Drake blasts newspaper at TB meeting

For 10 minutes of the Thursday, July 19 Town Board meeting, Commissioner Gary Drake lambasted Highlands Newspaper for its official inquiry into and coverage of the legality of two elected officials meeting on a regular basis at Town Hall.

To see the article to which Commissioner Draker referred “2-member meetings allowed by law,” see the July 19 edition at www.highlandsnewspaperPDF.com. To read part of what he read into the record Thursday night, see his letter-to-the-editor in this week’s paper. Therest will be available to citizens once the minutes are made public which include many verbal interjections.

Test scores up in MC schools

County-wide 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 non-traditional calendar and the intercessions for remediation and enrichment held this past school year.

At the Monday, June 25 Board of Education meeting, administrators reported that teachers said on an individual level, many students who never passed End-of-Grade (EOG) tests which are required by No Child Left Behind for grades 3-8, passed the first time by earning a 3 or 4 which is the required mark on a 1-4 scale.

MC Schools Director of Testing and Accountability Pat Davis said scores for the EOG tests for elementary and middle school students and End-of-Course (EOC) tests for high school students aren’t official until the state releases them.

Summer fun at Bust Your Butt falls

Visitors enjoy nature’s good, clean, cool fun at Bust Your Butt Falls on US 64 west between Highlands and Franklin. Highlands Fire & Rescue chief James Manley reminds all that this isn’t an amusement park and special care should be taken while enjoying what nature has to offer. Photo by Jim Lewicki
Dear Editor,

In his article, "The Spirit of Molech Lives with Us," Pastor Sam Forrester makes the allegation that burning to death a living, breathing human infant as a sacrifice to the pagan god Molech is the exact same thing as terminating the growth of a developing fetus. That comparison is a real stretch and hinges heavily on the belief of certain religious groups that human life begins at the moment an egg is fertilized - not proven legally, medically or theologically.

A few interesting points which we discuss in our book "Choice Matters." A fertilized egg does not implant in the uterus and become "a pregnancy" for 7 to 10 days with 50%-70% of these fertilized eggs never implanting. In the Old Testament they didn't even know that there was an egg - it was erroneously believed that a man planted his seed and if it didn't grow, it was the women's fault.

Breath seems to be a better determinant of human life than a fertilized egg. The Bible has many passages which refer to breath meaning life. We say in our book, "We became living human beings when we took our first breath and we will cease to be living after we take our last breath."

In our country religious beliefs should be tolerated and respected, but not imposed on others whose beliefs are different.

Paul and Barbara Gerhardt
Sapphire, NC

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Dear Mr. Mayor, commissioners and ladies and gentlemen of Highlands,

I've prepared this letter so that it may be part of the public record at this meeting, Thursday, July 19, 2012. I am reading this to you instead of speaking from memory to get all the facts correctly stated and also to control my anger issue.

I recently received an email that basically accused the mayor, another commissioner, the town manager and me of inappropriate behavior at Town Hall. In my 68 years, my integrity has never been questioned and I won't allow it now.

The email was sent by Kim Lewicki, owner and editor of the Highlands Newspaper, to Town Attorney, Bill Coward, me and others. Kim questioned the legality of the mayor, the town manager and two commissioners meeting at Town Hall on a regular basis in the mornings.

I take my job as Highlands commissioner very seriously and make it my mission to stay abreast of all town business, its employees and citizens' concerns. My morning visits to Town Hall are made because I owe it to the people who elected me. I was NOT elected to simply show up once or twice a month at a meeting and pretend to be aware of the complexities of safeguarding our town, our homes, and our citizens. Showing up for one or two meetings a month isn't enough to have a real pulse on our community and I don't know of a job anywhere that can be done effectively with limited knowledge. It is my duty to come to the meetings well informed and ready to make the necessary decisions required with little or no delays for our citizens. Also, I am a member and serve on other Macon County government boards and I feel it is incumbent upon me to relay the information I have received at these meetings to the town of Highlands and it is usually in these morning meetings.

In recent days there have also been accusatory letters-to-the-editor about the Highlands Newspaper questions my integrity.
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• OBITUARY •

David Ricky Webb,

David Ricky Webb, age 55, of Highlands, NC, died Saturday, July 21, 2012 at a Highlands-Cashiers Hospital. He was born in Macon County, the son of Doris Gibson Webb of Highlands and the late Richard Webb. He was of the Baptist faith. He was a lineman for the Town of Highlands. He was a very loving son, husband, father, grandfather and brother. His nieces and nephews loved him very much.

In addition to his mother, he is survived by his wife of 12 years, June Wallace Webb; three daughters, Teri Wallace Webb of Fountain Inn, SC, Amanda Webb of Alto, GA and Debbra Gilbreath of Dade City, FL; one son, Shane Webb of Spartanburg, SC; four grandchildren; one sister, June Webb of Highlands, NC; three brothers, Freddie Webb of Highlands, NC, Johnny Webb of Franklin, NC and Randy Webb of Hollywood, Maryland. He was preceded in death by two brothers, James Webb and Bill Webb. A memorial service was held Sunday, July 22 at 2 PM at Horse Cove Cemetery with Rev. Randy Reed officiating.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to The Liver Transplant Program, 400 Parnassus Ave. Sixth floor, San Francisco, CA 94143 or Four Seasons Hospice, 471 South Allen Road, Flat Rock, NC 28731. Bryant-Grant Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements. Online condolences may be made by visiting www.bryantgrantfuneralhome.com

... DRAKE continued from page 1

The article in the Thursday, July 19 edition didn’t mention any names or accuse any public official of wrongdoing — rather it set the record straight concerning the legality of meetings between two elected officials, as per Frayda Bluestein of the UNC-Chapel Hill School of Government.

Bluestein verified what Town Attorney Bill Coward has always said over the years — that such meetings are legal.

Commissioner Drake also suggested that Highlands Newspaper had no business querying Town Attorney Bill Coward. “Who pays your salary, Bill? Kim or us?” Coward replied, “You do.”

However, it is the taxpayers of Highlands who pay Attorney Coward’s salary.

The purpose of the article was to set the public’s mind at ease as to the legality of two-member meetings and to assure the public that Highlands Newspaper is a watchdog of government.

In other Town Board news commissioners heard a report about Highlands Playhouse repairs and discussed an interim 18-month lease with the Playhouse.

In recent months, the town has replaced the roof on the building, addressed flooring of the auditorium, removed a defunct 5-ton A/C system from the roof and replaced it with two 5-ton units installed in the crawlspace and a 3-ton unit for control areas and the box office; wiring has been substantially upgraded to OSHA standards and ADA requirements addressed.

Still more is needed.

At Thursday’s meeting, MIS/GIS Director Drake continued from page 1

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One of my favorite stories is about a couple named Tom and Gerry, short for Thomas and Geraldine. After being happily married for over 60 years, Tom became terminally ill. On his death bed, Tom gazed into Gerry’s eyes, held her hand and said, “If there is anyway I can reach you from the other side, I will. Listen for any sign that could be me trying to communicate with you.”

In tears, Gerry said, “Yes, Tom, I will. I’ll miss you so much. Please, if you can reach me, I’ll listen and be there for you as I have been for all these years.”

Well, shortly after making this vow, Tom croaked and Gerry was heartbroken. A week passed and then one night, in the dead of sleep, Gerry heard her name whispered in her ear. She bolted up in her bed and stared into the pitch black bedroom. Then she heard it again, a soft whisper in her ear. It was Tom’s voice. “Gerry, can you hear me?”

“Yes, Tom, I can hear you. How is it on the other side? Are you happy? Tell me everything,” Gerry asked.

Tom whispered, “Yes, Gerry, I’m very happy. I wake each day and the first thing I do is have sex, then I eat and have sex again. Then I nap. When I wake, I have sex again, take another nap and eat again followed by more sex. My new life is all about sex, eating and napping. Yes, Gerry, I’m extremely happy.”

Elated, Gerry responded, “Oh, Tom, I’m happy for you although I’m a little envious about you having all that sex. You must admit, that never happened when you were alive and married to me. What a wonderful gift you received from God.”

Tom responded, “God? … you think I’m in heaven? I’m a friggin rabbit in Kansas.”

I think it’s a fun story because if you’re a person who refuses to believe there is an afterlife with the Lord, but on the other hand, being an atheist is waaaaay too frightening for you, then there is always reincarnation. I suggest you read Many Lives, Many Masters by Dr. Brian Weiss, a devout atheist. It’s a fun read but don’t take him too seriously. Remember, most every-
As a Christian do you include or exclude?

Jon Meacham, Pulitzer Prize winning author and editor at Time Magazine, recently penned an article entitled “God and Gays.” Meacham, an Episcopalian, mused on the decision of some dioceses to bless same-sex unions. Like all members of the church he also gave some thought to the dwindling numbers of people attending services.

To further his point, he discusses the dangers of taking the Bible literally. As he so eloquently states, “If we took all scripture at the same level of authority, then we would be more open to slavery, to the subjugation of women, to wider use of stoning, Jesus himself spoke out frequently against divorce in the strongest of terms. Yet we have — often gradually — chosen to read and interpret the Bible in light not of tradition but of reason and history.”

His conclusion is that the Episcopal Church has made a sensible decision, in allowing dioceses to decide where they stand on this matter. Uncertain as to how this will affect membership, he nonetheless stands on the side of inclusion.

He mentions how Christianity is a religion that, at its best, reaches out and embraces our similarities and our differences. And if that causes diminishing numbers, so be it.

I applaud Meacham’s point of view. I believe it is our responsibility to adhere to the tenants set forth in the gospels despite the outcome. We must be inclusive when we are tempted to be exclusive. We must embrace our differences when we would rather be lulled into the comforts of homogeneity.

Dr. Henry Salzarulo • Feedback is encouraged. email: hsalzarulo@aol.com

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... TESTING continued from page 1

es the scores so they could change a bit both up or down, but overall results are promising.

Highlands high school students scored the highest percentages in the county for EOC tests in Algebra I, Biology and English I – 90.9, 100 and 100, respectively. However, compared to last year’s scores, Highlands was down 9.1 percentage points in Algebra I, but still beat the county’s overall score in Algebra I by 10.60 percentage points.

In Biology, Highlands high school students scored 100, up from last year’s 96.2; the county’s overall score was 80.8.

In English I, Highlands high school students scored 100 for the second year in a row; the county score was 90%.

Highlands students grades 3-8 bested county overall scores in reading and in math EOC tests in grades 5th-8th but fell short in 3rd and 4th grade math.

The county’s 3rd grade scores in math were 83.4; Highlands was 81.8; the county’s 4th grade percentages were 88.2; Highlands was 84.2.

The 2001 No Child Left Behind mandate that required the annual testing of students in English and math and mandated federal sanctions based on those scores has been tweaked by the Obama administration.

Due to broad dissatisfaction with the law, the federal Education Department is allowing states that implement pieces of the Obama administration’s education platform to work around NCLB’s broadest provisions.

Specifically, states are granted conditional waivers from NCLB if the Department of Education accepts their proposal to raise standards, tie teacher evaluations to test scores and create new accountability systems that reward or punish schools based on performance. Macon County is currently outlining those requirements for submission.

The federal government approved the first group of NCLB-free states in February. The newest states to emerge from under NCLB will be Connecticut, Delaware, Louisiana, Maryland, New York, North Carolina, Ohio and Rhode Island, making for a total of 19 states that are no longer bound by the law. Seventeen other states and Washington, D.C., also applied in the second round, but their plans have not yet been accepted.

NCLB expired in 2007, and both Republicans and Democrats agree on the need to revamp the law, due largely to widespread concerns about the effect of standardized testing, which is said to encourage educators to teach to the middle and lower academic standards.

Most of what the Obama administration has done is to try to give states more flexibility.

The next Board of Education meeting is Monday, July 25 at the administration office in Franklin at 6 p.m.

– Kim Lewicki

... DRAKE from page 1

rector Matt Shuler outlined both minor and major items that need to be addressed sooner, rather than later.

The ceiling joist needs repair estimated to cost $1,340; an ADA sidewalk to street level is needed for egress estimated to cost $50,145; and two rotten exterior doors need to be replaced, one on the Oak Street side and one on the Maple Street side – one of which is causing rot under the stage, estimated to cost about $4,000.

The status of the Playhouse repairs report is the first step in
Thoughts on the 1000th WWE Raw

Much to my wife’s chagrin, Monday night was spent in front of the television taking in the special three hour edition of Monday Night Raw. Monday Night Raw is the flagship show for World Wrestling Entertainment, (or as my wife calls it “men prancing around in man panties”) and has been on the air since 1993. Obviously there was quite a bit of nostalgia involved, as I can recall “going to bed early” on Monday nights as a 13 and 14 year old so that I could watch wrestling uninterrupted. My parents banned me from watching wrestling, but I thought I was smart and was getting away with murder by watching wrestling, all while my parents chuckled in relief at the fact that I was watching wrestling instead of sneaking out to drink.

The actual wrestling product that WWE has been putting out for the past 20 years has been hit or miss. At its best is when there is an interesting storyline that breaks new ground or introduces a captivating new character. Then, much like any other soap opera, the story gets run into the ground or the character becomes predictable, and then we are left with silliness until the next new character or storyline is developed. Characters that were once new and fresh can become boring and overexposed, which is what has happened with current WWE superstar John Cena. Cena is the modern day equivalent to Hulk Hogan…a cartoonish character who never loses and is no longer interesting. If Cena “turned bad” he would once again draw interest, but then WWE wouldn’t be able to sell t-shirts to little kids.

The 1000th episode of WWE Raw had some highlights, as the show opened with a reunion of DX. When I was a teenager DX was extremely edgy and many times crossed the barrier into “R” rated material, but it seemed cool at the time. It was decidedly less cool to watch a bunch of almost 50 year old men point at their crotch…although it did make for an interesting conversation as I tried to explain this to my wife. There was a bit more nostalgia, with appearances by former Raw staples like The Undertaker (still one of my favorites) and Jim Ross and Stephanie McMahon, but that gave way to a couple of the current storylines, most of which I find to be boring and repetitive.

Maybe it is just my age, but as the WWE expands its flagship show to three hours every evening, I am not sure that I will be able to justify watching on a regular basis. There are some potential storylines or characters that might be able to change that, but at this point it is the John Cena show and until he refreshes up his character I am going to turn the channel. My wife will likely be excited at the prospect of me moving on from RAW, but just like any other soap opera fan, the right storyline can easily reel me back in again.
In the past, around the time of the last general election, I wrote at least two columns centering on Obama’s inexperience in leadership and management, and referred to his group as run amateurs. So, what did I know? Three-plus years later, Edward Klein, former foreign editor with Newsweek, former editor-in-chief of The New York Times Magazine, and a contributing editor of Vanity Fair wrote a book entitled The Amateur. Needless to say Klein’s editorial associations would earn him the label of “liberal,” at least. Well, upon having read most of The Amateur, he certainly is no fan of Obama’s, but that’s beside the point. One thing most agree on is that Obama is no amateur when it comes to campaigning. Get him up there in front of a friendly crowd, and he is a pro. Or is he?

During one of his infrequent press conferences, on June 8th to be precise, the president declared “the private sector is doing fine.” Really? This should come as cold comfort to 23 million Americans who are struggling to make ends meet. Is he so far out of touch with reality that he doesn’t realize the plight of the unemployed, or the underemployed, or those who have given up trying and are living on government handouts? Or, is this his objective? If so, it’s doing fine.

Let’s look at a little dose of reality, shall we? The day I’m writing this, reported initial claims for state unemployment benefits increased 34,000 to a seasonally adjusted 386,000. Factory activity in the U.S. mid-Atlantic region contracted for a third month in July. The National Association of Realtors said that sales of previously occupied homes fell 5.4 percent in June. These are one day’s economic headlines. Doin’ fine? Maybe he was just having a moment of wishful thinking.

More recently, the Blaze headlines it this way. “President Obama to CBS: The Biggest Mistake Of My First Term Was Not Explaining How Good My Policies Are.” “In an interview with ‘CBS Good Morning’ host Charlie Rose, President Barack Obama opened up and revealed what he considers to be the biggest mistake of his first term. No, it had nothing to do with his policies; those were good, he explained.

The mistake of my first term was thinking that this job was just about getting the policy right. And that’s important. But the nature of this office is also to tell a story to the American people that gives them a sense of unity and purpose and optimism, especially during tough times. That’s called leadership, of which you and your nature know nothing about. You are too busy with your class warfare schtick to know how to spell unity; we know your purpose and that does not engender optimism. The storyteller-in-chief is falling down on the job.

Obama completed a trifecta of hopelessly out-of-touch statements even more recently. The following is excerpted from The Denver Post: “The teleprompter must have been out of commission when President Obama, speaking off the cuff, stuck his foot in his mouth at a campaign rally in Roanoke, Va. Despite the best efforts of campaign spokesman Ben LaBolt to recast Obama’s remarks, he said what he said.
Finally, it was one o'clock, and Mr. Parrish reopened the doors. “Next,” he called out. I clutched the documents I had brought, stood up, and moved toward his desk. Not wanting to have to come back for lack of the correct documents, I had brought with me My short form Florida birth certificate (no, I was not born in France), My Social Security card, showing my full name, My North Carolina marriage license, My late husband’s death certificate. The title and all other papers relating to my car, My car insurance information, My passport, My utilities bill from the Town of Highlands, My North Carolina voter registration card and an issue of the Highlands Newspaper, with my photo and column.

That should do it, I thought. Heck, if he’d asked, I would have even shown him my tattoos – except that I don’t have any! Poor Mr. Parrish smiled soothingly, and plowed through my paperwork like a trooper. Then it was on to the eye test. Funny, how the letters on the left side weren’t as clear as the ones in the middle.

Michelle Mead-Armor
michiemead@aol.com

Driving Miss Michie II

I walked into the waiting room of the Franklin DMV with the swagger of a nervous gunslinger in a disreputable Old West bar. The waiting room was full of equally anxious, unhappy looking people, each of whom had brought three friends and an equal number of people from their immediate family for moral support. Charles Parrish, the examiner, was a courteous, jovial gentleman, and he apologized for the length of the waiting time of people to be served. I signed the waiting list - #11 - and prepared for a long wait, my courage and bravado disappearing with each passing minute. Finally, they got to the young man just in front of me, and the bomb dropped. Since he was taking the actual driving test, he was the last person that morning to be dealt with. The rest of us would have to come back 1 ¼ hours later, after lunch. My heart sank. Head hung low, I accompanied Lee back to the car, sniveling at first, and then breaking into loud wailing. I sobbed and sobbed, inconsolable.

“Why don’t we get something to eat?” Lee said, cheerfully. Normally, I’d have to be on death’s door not to tackle food, but my appetite was gone. Instead, we walked around K-Mart, picking up odds and ends of shopping. Way too early, we were back in the DMV parking lot. We waited in the hot car, Lee making small talk, and meracking my brain to remember the fine print of the driving code. Surely I knew it by now, having studied it with the eagle eye of a Hollywood lawyer looking over a pre-nup. At times, I’d even tried bringing up details of the driving code into normal conversations, a challenge for some parts. Imagine my delight when one day I found myself with a friend in Clemson, stuck in funeral traffic. With great enthusiasm, I expounded on the do’s and don’ts of driving, giving particular attention to the use of headlights and hazard warning signals. Even though she didn’t say so, I’m sure she was impressed.
and on the right side. Never mind! Then, it was the sign test. Confident, I clearly stated what each sign silhouette stood for, and aced the lot. My confidence returned. I was on a roll! Then the examiner motioned for me to sit down at one of the two computer testing sights. I took a deep breath. It was show time.

Two answers seemed reasonable. I took a guess, and got it wrong. “Oh, no!” I thought to myself. “Was this the beginning of the end?” I panicked, but moved on to the next question. Confidence shaken, I read it, and froze. Another one with two reasonable answers. I pressed the button, and skipped it. Then, a few more correct answers, and another skipped one. I lost track of my tally at the bottom left hand side of the screen. Suddenly, the test stopped, and I looked up to see Mr. Parrish smiling benevolently in my direction.

“I just give me a second, M’am, and I’ll take your picture for your license.” I thought in the waiting room of the DMV! One. And another. I wonder what they are thinking in the waiting room, “This woman is 61 years old, and she’s just now getting her Learner’s Permit!” The waiting room erupted in cheers and applause. I walked over to have my photo snapped, wondering if when I got it in a few weeks it would show my stunned amazement and joy.

And then, it was all over. All that waiting and worry. All those sleepless nights and anxious days. That sour feeling in the pit of my stomach. The specter of failure hanging over me. Lee and I walked out of the building and down the sidewalk to the car. Suddenly, I remembered my school days in Virginia, and the victory cry we’d been taught as good Southern children. And with apologies to my Yankee father, I began to shout, my best rebel yell. “Yee-haw!” I crowed with enthusiasm. And since it sounded so good to my ears, I did another one. And another. I wonder what they thought in the waiting room of the DMV?!

Michelle is a writer and translator who moved to Highlands after years of living in Baltimore, Sydney, Paris and New York. She lives in town with her two very spoiled cats, Orion and Weasel. Now that Michelle has her Learner’s Permit, she is not amused by comments like “Boy, give me a call when you’re out on the roads, and I’ll be sure to stay home!” They are tacky, unnecessary, and just plain cruel. Oh, and they’re not particularly funny, either. Or helpful.
thing you read these days is fake.

Which brings me to my last story (Yeah!!!!) about another married couple named Tom and Gerry who were career criminals, killing people and stealing stuff their whole lives. They were eventually killed in a shootout with the police and were reincarnated as dung beetles in Africa. These small bugs find animal dung on the jungle floor, roll it into a ball and push it to their den for nourishment. One day while hard at work, Tom looked over at Gerry and said, “Is this all there is to life? Eat poop and die.”

Fred is hiding at the Farmer’s Market at the high school each Saturday morning peddling his books, I’m Moving Back to Mars and Deceived. Like Waldo, he’s hard to spot but stop by anyway and give him “what for” if you can find him.

Meet local candidates, tour the new office, shop the Democratic Store and enjoy live music!
Eroica Trio returns for the H-CCMF 2012 season

The Eroica Trio returns for the 2012 Highlands-Cashiers Chamber Music Festival season! On Friday, July 27th, and Saturday, July 28th, the trio will perform selections from Beethoven’s “Kakadu Variations” or “Ireland Phantasie,” Brahms’ “Trio in C Major” or “ Arensky Trio,” and “America” from “West Side Story” or “Miniature Viennese March.”

On Sunday, July 29th, the Eroica Trio will perform a free concert at the Performing Arts center in Highlands. The concert will feature Brahms, Ravel, Franck, and Albert Carlton Library. The concert will begin at 5 p.m. and will be repeated on Sunday, July 30th. These performances will demonstrate exactly why the trio is so highly regarded by music lovers worldwide.

Woodturning at The Bascom!
Young Artists, Unite! opens on July 31 at the Hudson Library

Experience a day of woodturning at The Bascom on Saturday, July 28 from 10 am – 4 pm, sponsored by the Carolina Mountain Woodturners and Cashiers’ Western Carolina Woodturners. Using the Turning Learning Center, a portable turning lab, eleven mini-lathes will be set up on The Bascom Terrace. Stop by and do simple woodturning projects like honey dippers, bud vases, bottle stoppers and spinning tops. Adults and children, 10 years old and up, are eligible to try woodturning.

The Bascom is open year-round - Monday through Saturday, 10 am to 5 pm 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 Bascom workshop offerings or for more details on all Bascom activities, visit www.TheBascom.org.

Playhouse fundraiser concert on July 29

Music Director and Highlands favorite daMon Goff will be holding a concert titled “daMon: Playin’ the Keys, Singin’ Some Tunes” on Sunday, July 29th at 5:30PM on the Playhouse Stage. Act I will be daMon playing and singing some of his favorite songs, from Gershwin to the Beatles. Act II will be a Sing Along - so bring your singing voice! Cost is Pay What You Can, as all proceeds will benefit the Highlands Playhouse.

Docents needed at Historical Society

What could Abraham Lincoln possibly have to do with Highlands, North Carolina? For the answer to these and other fascinating questions about the history of our town, visit the Highlands Historical Museum on Fridays and Saturdays between 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. and Sunday afternoons from 1 – 4. Meanwhile, the Highlands Historical Society needs docents for three hours on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday afternoons. If interested call 828-787-1050 and leave a message, or visit the Museum at 524 N. 4th Street.
Highlands Area Upcoming Events

Don Domkowki at 828 743-3004.
Sat. & Sun. July 28-29
  Offers may be made in person or by email to northcarolina@lhgn.com.
  www.buyhighlandshomenc.com. 10% of profits to go to Highlands-Cashiers Hospital.
• Open House – Sat., 10a to 4p. Sun., 1-4p. 35 Ravenel Lake Road. US 64 east past Cullasaja Club to Ravenel Lake Road on the right.

Sunday, July 29
• Second Annual R.E.A.C.H. Gala. Cocktails, live auction at the home of prominent Houston and Highlands interior designer, Tony Raffa and his partner Scott Allbee at 6 p.m. For reservations, call 828-369-5544.
• HCCMF: The Eroica Trio Program: “The Eroica Trio-A La Carte” – audience choice Performing Arts Center, Highlands. 5 PM $30, students $15. 828-526-9060 or www.hcmusicfestival.org
• Playhouse fundraiser concert at 5:30 p.m. at the Playhouse with daMon Goff. Cost is Pay What You Can.

Monday, July 30
• HCCMF: The Eroica Trio Program: “The Eroica Trio-A La Carte” – audience choice Albert Carlton Library, Cashiers. 5 PM $30, students $15. 828-526-9060 or www.hcmusicfestival.org
• Highlands Watershed project at Coleman Hall in the First Presbyterian Church on Monday at 1:30PM. Plans are to present the results of the study for the nine-element plan and to solicit feedback from all stakeholders in the target watershed. For more information, call LTLT at 524-2711 x309.
• At H-C Hospital, Memory Loss, Dementia and Alzheimer’s. The Basic: 10a to noon. RSVP to 526-1498.

July 30-Aug. 3
• The Playhouse’s Dance Camp. An intensive dance class for different levels. 9-11:30 for beginners and 12:30-3 for intermediate and advanced students. Cost is $100 per student. For more information call 828/526-2695.
• At the country club at Sapphire Valley at 4 p.m., Bear Stories and Photography with Bill Lea.

Tuesday, July 31
• An opening reception of Young Artist Unite Exhibition at the Hudson Library from 3-4:30p.

Wed., August 1
• A free Interlude concert at 2 p.m. Dress is casual. Robert Henry, piano at the Episcopal Church.
Thursday, Aug. 2

HCP’s August production ‘Fox on the Fairway’ in the works

Play director Tanji Armor has cast the following actors in the Highlands Cashiers Players’ production of Ken Ludwig’s comedy, “The Fox on the Fairway,” scheduled to run Aug. 23-26, and Aug. 30-Sept. 2, at the Performing Arts Center in Highlands. From left are Stuart Armor, Lance Trudel, Michelle Hott, Laura Zepeda, Ronnie Spilton, Chris Hess.

Highlands Fire & Rescue Open House Aug. 4

Highlands Fire & Rescue Open House at the station on Oak Street, 11a-3p. Hotdog plates and rides on a fire truck are part of the festivities celebrating 59 years of service to the Highlands community.

Dames at Sea opens July 26 at the Playhouse

The Highlands Playhouse is excited to open its third show of the 2012 Season, Dames at Sea, on Thursday, July 26th. Dames at Sea is a send-up of the classic 1930s musicals as it follows a young girl, Ruby, as she moves from Utah to New York City in order to land a role in a Broadway show. Expect madness and mayhem along the way as Ruby encounters obstacle after obstacle in obtaining her dream.

“Tap dancing sailors, classic show tunes, glitzy costumes, and a battleship – what more could an audience want in an evening’s entertainment,” Director William Patti said. Patti, a Rabun County resident who serves as the Director of Performing Arts at Rabun Gap-Nacoochee School and Co-Director of the North Georgia Studio of the Performing Arts, thinks that this will become an instant audience favorite in Highlands. “Audiences are going to be able to come to see Dames at Sea, relax for two hours, and leave with a smile on their face. No deep thinking, just good old fashioned fun!”

The show is being choreographed by Karyn Tomczak, a former Radio City Rockette and touring theater actress. The show stars Otto resident Heidi Spoon, as Mona, who will be making her Playhouse debut despite a long list of professional credits before moving to Macon County – including the 1998 run of The Wizard of Oz at Madison Square Garden. Nigel Huckle, who recently starred in the critically acclaimed Spitfire Grill at the Highlands Playhouse, will return to play the lovable sailor, Dick.

Tickets for Dames at Sea can be purchased by visiting the Highlands Playhouse Box Office or by calling 828-526-2695. Dames at Sea will run through August 18th, with shows on Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8PM, and Sundays at 2PM.
Highlands, Cashiers, Sapphire, Shortoff, Cullowhee (including Western Carolina University), East Franklin, South Cullowhee, and Tuckasegee. An estimated 9,000 people were affected.

Restaurateurs Arthur Paoletti of Paoletti's and Andrew Figel of... on the Verandah didn't miss a beat. Figel's restaurant is filled with natural light due to its porch setting and the kitchen uses gas to operate. Paoletti's has a generator. “Luckily, it was business as usual,” said staff.

Richard Delaney, president and managing director of Old Edwards Hospitality Group (OEI) said it was business as usual, too – actually busier.

“We are lucky to have generators at the hotel and at Satulah so we were out only briefly as the generators kicked in.”

He said since they had a rehearsal dinner and reception that evening it was a good thing for OEI and for the guests coming for dinner.

“Madison's and the wine garden were extremely busy as we went from a pretty booked Thursday evening to being packed as guests made changes in their dinner plans because of the outage and booked with us,” said Delaney. “It was pretty hectic for a few hours but we tried to accommodate everyone and did our best to handle twice as many guests as we had booked.”

Marty Rosenthal of Lakeside Restaurant said when the power went out he closed up and went home. “I don’t have a generator because the power goes out so infrequently, now.”

JT Fields, owner of Mountain Fresh Foods said he learned his lesson three years ago after the town lost power for several days due to a major ice storm that winter.

“We made the investment in a whole-store generator. This time around we were able to run the whole store on auxiliary power so we didn’t miss a beat,” he said.

“When selling fresh and frozen foods, and serving the public, it’s essential to not lose power.”

Like OEI, Mountain Fresh’s only issue was serving a couple hundred more guests than it normally does on a Thursday night.

“When word got out that we were still open, everyone came in. The line for the grill wrapped halfway around the inside of the building. We had two staff members taking orders, three on the grill, and one cutting potatoes to make into French fries. It felt great to be able to serve the community during a power outage,” said Fields.

The folks at Our Lady of the Mountains Catholic Church didn’t let a little power outage spoil their plans, either. Their once monthly 6 p.m. Ladies Night Out dinner went off without a snag under the ambiance of candlelight.

Bryson’s Food Store also has a generator so the outage didn’t cause it to lose product or business.

The generator at the Rec Park had a few hiccups. It started when the power went out, but staff had to twiddle with it to get it to turn the power on inside the building. The Police Department generator misfired completely. Luckily, it’s under warranty.

The police department was busy manning traffic lights until happily, the power was restored in Highlands by 8:45 p.m.

- Kim Lewicki
... DRAKE continued from page 6

dum were adopted unanimously – a Sedimentation and Erosion Control memorandum required by the state which unifies all plans throughout the state.

“...”

The board also OK'd the ABC Commission Resolution that gives the Town Manager the power to sign off on the issuance of ABC permit recommendations to the state ABC Commission.

Currently the Mayor signs these permits and he felt that it was more appropriate for staff to handle these. The applicants would be people who want to open a restaurant and the process involves a background check by the police department.

The last resolution involved the Town Insurance Cafeteria Plan which has changed from last year's plan.

According to Frye, changes include an increase in the drug card co-pay from $4 to $10; a $200 increase in what the town pays on the employee's deductible up from $7,800 to $8,000 this year -- total deductible is $10,000 with the town covering $8,000 and the employee $2,000 (80/20 split) and a switch from a third party plan administrator to one provided by Blue Cross which should enable the claims to be processed faster and it saved $13,000 in administration costs.

Mayor Wilkes reported that the town has been awarded a FEMA grant to improve and replace undersized culverts at Fifth, Laurel and Spruce streets. The total cost of the project is $666,000 with the non-federal FEMA funds coming to $166,500. FEMA has three years to come through with the funds.

Public Works Administrator Lamar Nix said the town has been eyeing this project for several years and all the preliminary work is done.

Frye said the money will come to the town and the town will oversee the bid process and the work.

Except for December, the board also agreed to meet the third Thursday of each month through the end of 2012. December's meeting will be held on the 6th. Unless otherwise noted, meetings will be held at the Community Building at 7 p.m.

Kim Lewicki
Dooley returns to Highlands

Rev. Jeremy Dooley became Associate Pastor at First Baptist Church, Highlands on July 1st. Affectionately called “Dooley” grew up in Highlands. He graduated from Highlands School, Southwestern Community College, Western Carolina University, and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. For the past four years he was Associate Pastor of Students and Families at Parkway Baptist Church, Auburn, AL. He and his wife, Jaime, a public school teacher, have two sons, Ryne and Rayce. First Baptist Church invites the community to his reception in the church’s fellowship hall on Sunday, July 29 at 6:30pm. Call the church office for more info (828-526-4153).
... LETTERS continued from page 2

mayor, the town manager and commissioners who are simply trying to do the right thing for our citizens. Believe me, I have a business that doesn’t get my full attention on some days, but again, I have taken my position as a Highlands commissioner very seriously and I intend to continue to do so. If it means meeting in Town Hall and getting answers to my questions that effect responsible voting on the Town Board than I will be there often as it takes. Please feel free to drive by and check to see if my vehicle is there.

In the past months, I have turned a blind eye to some questionable comments made in my direction by Kim and on many occasions have laughed with others saying that I would have to get the paper to see what I said. As recently as this past week, I was asked questions by Kim concerning the subject of this letter. Make no mistake, I had no comment in her latest issue because I wanted my words to be read and to be recorded as such. The latest incident questioning my integrity is no laughing matter at all. I understand that there can be some editorial privileges but going forward Kim, I ask you to please practice responsible, informed, and respectful journalism. As my grandmother once stated: There are really no pots to be stirred!

I encourage all citizens to attend our meetings and get your information first-hand instead of through fabricated gossip that seems to stream through our town. If you have questions about Highlands, please contact your mayor, your town manager or your commissioners for the answer. If we can’t answer you at that very moment, we will get the answer for you.

Note: Highlands Newspaper took the liberty of correcting punctuation and spelling, specifically correcting the names Lewiki to Lewicki and Cowart to Coward.

Run-off in the rainforest

Dear Editor,

Highlands is well known as a temperate rainforest that receives on average over 80 inches of rain per year. Some years the area receives significantly more than that, some years less. September 2004, the month of Hurricanes Fran and Ivan, Highlands had more than 3 feet of rain in 10 days. Given the fact that we live in a very wet climate it would behoove the Town if Highlands to adopt strict best management practices (known as BMP’s) for storm water run-off and actually PLAN for high rainfall. These practices should be well-known to the people designing and overseeing construction in the town, yet are routinely absent from much of the work done recently.

Techniques to slow down and clean run-off include maintaining existing vegetation and planting and directing run-off towards landscaping designed to filter and help prevent flooding downstream. This is both good for the watershed and means that expensive treated city water is being used for people and not landscaping. Imagine the irony of piping all the water off a site, then BUYING water to irrigate plants with. This is actually the way most commercial landscapes are built, sadly.

In our recent very heavy rains I noticed a plume of silt like chocolate milk from the Mill Creek tributary of Mirror Lake. Upstream are two large construction sites. On prominent construction site number one most vegetation was removed and replaced with impervious surface in the redevelopment of the site and all run-off is directed to storm drains where it dumps right into the drainage for the second construction site, a muddy mess. The increased volume of run-off completely overwhelmed the drainage systems on site two, and blew out silt fencing, sending volumes of silt into Mill Creek, Mirror Lake and the Cullasaja River.

It is not uncommon to have run-off measures put in place that are overcome by our heavy downpours. Contractors from out of town often aren’t aware of the volume of water we routinely have here. Preventative measures have to be monitored and maintained. In the last heavy rain I observed a worker in the pouring rain sweeping mud into the drainage system, and ignoring gaping breaches in the silt-fencing. A larger sign on the site apologizes for the “inconvenience.” This is much more than an “inconvenience.” This is abuse of our beautiful waterways.

We tout what a beautiful place this is to live. It takes forethought, work and vigilance to keep it that way. These issues are so much easier to prevent than to fix. The pretty stream by the pavilion where I eat my lunch at the Bascom is now compromised with silt. Who will pay to fix such damage? Fines? Wealthy donors? The people that made the mess. Several years ago the other branch of Mirror Lake was severely compromised by the “River Walk” fiasco. In another egregious case siltation from the draining of Randall Lake compromised Big Creek, the source of the town’s drinking water. Examples are too numerous to mention. It seems as though no lessons are ever learned.

To the credit of the Town of Highlands a large storm-water control and infiltration system was installed recently under the Kelsey-Hutchison Park with the funds from a clean water grant. This is work in the right direction and those involved deserve to be recommended for a job well done.

It is possible to utilize run-off in landscapes - in beautiful healthy landscapes that benefit from the run-off water, clean the water, and slow down drainage from the site, thus reducing flooding downstream. The parking area at the Martin-Lipscomb Performing Arts Center is a good example of a landscape that utilizes water on site to support a lovely garden. Go by and look at it and see what you think. Compare those plantings to the ones in the largest existing parking lot in town. I believe you will find the difference quite refreshing.

Michelle Price wrote in a recent letter saying that we should be aware that the future intake for the Town drinking water is not located in the best water. Essentially all of the run-off from downtown Highlands flows through the lake where the intake is to be located. This would make it even more imperative to control what is going into the system. Residents of Highlands should encourage the town to preserve its water quality. Let the Town Board know clean water is important to you.

As I sit here writing this letter it is pouring again – five inches of rain in the past three days. I know Mirror Lake will be silt ing up again. I hope we can turn our attention to preventing degradation of our waterways rather than cleanup. I encourage the Town Board to adopt strict BMP’s for storm-water management. The town should require proper design and provide the tools and knowledge to properly perform construction in our wet climate and impose stiff fines for violations. Individuals and contractors need to be aware of run-off issues caused by our high rainfalls.

We need to be “on top” of this because we are on the top of the watershed – we have a responsibility to our beautiful waterways, all creatures dependent on the river (all of us), and those that live down stream.

Jodie Zahner
Highlands
**Potter Watts spends day signing his work at the Hen House**

In addition to signing pieces of his Good Earth Pottery for customers, Saturday, July 21, at the Hen House, one of Richie Watts’ special End of Day creations was signed and will be auctioned off to benefit the Literacy Council of Highlands.

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**Knitters unite at Knit**

Recently, The Bascom knit group met at KNIT in Oak Square for its weekly meeting. Normally, the group meets on the terrace at The Bascom every Saturday from 10 am to noon.

**HCC lady golfers give toward literacy**

Highlands Country Club Head Golf Pro Ken Mattis, presented a $1,500 check to the Literacy Council of Highlands Executive Director, Tonya Hensley and Judy Joyner. The funds were raised by the Highlands Country Club Ladies Golf Assoc. on July 10th in memory of Diane Biggers. Biggers was a loyal supporter of the Literacy Council and donated much of her time to tutoring young children. She also had a passion for adult literacy in Highlands.

**Greenway names ‘Trail Worker of the Year’**

John Akridge received the Trail Worker of the Year Award at the recent annual meeting of the Highlands Plateau Greenway. President Joe Mangum (right) presented the award during the installation of officers and Board members: Vice President Edwin Poole, Secretary Rick Siegel, Treasurer Sonya Carpenter, and members Lester Norris, Kyle Pursell, and Pat Taylor.

**Christie’s unveils new look for magazine**

Christie’s International Real Estate, the world’s leading network in the marketing and sale of luxury homes worldwide and the only property network wholly owned by an art auction house, announces the debut of its redesigned global property magazine. The quarterly publication, once a catalogue of homes offered for sale worldwide, now features articles of internationally respected journalists, intimate views of the luxury lifestyles of renowned global personalities and vibrant photography all portrayed in a new and sophisticated design aesthetic. Christie’s is represented in Highlands by Harry Norman Realtors’, Elizabeth Salzarulo - 828-342-5555.

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Police & Fire Reports

Highlands PD log entries from June 25. Only the names of persons arrested, issued a Class-3 misdemeanor, or public officials have been used.

June 25
• At 6 p.m., officers received a report of shoplifting at Leil's Place on Main Street where numerous items of clothing were taken.

June 30
• At 2:27 a.m., Joshua Matias Delacruz, 18, of Highlands was arrested for driving after drinking underage.
• At 9:30 p.m., Matthew Newton Holt, 22, was arrested for being in possession of drug paraphernalia and possessing amphetamines/methamphetamines. He was held in the Macon County Detention Center on a $3,000 secured bond.

July 1
• At 9:30 p.m., officers responded to a two-vehicle accident at Church and 3rd streets.
• At 12:20 p.m., officers responded to a one-vehicle accident in the Mountain Fresh parking lot.

July 2
• At 1:08 p.m., officers responded to an two-vehicle accident at Church and 3rd streets.

July 3
• At 12:20 p.m., officers responded to a one-vehicle accident at Church and 3rd streets.

July 5
• At 12:30 p.m., officers responded to a two-vehicle accident at 4th and Church streets.
• At 5 p.m., officers responded to a two-vehicle accident on NC 28 south.

July 6
• At 2:45 p.m., officers responded to a two-vehicle accident on Biscuit Rock Road.
• At 1:21 p.m. First Citizens Bank reported ATM power outage.
• At 1:51 p.m., officers responded to a two-vehicle accident at NC 106 and Munger Road.

July 7
• At 1:32 p.m., officers responded to a two-vehicle accident at US 64 and Chowan Road.
• At 10 p.m., officers responded to a one-vehicle accident in the HCCDC parking lot.
• At 3:46 p.m., officers responded to a vehicle emergency activation at a residence on Cobb Road.

July 8
• At 1:19 p.m., officers were asked to check on an unoccupied residence on Hicks Road where a dog was barking.

July 9
• At 3:35 p.m., officers responded to a one-vehicle accident at Woodcrest Way and NC 106.
• At 9:49 p.m., officers responded to a two-vehicle accident at Main and 4th Street.

July 10
• At 10:52 a.m., officers responded to a residence on Paul Walden Way concerning a disturbing the peace, verbal dispute between two women.

July 11
• At 2:30 p.m., officers were called to a residence on Cullasaja Drive about a civil dispute between a man and woman.

See Police & Fire page 22
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Missing Pet

CALICO CAT (FEMALE) WITH GREEN EYES. Big black and tan spots on white with white belly and feet. 3 years old. Wearing a dark pink breakaway collar. Last seen at the end of Morewood Road the afternoon of Friday, July 13. Please call 404-667-2112 with information. (st. 7/19)

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2 GE NOVALUX 1924 HIGHLANDS STREET LAMPS, good condition. Information: Call Benson at 524-7194. (7/26)

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HATHA YOGA – Mon & Thurs at 10:45a, Wed., at 7:45a Call 828-482-2128. (9/27)

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56 ACRE SCALY MOUNTAIN COMMUNITY, Septic in, Well permit in hand. Nice private lot with no restrictions, Cleared site, Trees surround. $39,000 Tonvaughn@aol.com or (850) 363-1436. (ST. 6/28)

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For more information call Wiley Sloan at 828-200-0361 or email him at wileyandsarah@nctv.com.