012, \$122,500, \$489,030
- 7409757184, 251 SHOAL CREEK RD, AULISIO BRIAN, 7/2/2012, 0, \$152,220
- 7409757317, 26 RUNKEN LN, HENDERSON ERNEST R, 6/28/2012, \$75,000, \$114,080
- 7418367745, 149 OSAGE LN, GUTHRIE ANDREW, 5/11/2012, \$70,000, \$170,000
- 7408716849, OFF RD 1626, LANDERS ANNE J, 9/27/2012, 0, \$61,300
- 7408739828, OFF RD 1626, LANDERS ANNE J, 9/27/2012, 0, \$81,500
- 7408864865, 110 RITCHIE RD, BILLINGSLEY CHARLES DARRELL, 3/8/2012, 0, \$145,600
- 7419112019, 7441 DILLARD RD RD, RABUN COUNTY BANK, 1/11/2012, \$240,000, \$348,920
- 7419640237, 41 ROCK HILL RD, SCOTT NANCY J TR, 4/5/2012, 0, \$712,900

... YEAR IN REVIEW continued from page 20

Mountain Lane by two family members who also reside at the residence. It was a murder/suicide.

- Town Board discusses right-turn-only lanes at Third and Main Streets.

- Highlands School basketball teams win Conference Championships.

- 100 citizens turn out for historic county commission meeting on Valentine's Day to about two hot topics which were amendments to the county's Planning Board and Subdivision ordinances.

- Highlands gets new fire rating which might decrease insurance premiums for certain homeowners.

- The Presbyterian Church's memorial garden/park is a go. At the Feb. 7 Town Board meeting, both commissioners and First Presbyterian representatives agreed to "sleep" on the 99-year lease option versus abandonment of the triangular piece of property left when Fifth Street was moved from its original position to his current position – property the church has already been using with permission from the town. In the end commissioners agree to abandon the property.

- The Macon County Schools' calendar continues to be a point of contention between some parents and school board members. At the Monday, Feb. 27 Board of Education meeting, Superintendent Dr. Dan Brigman presented the proposed calendar which he said was picked by staff and stakeholders and includes the new mandated 185 school days – up from 180 school days. Those opposed to the calendar don't like the early start date – The first day of school would be Monday, Aug. 6 and the last day would be Friday, May 24.



- The public is invited to the Police Department Open House and Tour located on Oak Street next to The Highlands Playhouse, Saturday, Feb. 25 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. the story-and-a-half, 3,000 sq. ft. building with a conference/training room, interview rooms, a locker room, evidence vault, kitchenette, administrative offices and public areas.

- Candidates line up for 2012 race - Primary is May 8. Candidates are: Macon County Commission: Jim Tate, Kevin

Corbin, Paul Higdon, Rick Higdon, Bobby Kupperts and Rick Snyder.

March

- Jury finds former Old Edwards Hospitality Group's CEO Mario Gomes guilty on wire fraud charges.

- Hybrid form of Highlands Town Government where the Town Board has hiring and firing authority over the Police Chief and the Planning Director is on block March 20. Highlands' form of government continues to be a controversial issue between commissioners and among the citizenry. At the Tuesday, March 6 Town Board meeting Town Attorney Bill Coward walked commissioners through the process to align Highlands' government with the state charter for the Council- Manager form.



- On Tuesday, March 6, Hillrie Quin received the Duke Volunteer of the Year award from Fred Alexander of Duke Power. Quin was recognized for his work on the Highlands Greenway system over the past five years. Over the years Quin and his crew of volunteers have resurrected and expanded the Greenway system by improving trails, building bridges and steps thereby making the system safe and passable.

- Highlands School students take on Boston for a hands-on American History lesson.

- Citizens living in the vicinity of Chowan Road will have to change their routines as of Friday, March 23. The road will be closed — possibly for as long as six months – while town officials find out what it's going to take to repair the embankment which is falling away. The road is still closed.



- The discussion about the two sides of

boating on the Upper Chattooga continues. USFS ready for boaters on Upper Chattooga when physical conditions are right. Conservation groups file appeal of Forest Service's plan to allow boating on the Upper Chattooga.



- Highlands youth teams make history with undefeated seasons.



- The 2012-'13 Macon County school calendar is adopted. School starts first week in August and is out in May.

- At its March 8 retreat where a course was set to cut costs and raise revenue for the town, commissioners discussed the likelihood of doing away with 100% family insurance coverage for employees in 25% increments over a four-year period. The issue was discussed at subsequent Town Board meetings.

- It's official: NO BOATING allowed on Upper Chattooga

April



- Macon County's Board of Education braces for more funding cuts from the state.

- USFS closes Dry Falls until September while it repairs and renovates the pathways down to the falls.

- Georgia DOT initiates a detour to Highlands while the bridge over the Little Tennessee River on SR 246 is being repaired. Scenic 3-mile detour to 441 begins.

- Seniors Issac Beavers and Stephanie Smart were crowned King and Queen at the prom Saturday, April 21 in Coleman Hall at the Presbyterian Church.

- Town considers getting into the fiber business to raise revenue.

- The Macon County Board of Education faces funding challenges for FY 2012-'13 due to state cuts.

May

- Philanthropist Jane Woodruff keeps citizens updated on new Post Office progress.

- Highlands Playhouse gets \$100,000 from the Winkler family. Money is earmarked for physical repairs and renovations. By year's end that changed. About half the money was used for other things but a local, unnamed builder came to the rescue offering to repair and renovate the structure for free so Playhouse can use remaining Winkler money and other funds for other things.

- Unsightly fencing that popped up along Highlands' corridors initiates discussion and finally an ordinance regulating fencing. Lighting is included in discussion and ultimate ordinance.

- Macon County Schools Superintendent Dr. Dan Brigman announces his resignation as of June 30, 2012. He accepted a position of Superintendent of Schools for Catawba County.

- MC Commission incumbents take race. This year's primary election was full of contenders, and at the county level the incumbents won out. – Rep. Kevin Corbin, Dem. Bobby Kupperts and Rep Jim Tate. The only commissioner to face an opponent Nov. 6 will be Kupperts who campaigned against Rep. Paul Higdon.

- Ex-police officer Erika Olvera was glad to be moving on after 2010 sexual harassment case against the town. Citizens won't be hearing anymore concerning the messy and very public 2010 sexual harassment, gender and race discrimination case against the town. The town of Highlands, agreed to the settlement paid to Erika Olvera by Traveler's Insurance – the town's insurance company – for \$30,000. This officially closes the discrimination case filed with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunities Commission by former police officer Olvera.

- Macon County Superintendent Dr. Dan Brigman's interim successor in Dr. Jim Duncan.

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... YEAR IN REVIEW continued from page 21

- Edwin and Kay Poole and Monica and Kevin Vinson were named "Fans of the Year" at this year's Highlands School Athletic Banquet.



- Sweepstakes parlors are spouting like wildflowers along US 441 between Franklin and Dillard, GA, and the Macon County Commission want to do something about it – trouble is, there's no much they can do according to NC General Statutes.

- NC DOT announces plans to resurface and pave The Gorge Road over the summer. News spurred much controversy but citizens calmed when they learned lanes on the road would remain open during the process except for a 1.1-mile portion of 'Gorge Road' which would be closed 3-5 days in June. Due to the physical nature of that segment of the road, closing one lane to traffic wasn't possible.

- The Town Board's 2012-'13 draft budget sets another electric rate hike for 6%, effective Jan. 2013.

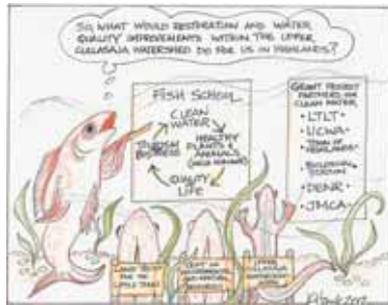


- The Town Board the Highlands Playhouse work on temporary lease agreement. Commissioners agreed to use taxpayer money to repair the building and bring it up to code, but the Town Board wants the Playhouse to be open to other entities when it's not being used for Playhouse productions unless the Playhouse board can show that it can use it year-round. The Playhouse board claims it can and will.

June

- Now that the referendum allowing for the sale of alcoholic beverages in Jackson County passed, grocers and restaurateurs agree there are potential ramifications for Highlands, as the town was an option for many Cashiers residents who were looking to purchase spirits, but say it will take at least a year to judge.

- Beginning June 11 or 12, patching will begin at the Franklin-end of the Highlands Road at Walnut Creek utilizing one-lane closures a lead truck and flagmen to direct traffic. Patching crews will skip the 1.1-mile narrow part of the gorge and patch and pave that all at once when the section will be closed to through traffic for 3-5 days.



- For years there have been talks, studies and cost estimates compiled on dredging Big Creek of silt – silt that continues to plague the town's water intake valve and the "health" of Big Creek. Big Creek and Lake Sequoyah are Highlands' two Class I water sources so silt and the turbidity associated with it affects Highlands' water distribution system. Citizens along Big Creek urge town officials to restore Big Creek rather than adding another intake valve at the Sequoyah Lake dam. They get little feedback from Town Board.



- Bear visits are on the rise and threatening homeowners. Events explaining how to live with bears and discussions are had between those who are wary of bears and those who encourage their visits by feeding them.

- Candidates for NC Congressional District 11 Mark Meadows and Vance Patterson face off at debate sponsored by FreedomWorks in Franklin.



- On Friday, June 8, the new Post Office at NC 106 and US 64 was dedicated with a ribbon cutting attended by state and local dignitaries, the architect, contractor, builder, the Jane Woodruff family, the Highlands Boy Scouts, numerous citizens and U.S. Postal Service representatives, who said Highlands' new Post Office is likely the best in Western North Carolina. In her invocation, Rev. Lee Bowman of First Presbyterian Church said the new Post Office represents another example of Woodruff's quiet generosity whose hand can be seen all over Highlands.



- Macon County Commissioners have decided to take a "wait and see" attitude concerning sweepstakes regulations in the county.



- Highlands Town Board dismisses public's concerns. During the public comment period, citizens urged commissioners to allow festivals in the park at Pine Street and asked why Spring Street is a one-way street going east. They got a tepid re-

sponse that spurred letters-to-editor and disgruntled citizens.



July

- At the June Town Board meeting, citizens learn that the town has no plans to develop Kelsey-Hutchinson Park.

- At the June 25 Planning Board meeting, members began discussing a Comprehensive Plan for Highlands – which is a step up from the Land Use Plan on the books which was completed a decade ago. It will likely take a year to complete the plan.

- Citizens learn that 2-member meetings of Town Board commissioners is allowed by law. Over the past few years, citizens have routinely asked Highlands Newspaper if daily meetings between two elected officials in Town Hall is legal. It is.

- Three Macon County School Board candidates will be on the November ballot – incumbent Stephanie McCall, District I – Highlands' and incumbent Jim Breedlove, District IV who are running unopposed. Incumbent Tommy Baldwin, District III, is being challenged by Melissa Bateman Evans.



- The Town of Highlands Zoning Board of Adjustment overturns administrator's ruling. The Zoning Board of Adjustment has entered a new era. Not only was the Zoning Administrator's ruling overturned Wednesday, July 11 – the third time in 10 years – but protocol and proceedings leading to that vote were handled in a lax, almost offhanded way by Chairman Steve Chenoweth. R.L.R. Investments plans to renovate both floors of the building into professional office space – real estate rentals downstairs and

... YEAR IN REVIEW continued from page 22

real estate sales upstairs. There are 2,323 sq. ft. downstairs and 2,627 sq. ft. upstairs; a total of 4,950 sq. ft. and the lot is zoned B-2 commercial. The problem: Not enough on-site parking to be in compliance with the town's ordinance. One spot for every 200 sq. ft. is required, so 23 spaces were needed but there's only room for 13 spaces on the lot which abuts Helen's Barn Ave. According to the Zoning Department brief, the request as presented failed on two counts under Sec. 7.4 – Nonconforming Improvements and Structures and 7.4.1 Nonconforming Buildings and Premises involving change of use and discontinuance of use.

- The FDIC took enforcement action with Macon Bank in a Consent Order issued March 26, 2012 which outlines verification of management practices required to take place within a 90-day window

- NC DOT closes 1.2-mile-long section of U.S. 64 (The Gorge Road) from the Highland Gates subdivision entrance to the Jackson Hole Gem Mine parking lot starting the morning of Monday, July 23. The closures will take place on weekdays from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. for a period of 1-2 weeks. All work must be completed by Aug. 3 in time for school bus routing.

- Commissioner Gary Drake blasts Highlands Newspaper for 10 minutes at the July 19 Town Board meeting for its official inquiry into and coverage of the legality of two elected officials meeting on a regular basis at Town Hall – this, even though article to which he referred “2-member meetings allowed by law” let citizens know that the meetings between Mayor David Wilkes and himself were not illegal.

- Highlands rolls with outage. According to Fred Alexander, Duke Energy's district manager for government and community relations, a lightning strike destroyed two insulators at the substation outside the Thorpe Powerhouse off Hwy 107 in Jackson County. Since everyone gets their power from Duke, 9,000 people were affected in Highlands, Cashiers, Sapphire, Shortoff, Cullowhee (including Western Carolina University), East Franklin, South Cullowhee, and Tuckasegee.

- County-wide Macon County Schools End-of-Grade and End-of-Course test scores for 2011-'12 show math, reading, biology and English proficiency up in Macon County Schools – something administrators attribute to the Lindamood-Bell reading program, the nontraditional calendar and the intercessions for remediation and enrichment held this past

school year.

- Thanks to an anonymous donor, the Highlands Chamber of Commerce/Visitor Center is getting a permanent, new home. The donor is buying the old Nick's Restaurant building and then gifting it to the town who will then lease it to the Chamber of Commerce/Visitor Center for \$1 per year.

August

- Gorge Road open to through traffic. Paving to begin Monday, Aug. 6

- Highlands Fire & Rescue Dept. has its annual Open House, Sat., Aug. 4, which includes free hot dog plates and rides through town on the fire truck.

- The town's surveillance system is up and running. Though folks entering and exiting the Rec Park may not notice the “All Activities Are Monitored By Video” signs, they will notice the 54” flat screen TV set up at the reception area depicting 30 camera views of the property. The video surveillance system on the town's recreational facilities as well as at Highlands School, is the king pin in the Gilliam's Promise program to deter criminal and drug activity in Highlands. Later, the town works out a surveillance ordinance which allows the equipment on town property.



- Highlands School staff elect Mary Greene Support Person of the Year and teacher Chris Green Teacher of Year.

- Town says 'no' to free utilities requests – The Wright Family Memorial Garden and the ABC Store but later in the year gives the Chamber of Commerce a year of free utilities because it didn't renege on its promise to fund the Main Street Wayfinding signage project to the tune of \$10,000..

- The Jackson-Macon Conservation Alliance offers sustainable solutions for town in multipart series.

- The Highlands Post Office discontinued operations at the current location on NC 28 and Highlands Plaza after Saturday, Aug. 25.

- Highlands School students will have the privilege of being part of the Rachel's Challenge violence prevention program this fall thanks to the efforts of Highlands Police Chief Bill Harrell and 'Rachel's Challenge' coming to HS private funding.

- La Crosse Encephalitis hits Highlands – the Moore family is affected.

- A “Once in a Blue Moon rising” is Aug. 31.

September

- Highlands passes its Relay for Life goal and raises more than \$105,000.

- Merchants gamble on Cashiers market. Over the last year or two, several merchants have either expanded their businesses to include a shop in Cashiers, or after doing business in Highlands for years decided to close their shop and give Cashiers a try, or when it was time to open a business for the first time, just plain opted for Cashiers over Highlands.

- New State food rules in affect as of Sept. 1.



- The USFS Dry Falls park opens Sept 21

- Tax reports show economy on the mend. According to recent reports at both the county and town level, sales tax reports indicate that the economy in Highlands and Macon County are on the upswing and in some cases doing better than neighboring counties Superintendent charges school district to do better.

October



- H-C Hospital joining Mission Health. The dual commitment of moving health

and wellness forward in Western North Carolina is the idea behind the recent affiliation of Highlands-Cashiers Hospital and Mission Health.

- Highlands to promote its unique traits through logo and signage through its wayfinding project.

- The Macon County School budget is tight but in the black.

- Macon County Sheriff's Office to track crooks with LeadsOnline. LeadsOnline is the largest online data system which investigators use to solve crimes from burglary to identity theft, to homicides and narcotics.

- Congressional District 11 candidates Mark Meadows and Hayden Rogers face off at League of Women Voters Q&A.



- If all goes as planned, two Conditional Use Zoning requests will be OK'd enabling Old Edwards Hospitality Group to turn another Highlands historic property into a wedding/event venue and enable the Town Place development to enter phase 2 on its site.

- Macon County Commission candidates Dem. Bobby Koppers and Rep. Paul Higdon face off at League of Women Voters Q&A.

- Macon County Commissioner OK's new program to keep mercury out of the county's landfill.

- New donors step up to 'save' Highlands Playhouse by offering to do all renovations and repairs for free.

- The Town of Highlands was named a Grand Winner in the 2012 North Carolina Outstanding Traffic Safe Community Awards by Triple A rewards Highlands AAA Carolinas Foundation for Traffic Safety.

- Town's Planning Board OKs two Conditional District zoning request – Town Place Condominium's administrative change concerning the CUD-R3 plat at Hickory, US 64 and Chestnut streets and OEI's request to change the R2 part of the split-zoned parcel on Main Street to CD-B3.

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November



• 'Perfect Storm' brings winter blast to Highlands. Highlands was spared the brunt of weather caused by the three converging weather systems that blasted the northeast seaboard Monday and Tuesday, but still its effects were felt. Winds of 25 mph-35 mph with gusts much higher, brought down trees and power lines causing numerous power outages scattered across the power grid.



• The Town of Highlands and Lupoli Construction have won an award by the Main Street Program of the State of North Carolina for the Town Square Renovation and Revitalization project.

• Snow on Election Day. Election results bring local changes. Incumbent Republican commissioners Kevin Corbin and Jim Tate ran unopposed and so held onto their seats; incumbent Democrat Commissioner Bobby Koppers lost to Republican Paul Higdon – 42.92% (7,069 votes) to Higdon's 57.08% (9,400 votes). Incumbent Macon County School Board members Jimmy Breedlove from District 4 and Stephanie McCall from District 1 ran unopposed. Incumbent Macon County School Board member Tommy Baldwin of District 3 lost to Melissa Bateman Evans, 52.93% (6,426 votes) to Baldwin's 46.65% (5,663 votes.) Mark Meadows beat Hayden Rogers.

• At the Macon County Board of Education meeting Thursday, Nov. 10, the board voted unanimously to hire current Franklin High School principal Dr. Chris Baldwin as Macon County's next superintendent for \$105,000 per year, effective July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2017.

• Highlands U12 soccer team wins

championship



• Solutions sought for parking woes. Town extends restricted parking on Main, 2nd and 3rd streets when commissioners learn employees are parking in the vicinity in nonrestricted spots. They also ask the planning department to scout out spots for 15-minute parking all over town.

• There's a new Santa Claus in town!. After a lap-numbing 20 years as Highlands' official Santa, Allen "Buck" Trott, is handing the reindeer reins to another Highlander. Allan Dearth will be filling out the Santa suit for this season and far into the future.

• Highlands School impacted by state budget cuts. At the Macon County Board of Education meeting held on Monday, Nov. 19 in Nantahala, the board of education voted not to fill the vacant teacher's assistant (TA) position at Highlands School resulting from the retirement of longtime Highlands TA Brenda Keener. Due to state budget cuts, the board agreed to not fill positions vacated by teacher assistants for FY 2012-13.



• At it's November meeting, the Zoning Board of Adjustment OK'd a subdivision variance for 560 North Fifth Street. The 1.11-acre plot, owned by the Bryson Family, is zoned R2, and currently houses three homes – two that front Fifth Street and one that fronts Laurel Street – all on one lot with one tax bill. They Planning Board subsequently OK'd the subdivision plat and the Town Board will give the final OK at it's January meeting.

December



• Town gets tough on overdue electric bills. As of Tuesday, Dec. 4, town employees were instructed to turn off electricity to 200 homes and businesses in Highlands. The 21.6% hike on electricity as well as the 15% hike for garbage pickup and 20% increase for water/sewer has made it difficult for many citizens and businesses to keep their utility bill current.

• A new 43-acre park off 441 in Franklin which will include two cloverleaf fields for baseball and softball will put the county in line for travel tournament money which will be a huge boon to Macon County's economy.

• Utility policy change rocks community. Citizens brace for January's 6% rate hike. Town Manager Bob Frye explains town's position while church representative urge officials to be more lenient and allow citizens to pay what they can during the winter – as in years past – until spring comes and full-time employment resumes.

• Conditional Zoning was fodder at Town Board meeting. Commissioners rehashed what the Planning Board ruled on at its October meeting regarding two Conditional District requests – 594 Main Street and the Town Place Condominium site. Commissioners Amy Patterson and John Dotson said the OK the Planning Board gave the Town Place Condominium project was a substantial change and not an administrative change. A substantial change should have come to the Town Board rather than the Planning Board making the decision. They contended that not sticking to the site plan – one of the requirements of the new Unified Development Ordinance stipulations – meant the Planning

Board's decision should not stand. They were overruled 3-2 but Mayor Wilkes asked that they look at the verbiage in the UDO to clarify requirements in the future.



• Highlands School Homecoming King and Queen, seniors Taylor Osteen and Hayden Bates



• Fire Chief James "Popcorn" Manley announced his retirement effective Dec. 31, 2012. Ryan Gearhart, 35, as chief and Robbie Forrester, 39, as assistant chief each to a two-year term as dictated by the department's new by-laws that went into effect last year.

• State cuts to education to the tune of about \$500,000 have the Macon County School System scrambling to make up the difference through utility cuts and teacher costs. For starters, the budget adopted for the 2012-2013 school year included decreases in the utilities budget. Principles were asked to try to cut their utility bills and openings created by teaches who retire, transfer or resign will be filled with interim teachers at a lower pay scale and without benefits.

• Pastors urge town to rethink its utility policy. Last week five pastors met to discuss the consequences of the town's increase in utility rates which resulted in termination of power to many. The pastors of the Catholic, Episcopal, Methodist, Lutheran and Presbyterian churches of Highlands are concerned about the change in the Town of Highlands enforcement policies regarding the termination of electric service. The most crit-

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ical concern is that those who are most at risk may suffer grave consequences if they have no heat for their homes in subfreezing weather. They ask that the town allow old "pay what you can" policy until spring.

- With the county refinancing it's biggest debt service – a \$16 million loan with BB&T for Mountain View and East Franklin schools – it will save taxpayers \$2.15 million over the course of the loan.

- Highlands United Methodist Church offers its historic Apple Tree Cottage between Spring and Church Street Alley free for the taking to make room for expansion.



Some 2012 changes to the Highlands landscape: Renovations to First Baptist Church, completion of the Log House on the corner of Maple and US 64 east and the addition to Chill



2012 a good year for preservation in Highlands



Remote waterfall on the Downes property.

By Julie Schott
HCLT

With the help of many members and friends throughout our community, in 2012 Highlands-Cashiers Land Trust

(HCLT) helped land donors to conserve even more of the pristine waters, lush forests and scenic vistas we call home.

By the end of this 2012, HCLT con-

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• BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NEWS •

Gingerbread house fun at The Bascom Annual Event a Big Hit with Families—and the Winners!



Families from near and far look forward every year to The Bascom's Gingerbread House Workshop, held on November 23 and 24. More than 159 attendees participated in the event over the course of the two days. Thirty people entered their gingerbread houses in an optional contest. The public cast their votes between November 25 and December 7.

By popular vote, first place for favorite gingerbread house was awarded to Taylor Wacker. Second place went to Ford Wagner, and third place to Freda Olalde, as announced by Youth and Outreach Coordinator Will Barclift of The Bascom. In addition, Victoria Gentry, Mary Childs Hall, Alexandra Langlais, and Abby Olvera received Honorable Mentions for their gingerbread houses.

Moms, dads, grandparents and children of all ages enjoyed decorating ready-made gingerbread houses with an array of

confections supplied by The Bascom. Lacey Hamrick served as instructor to help spur the creativity of all involved. It's a wonderful, no-fuss, no-mess way to celebrate the holiday with the camaraderie of old and new friends. Mark your calendar for next year's decorating workshop, held annually during the weekend after Thanksgiving. What a fun way to kick off the Christmas season—without disrupting your own kitchen!

- The Bascom is open year-round, Monday through Saturday, 10am to 5pm, and Sunday, 12 noon to 5 pm. Enjoy workshops, exhibitions, special events and quality programs throughout the year at The Bascom. For more information, to register for workshop offerings or for more details on all Bascom activities, visit www.TheBascom.org or call (828) 526-4949.

H-C Hospital Plant Manager earns certification



Terry Winn

H-C Hospital's Plant Operations Manager and Safety Officer, Terry Winn, was recently named a Certified Healthcare Engineer (CHE) by the North Carolina Healthcare Engineers Association (NCHCA). This prestigious, professional certification signifies Winn's commitment to the safety and well-being of all patients, staff, volunteers and residents of the Fidelia Eckerd Living Center. As a part of Winn's CHE designation, he was required to meet state mandated specifications and standards. He scored optimal points in four major sections of the CHE application with scores based on education, years of service, educational programs attended, and involvement in NCHCA. The hospital congratulates Winn for his years of service and dedication to fulfill the Hospital's mission of providing the best possible quality healthcare to all.

• BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NEWS •

Patient heart attack survival is remarkable Thanks to H-C Hospital and Mission Health collaboration Celebration Luncheon Held Decemer 17

On November 2, 78-year-old Nancy Temple sat with her husband, Bill in the parking lot of Highlands-Cashiers Hospital (HCH) debating whether the “indigestion” she was experiencing warranted emergency care. Moments later she was experiencing a heart attack in the HCH emergency room that stopped her heart. HCH emergency staff revived her through CPR and shock treatment, not once, but four times in a two-hour period. When stabilized, Mrs. Temple was air-lifted to Mission Hospital and survived. Mrs. Temple’s remarkable survival story was celebrated on December 17 at a luncheon in her honor attended by both Mission and HCH staff members who were involved in her life-saving care.

While this is certainly not the first patient to benefit from the teamwork of HCH and Mission Health, Mrs. Temple’s case represents many key factors that increase survival rates for heart attack victims: timely emergency treatment at HCH; safe transport by MAMA; successful catheterization and implementation of a new protocol for therapeutic hypothermia treatment at Mission Hospital.

During the luncheon Mission representatives praised HCH for the skilled emergency care provided at our hospital. “Timing is of the essence when administering heart attack treatment,” said Eileen Lipham, Chief Nursing Officer and Administrator of Clinical services at Highlands-Cashiers Hospital. “In cases like our patient, who was just moments away from a heart attack, those crucial first hours meant the difference between life and death.”

The MAMA pilot and paramedic reminisced how they noted the stamina of this patient and spoke of their attentive monitoring during the 22-minute air transfer. “I kept my finger on her pulse every second of the flight,” stated Chuck Paris, MAMA flight nurse.

Therapeutic hypothermia, also known as “Code Freeze” was explained by William Hathaway, MD, Chief Medical Officer of Mission Hospital. The pro-

cedure was introduced at Mission in 2007 and has demonstrated a significant increase in survival rates as a result. Therapeutic hypothermia involves infusing intravenous ice cold saline and using chilled water blankets to lower body temperature after a cardiac arrest. When administered within six to eight hours after a cardiac arrest, therapeutic hypothermia significantly increases a patient’s chance of survival and reduces the risk of neurological damage often caused by the sudden rush of blood back through the body after resuscitation.

“Providing this protocol to patients in the rural communities that Mission Health serves will not only increase their chance of survival after a heart attack but also prevent permanent brain damage,” said Hathaway. The chance of survival after cardiac arrest in rural North Carolina is about five percent. Since implementing the therapeutic hypothermia protocol, Mission Hospital’s survival rate in heart attack patients has increased to 35 percent, according to Hathaway.

Also crucial to survival is recognizing the symptoms of a heart attack and seeking emergency treatment, as almost half of sudden cardiac deaths happen outside a hospital, according to the CDC. Most heart attacks start slow, with mild pain or discomfort in the chest, one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw or stomach. Other symptoms like shortness of breath, breaking out into a cold sweat or experiencing nausea or lightheadedness can occur with or without discomfort in the chest. Women are more likely than men to experience some of these heart attack symptoms without chest pressure. These symptoms can be hard to distinguish, causing people to wait too long before getting help.

These hard-to-diagnose symptoms nearly caused a tragic event for Mrs. Temple who was experiencing “indigestion.” Choosing to go into the emergency room and, ultimately, receiving therapeutic hypothermia was a precaution that saved her life.

At the conclusion of the luncheon Nancy and Bill Temple were tearful and could



Nancy Temple shows joyful emotion at a luncheon held at HCH with Mission Health to celebrate her remarkable heart attack survival and recovery.

not thank the Hospital enough. Mrs. Temple is currently enrolled in the certified cardiac rehabilitation program at HCH, continues to play bridge and thankful to be alive, and looks forward to a happy and healthy new year.

“This is a fine example of the teamwork and dedication of our staff members who continually demonstrate that by working together, we can provide the most excellent care. I am very proud of their patient care achievements,” said Hospital President, Craig James.

“The Story of Nancy’s dramatic life-saving experience is inspirational and gives powerful testimony to the skill and determination of our dedicated staff in the HCH Emergency Department and in the tremendously effective relationship between HCH and the outstanding cardiology staff at Mission. We thank everyone involved,” said Hospital Board Chair, Charlie Sheehan.

• Highlands-Cashiers Hospital (HCH)

is a not-for-profit community hospital serving Highlands, Cashiers and the surrounding mountain communities, located on Highway 64 between the two towns. Established during the early 1950’s, the hospital has grown to provide the facilities, staff and support services to offer diagnostic, surgical and acute patient care through onsite professional services or as a referral to other regional health-care systems. HCH emergency care is physician-staffed 24/7 and treats patients promptly, with personalized care and attention. HCH has 39 board certified physicians representing 15 medical specialties on its medical staff. Altogether, with its 24- bed acute care services, outpatient ancillary services, 84-bed skilled nursing facility, and four hospital-owned physician clinics in Cashiers and Highlands, HCH employs 250 full and part time employees.

• USFS NEWS •

US Forest Service report forecasts natural resource management trends and challenges for next 50 years

Study projects significant forest loss due to suburbanization and land fragmentation

A comprehensive U.S. Forest Service report released today examines the ways expanding populations, increased urbanization, and changing land-use patterns could profoundly impact natural resources, including water supplies, nationwide during the next 50 years.

Significantly, the study shows the potential for significant loss of privately-owned forests to development and fragmentation, which could substantially reduce benefits from forests that the public now enjoys including clean water, wildlife habitat, forest products and others.

"We should all be concerned by the projected decline in our nation's forests and the corresponding loss of the many critical services they provide such as clean drinking water, wildlife habitat, carbon sequestration, wood products and outdoor recreation," said Agriculture Under Secretary Harris Sherman. "Today's report offers a sobering perspective on what is at stake and the need to maintain our commitment to conserve these critical assets."

U.S. Forest Service scientists and partners at universities, non-profits and other agencies found urban and developed land areas in the U.S. will increase 41 percent by 2060. Forested areas will be most impacted by this growth, with losses ranging from 16 to 34 million acres in the lower 48 states. The study also examines the effect of climate change on forests and the services forests provide.

Most importantly, over the long-term, climate change could have significant effects on water availability, making the US potentially more vulnerable to water shortages, especially in the Southwest and Great Plains. Population growth in more arid regions will require more drinking water. Recent trends in agricultural irrigation and landscaping techniques also will boost water demands.

"Our nation's forests and grasslands are facing significant challenges. This assessment strengthens our commitment to accelerate restoration efforts that will improve forest resiliency and conservation of vitally important natural resources," said U.S. Forest Service Chief Tom Tidwell.

The assessment's projections are influenced by a set of scenarios with varying assumptions about U.S. population and economic growth, global population and economic growth, global wood energy consumption and U.S. land use change from 2010 to 2060. Using those scenarios, the report forecasts the following key trends:

- * Forest areas will decline as a result of development, particularly in the South, where population is projected to grow the most;
- * Timber prices are expected to remain relatively flat;
- * Rangeland area is expected to continue its slow decline but rangeland productivity is stable with forage sufficient to meet expected livestock grazing demands;

- * Biodiversity may continue to erode because projected loss of forestland will impact the variety of forest species;
- * Recreation use is expected to trend upward.

Additionally, the report stresses the need to develop forest and rangeland policies which are flexible enough to be effective under a wide range of future socioeconomic and ecological conditions such as climate change. The Forest and Rangelands Renewable Service Resources Planning Act of 1974 requires the Forest Service to produce an assessment of natural resource

trends every 10 years.

The mission of the Forest Service is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations.

The agency manages 193 million acres of public land, provides assistance to state and private landowners, and maintains the largest forestry research organization in the world. Forest Service lands contribute more than \$13 billion to the economy each year through visitor spending alone. Those same lands provide 20 percent of the nation's clean water supply, a value estimated at \$27 billion per year.

NCDOT looking for public input on future of walking and biking in North Carolina

The N.C. Department of Transportation is in the process of developing a new statewide pedestrian and bicycle plan – and it is seeking the public's help to craft a vision for the future of walking and biking in North Carolina.

The plan, which will be developed in collaboration with state agencies and regional, private and industry stakeholders, will examine how to create a safer pedestrian and bicycle network that also benefits the state's economy, public health and environment.

When completed, the plan will be among the most comprehensive of its kind in the nation.

Learn all about the plan at NCDOT's website, and share your thoughts and ideas related to pedestrian and bicycle transportation at the plan's online community forum – www.walkbikenc.com

... PRESERVATION continued from page 25

served five new properties:

- Sixth Street Bog in Highlands was donated by James and Janice Carter and protects a rare mountain bog which is home to numerous rare plant species and provides habitat for critical wildlife.

- Dan Pittillo, a venerated WCU botany professor donated a property in Jackson County that protects over 30 endangered plants. Dan has created a beautiful living tribute there to his late wife, Jean, by building a Native Wildflower Garden in her memory.

- Tim and Emily Campbell have conserved another property that protects part of Nantahala River in Macon County. This is the fourth property Tim Campbell has helped conserve with HCLT and has now been a part of conserving over 200 acres of valuable land resources.

- Bertis and Katherine Downes have protected a property that is critical to the town of Highlands drinking water. Water is an important resource and, as droughts

continue to plague parts of the US and around the world, protecting water supplies is becoming even more important. In addition to the water, this property also protects over 25 acres of mature forest and a remote waterfall with the rare spray cliff community type.

All those who live or visit here share an appreciation for and dependence on the abundant natural resources these mountains provide.

It is our responsibility and privilege to conserve these places for those who come after us. This holiday season and throughout the year HCLT gives each of us the opportunity to be a part of this great legacy.

To become a member of Highlands-Cashiers Land Trust visit www.hicashlt.org or simply mail your tax-deductible contribution to: HCLT, PO Box 1703, Highlands, NC 28741. Together we are saving mountains.

This is the end of year combination issue for Dec. 27/Jan. 3.

The next edition for Highlands Newspaper will be on the streets and on the web at www.highlandsinfo.com click Local News on Jan. 10.

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Resolve to meet your financial goals in 2013

(StatePoint) Achieving your financial goals can sound like a daunting New Year's resolution if you aren't organized when it comes to your money. But by planning ahead, you can more easily improve your financial situation.

If you're new to money management -- don't stress -- new tools are making it simple to stay on top of your finances, allowing you to pay down debt and save for the future.

Here are some foolproof ways to achieve your financial goals this year:

Short and Long-Term Goals

Whether you dream of owning the latest iPhone, a home, or you're planning for retirement, identifying your goals is the first step to making them happen. Without goals, it's easy to spend too much money on the here and now without thinking about the future. Figure out what portion of each paycheck you're willing to divert to a goal-designated savings account. This will give you a realistic idea of how long your goals will take to achieve.

Talk to your employer's Human Resources department about how to set up a 401 (k) or 403 (b). Not only are your contributions to your account tax-free, but many employers will even match your contribution, which is an offer that should be impossible to refuse.

Tracking Finances

Tracking your finances can help you make smart financial decisions that won't put you in debt. But before you clear off your desk and buy file folders, consider this: electronic money management can save you the mountain of paperwork. Free online resources can help you

manage all your financial accounts in one place. For example, personal finance website Mint.com, allows you to categorize your spending, create budgets and savings goals, and set up bill reminders and alerts. Available for Android and iPhone phones and tablets, you can manage your spending on the go and in real time.

Or try Quicken 2013 from Intuit, which gives you access to checking, savings and credit card account information, automatically syncing your information across your mobile devices so you can keep your accounts up-to-date by entering transactions as they are made. The bill reminders tool, budgeting features and debt reduction tool make it easier to eliminate debt in the New Year and plan for the future. You can learn more by visiting www.quicken.intuit.com.

New Avenues

Not all your goals will be achievable with assets you have today. Luckily, there are new, lower-cost ways to pay off debt. For example, borrowers using Lending Club can qualify instantly with a simple online application. Unlike a traditional bank loan, Lending Club enables dozens or even hundreds of people to seamlessly invest in the loan, resulting in lower costs for borrowers and consistent returns for investors.

For more financial advice to carry you through a new year, visit www.mint.com/blog.

Without help, New Year's resolutions can be tough, if not impossible to achieve. Innovative tools can give you a leg up toward your goals.

Resolve to Quit Smoking in the New Year

(StatePoint) It's at the top of many New Year's resolution lists -- quitting smoking. In fact, 15 million people try to quit smoking cigarettes yearly. Only 5 percent succeed when they use no support or go cold turkey. Moreover, the average smoker will attempt to quit up to nine times before successfully quitting.

Luckily there are new tips and tools that can help smokers kick the habit this year.

In an effort to empower the more than 45 million current U.S. smokers to call it quits, GlaxoSmithKline Consumer Healthcare has launched Quit.com, a free, total quit-smoking online resource with tools to help smokers quit their cigarette addictions and stay smoke-free.

Every smoker is different; therefore every smoker's

approach to quitting may need to be different. Quit.com houses personalized tools in a central location to help smokers navigate quitting smoking, no matter where they may be in their quit journey.

Here are some tips from the experts at Quit.com to help smokers quit their nicotine addiction in the New Year:

- **Preparing to Quit:** First pick your quit date. By having a day you're working toward, you'll be able to prepare mentally and physically to quit. Do your research on how to be prepared before getting started.

- **Ready to Quit:** Support your quit by reducing your body's physical cravings so they don't get in the way of your willpower. Consider using a nicotine replacement product that fits your lifestyle, such as a gum, lozenge or patch.

- **Currently Quitting:** Celebrate every little win and stay focused on the positive benefits of quitting and why you decided to quit in the first place. If you get a strong craving, change things up to throw your urge to smoke.

- **Post-Quit:** Surround yourself with inspiration to stay smoke-free -- your family, your pet, your health and your finances -- and remember you have everything to gain by quitting.

More tips on quitting smoking can be found at www.Quit.com.

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• FIRE DEPT. REPORTS •

Highlands Fire & Rescue Dept. log entries from Dec. 6

Dec. 6

- At 9:51 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to Zermott Circle. The call was cancelled en route.

Dec. 10

- At 5:08 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to Wyanoak Drive to assist EMS.

Dec. 13

- At 3:50 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at the Hospital. It was set off by workers.

- Mid-morning, the dept. provided mutual aid to Scaly/Sky Valley Fire Dept. on a structure fire.

Dec. 14

- At 9:52 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to Smallwood Drive to assist EMS.

Dec. 15

- At 8:16 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to Caloway Road to assist EMS.

- At 9:22 a.m., the dept. responded to a call of a large amount of smoke in the areas off the Cashiers Road. It was a control burn at some storage unites.

- At 10:37 a.m., the dept. was first responders to Holt Road to assist EMS.

- At 12:21 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to Main Street to assist EMS with a person who had fallen.

- At 1:33 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to Cowee Ridge Road to assist EMS.

- At 6:14 p.m., the dept. was called to assist EMS with returning patient home to Cowee Ridge Road.

- At 6:21 p.m., the dept. responded to a report of a brush fire on Mack Wilson Road. It was a controlled burn.

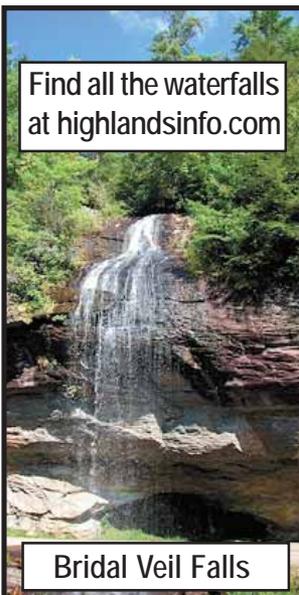
Dec. 16

- At 9:50 p.m., the dept. responded to a one-vehicle accident on US 64 west where a vehicle had rolled over. The driver had gotten a ride into town.

- At 6:45 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to Western Rhodes Drive to assist EMS.

- At 10:55 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to Cowee Ridge Road to assist EMS.

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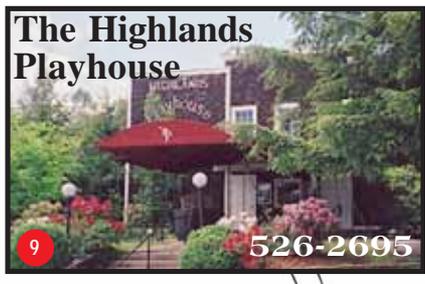


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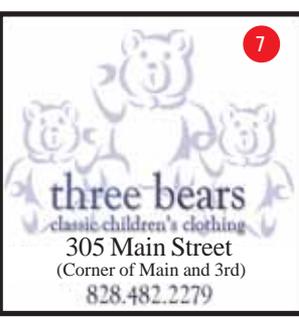
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