

Highlands Newspaper

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Thursday, Feb. 14, 2013

Jury awards \$6 million in wrongful death case

The illegal prescription drug trade has raised its ugly head again but this time in a rare move in civil court the guilty parties have been dealt a fiscal blow.

After a day and half of deliberation in civil Superior Court

Monday and Tuesday of this week, a jury found the 2009 death of Elizabeth Preston Coram was caused by the conduct of Larry Murray and Adam Hicks, and awarded the Coram estate \$6 million in damages.

Since this was a civil case and not a criminal case the preponderance of evidence determined the outcome of the case not whether they could be considered guilty "beyond reasonable doubt" as in a criminal case.

"I am very pleased at the way 12 Macon County citizens stepped forward to make this statement," said JB Coram, Elizabeth's father. "They returned a record judgment in record time and made a power-

• See CORAM page 10

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I-pads could replace books in county schools

By Ryan Potts

Macon County Schools are currently in the process of implementing a new program designed to pilot the use of electronic textbooks in Macon County and Highlands School was first on the list.

The purpose of the program will be to provide feedback and to gain specific information about the proposed use of iPads to replace or supplement textbooks in the classroom.

Macon County Technology Coordinator Tim Burrell explained the reasoning behind the pilot program, saying the goal of the pilots is "to gain student and teachers input on what works and what doesn't. We already know the textbooks that are currently available are far more advanced than a paper copy."

Currently, the iPads are being tested at Highlands School in the Honors and AP English classes taught by Cathy McIntyre-Ross. At Franklin High School, the classes will include one Honors English Literature class, one



Highlands School teacher Cathy McIntyre-Ross with her Honors English Literature class.

Photo by Ryan Potts

Honors Geometry, one AP Government, and one Honors World History.

Due to the small number of students, Nantahala School will be receiving 33 iPads, one for each high school student. Nantahala's pilot will be different because it

will cover multiple courses, allowing the county to get a good idea of how to manage the digital workflow across multiple classes and teachers.

At Highlands, each iPad has already been loaded with multiple books for the English Litera-

ture classes. Some of the e-books include e-textbooks, and many literature classics such as *Pride and Prejudice*, *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, *Heart of Darkness*, *Crime and Punishment*, *Their Eyes Were Watching God* and *Julius Caesar*. Most of the

• See I-PADS page 8

'Ham' case dismissed; public hearing set

The Stephen Ham vs. Mayor David Wilkes case was set to be heard in Macon County Superior Court Monday, but the case was dismissed.

"Steve voluntarily dismissed his claim without prejudice which gives him the right to re-

file the same claim within a year," said Town Attorney Bill Coward. "That rendered moot the town's motion to have the case involuntarily dismissed."

According to Macon County Clerk of Court Vic Perry "the case was settled out of court." but Cow-

ard said the word 'settled' suggests something that didn't happen.

"There was no 'settlement,' i.e., no money paid to Steve," he said. "I have no idea why the Clerk would think that. This is not a 'settlement' in the classic sense of

• See HAM page 7

Sweepstake parlors close down in county

On Tuesday, Feb. 5, the Macon County Sheriff's Office delivered letters of intent to five sweepstake parlors that were still open in the county despite the Dec. 2012 ruling making them illegal.

According to Sheriff Robert Holland, a Temporary Restraining Order (TRO) was entered in Davidson County last week prohibiting enforcement of NC GS14-306.4, but after a hearing held Monday, Feb. 4, the TRO was dissolved and the entire lawsuit was dismissed.

His office promptly issued a letter of intent to the parlors still open in the county.

"Since there is no legal barrier that prohibits law enforcement from criminally charging

• See SWEEPSTAKE page 10

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• THE PLATEAU'S POSITION •

• LETTERS •

Good news for visual arts in the park!

After writing my last letter-to-the-editor in the Feb. 7 edition of Highlands Newspaper concerning the town's art policy, especially having art exhibits in the park, I received positive feedback from a town official. I was informed that visual art exhibitions are not "banned" from the park as I had described it in my letter. Art shows can be held in the park, so long as a nonprofit organization sponsors the event.

As I understand it, exhibiting artists will pay entry fees to the sponsoring nonprofit organization and will be allowed to sell their work. After all administrative and overhead costs are satisfied, the sponsoring organization will also be the beneficiary of the event. It appears to be good and fair policy to me.

The art exhibits in the park will not be allowed on the Memorial Day and Labor Day weekends. Apparently, there is a concern that such events on holiday weekends would put too much strain on parking and thereby reduce the flow of business in downtown.

I hope that analysis is correct. With so many other art events occurring in the area, I fear folks may skip Highlands to go to places like Cashiers where artist will be exhibiting work on holidays in their big, beautiful park.

Being a loyal Highlander I will stay right here. I may even walk on our wonderful Greenway to downtown and look for some local, mountain-made merchandise to buy.

Patrick Taylor
Highlands

So glad art shows in the park are still on!

Dear Editor,

I wish to express my thanks and appreciation to the Highlands Town Manager for deciding to allow the Village Arts and Crafts Show to continue and to the Macon County Art Association for sponsoring the event.

soring the event.

I am a vendor – Pure 'n Simple Jewelry; my products are one-of-a-kind pieces handmade by me using semi-precious gemstones. The two small shows in Highlands have long been the highlights of my season; in fact, they are the only shows where I exhibit. The occasions have been "little vacations" for me. As a disabled senior citizen who loves my hobby-turned-obsession, I have enjoyed spending long weekends in Highlands.

I'm looking forward to seeing all the nice people I've met and friends I've made when I visit Highlands for the show in early June. And I'm sure that my many

merchant friends in the town will be glad to see me again!

Nancy C. Taylor
Greenville, SC

H-C Hospital care was impeccable

Dear Editor,

Recently, after a serious falling accident, I experienced medical treatment from our local healthcare system at Highlands-Cashiers Hospital and at Asheville's Mission Hospital. Doctors and nurses at

Highlands-Cashiers Hospital saved my life and I spent ten days in Mission's ICU getting well.

My treatment and care at both hospitals was, in my opinion, the best there is. Highly qualified doctors, nurses, staff and specialists in both hospitals exhibited the utmost in professionalism and impeccable care.

Carol Adams
Glenville

• OBITUARIES •

Commander Charles Chuck Edgar Sellers USN (retired)

Following a long fight with cancer, Commander Charles Edgar Sellers (Chuck), USN (retired), died February 5, 2013, at home in Columbia, Maryland, with his wife Beth by his side.

Chuck was born to Edgar Elzie Sellers and Anna Meta Anderson Sellers in Franklin, NC on July 2, 1951. He spent his formative years in Savannah, GA, where he attended and graduated from Savannah Country Day School. Chuck's unique Naval Academy experience was completed with him as a member of the classes of '73 and of '75, with a Bachelor of Science in Oceanography and a commission of Ensign in the US Navy.

Upon graduation in 1975, Chuck earned his surface warfare designation, serving on the USS Illusive (MSO 448), Plank Owner on the commissioning crew of the USS Moosbrugger (DD 980), and serving on the USS Jonas Ingram (DD 938). At this point, Chuck shifted designators to become a Navy oceanographer, and he attended and graduated from The Naval Postgraduate School with a Masters of Science in Air Ocean Sciences. His service as a Navy meteorologist was highlighted with tours with Commander US Naval Forces Europe in London to the Naval Oceanographic Command at Stennis Space Center in Bay St. Louis, MS.

• See OBITUARY page 3

LETTERS-TO-THE EDITOR-POLICY

We reserve the right to reject or edit submissions.
NO ANONYMOUS LETTERS WILL BE ACCEPTED.

Views expressed are not necessarily those of Highlands Newspaper.
Please EMAIL letters by Sunday at 5 p.m. There is a 500-word limit without prior approval.

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Donations sought for Honduras mission

• MILESTONES •

During his stay as a Peace Corp volunteer in Honduras, Highlander Alex Os-teen used his business acumen to help a struggling coffee cooperative go from losing money every year to netting a profit of over \$100,000. With some of this money the small town decided to try to build a medical clinic so villagers wouldn't have to travel so far to see a doctor.

Unfortunately, due to political unrest, Alex had to leave before the clinic was completed, but he did promise that he would raise additional funds here in the U.S. to help the construction costs.

When Alex went to Bolivia with Dr. Baumrucker, the doctor said he knew where he could purchase new medical equipment at reduced prices for such clinics and was able to buy enough supplies to equip two offices for about \$1,000. If bought at market prices, all this equipment would have cost more than \$6,000.

Examples of this equipment are on display at the Highlands United Method-



Honduras medical clinic in the works; equipment on the way.

ist Church and interested donors can choose to make a donation to cover the cost of the tools that will soon allow a doctor to examine and make diagnoses in Honduras. The money will help defer the cost of the construction which hopefully will be completed when the team of volunteers

travels to Honduras on May 11, 2013 to install there items.

The items are on view in the Methodist Church fellowship hall 8a to 4p during the week and Sundays from 9a-12:30p.

Make donations to the HUMC designated for the Honduras Mission.

... OBITUARIES continued from page 2

Throughout his various tours, Chuck's main focus has been improving those around him. After retiring after 22 years of active service, Chuck became a program manager, helping to build new classes of Navy ships, first on the Gulf Coast, and later, in the DC area, helping build the USS San Antonio (LPD-17), USS Zumwalt (DDG 1000), and the USS Freedom (LCS 1).

While his work focus has been the US Navy, Chuck, with his wife Beth, have raised three children of whom they are very proud. Chuck was the dad who volunteered to do anything that supported his kids. Chuck was predeceased by his father, Edgar E. Sellers, and one son, Chisholm Solana Sellers. He is survived by his mother, Anne Sellers, his wife, Elizabeth (Beth) Weeks Sellers, and his children, Charles Doty (Jennifer) of Columbia, MD, Elizabeth Anne of Arlington, Virginia, and Caroline Elise of Columbia, MD, as well as his two granddaughters, Molly Anne Sellers and Leah Rose Sellers.

Chuck was one of the most positive people you could find. He had the ability to touch everyone and leave them happier and upbeat as well. All who knew Chuck are better off, and his impact on the world will continue to be felt through all of those he touched. Burial was in the Greenwich section of Bonaventure Cemetery. The family has asked that in lieu of flowers, donations may be made in memory of Chuck

to Savannah Country Day School for the Edgar E. Sellers Scholarship Fund, 824 Stillwood Drive, Savannah, GA 31419-2643.

Delphia Denzel Evitt

Delphia Denzel Evitt, age 98, of Highlands, NC, died Sunday, February 10, 2013. She was born in West Plains, MO, the daughter of the late James Monroe Guilliams and Eliza McKinney Guilliams. She was married to Mack Evitt who died in 1965. She had worked as a CNA at Highlands-Cashiers Hospital. She was a loving mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother. She loved making afghans, crocheting and flowers. She was a member of Highlands First Assembly of God Church.

She is survived by three daughters, Kathleen Evitt of Sylva, NC, Colene Ledbetter and Shirley Houston and her husband William Clinton of Highlands, NC; eight grandchildren and several great-grandchildren also survive. In addition to her parents and husband, she was preceded in death by a daughter, Maxine Evitt; a son, Leland Evitt; four sisters and three brothers.

Funeral services were held Wednesday, February 13 at 2pm at Highlands First Assembly of God Church, with Rev. Randy Reed and Rev. Jeff Houston officiating. Burial was in Evitt Cemetery. Pallbearers were Thad Evitt, Craig Evitt, Craig Montgomery, Chuck Knolton, David Shope, and Ben Houston.

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



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• LOOKING AT LIFE •

Shrink this!

I knew it was going to happen. As soon as our beloved president spotted an opportunity to get on stage and perform, I knew what he would say about the Sandy Hook Elementary School shootings and I knew how this would all unfold. I also knew his performance would be awesome and dramatic. Keep in mind this administration's motto: "Never let a perfectly good crisis go to waste." Ha, and you thought the title was about your shrinking paycheck!

Just like ole Bill Clinton, president Obama can cry at will. But I think Bill was a better crier with his hangdog look and raspy voice, tears would flow on demand. It's a talent most actors must acquire to be successful.

Ya see, I had our current president figured out from the start. I knew he would skip past the important issues, like the psychopaths wandering our streets, the unrestricted

violent video games our children love to play with their buddies and I knew he would skip past his cherished and beloved Hollywood gang who don't have a clue what moral greatness is about. I knew he would go straight for the guns.

The only thing that threw me off a little was the president picking Vice Clown Joe Biden to head up the investigation/study. Is Obama giving his "big stick" to Biden? Whoa....close your eyes and picture that! For me, that was the icing on this charade of charades. Oh, and I'm asking the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra to play "March of the Gladiators" when our congress passes new gun legislation....if and when our Democratic Senate ever does.

Relax, Highlanders, President Obama is not going to take our guns away and violate our second amendment rights. While he would love to do that, he's way too smart to attempt something that bold. Instead, he'll try to take away some of our toys and accessories such as bullets and magazines. The second amendment does not protect us from the government taking away our toys. Write that down and watch this show of shows unfold.

He'll fail, of course, but he might be able to ban certain magazines that feed bullets into weapons. Currently the president wants congress to approve a limit of 10 rounds (bullets) per magazine, therefore making the sale of everything else illegal. Under the new proposal, psychopaths will be inconvenienced and have to reload after killing 10 children.

But a disturbed person can kill as many children with three 10-round magazines that are legal than with one 30-round magazine that is illegal. It might take the shooter an extra few seconds to reload.

Remember, for Obama, this magazine stuff is pure theatre....an opportunity to further his agenda, seizing upon a crisis. He's a very bright guy and knows that limit-



Fred Wooldridge

ing the size of magazines will stop nothing. He simply wants to show us he's doing something while finding out where all our guns are and who owns them.

If I were president, God forbid, I would do things differently. Instead of aggravating every redneck, hunter, sportsman, marksman....homeowner....and yes, even many Democrats, I would recognize that banning oversized magazines won't save anyone's life.

Then I'd call the president of Afghanistan and inform him the U.S. monthly bribe checks he's been receiving year after year (I think it's in the billions of dollars.) won't be arriving anymore because America has to do a better job of protecting our school children. I'd give that money to the states to be used for the sole purpose of putting one or more trained police officers in every American school until I can get most of our nut cases rounded up. That will take some time....they're everywhere!

Instead of having a small army of thugs raiding gun stores and demanding they turn over their illegal magazines or go to jail, I would have a small army of trained police psychiatrists, (police shrinks) educated in criminal behavior, knocking on the doors of psychopaths and carting them off to the closest funny farm for psychological testing.

And where do we find these psychos, you ask? Well, I know a lot about these sick puppies. I dodged them for more than two and half decades. During my era as a cop, South Florida was loaded with them. I'm talkin' about people who are capable of killing hundreds more children. I have no doubt these sick people were glued to their TVs and were salivating after the Sandy Hook massacre, planning their own big moment in the spotlight. And I'll bet there's a kid in Highlands' school that teach-

•See WOOLDRIDGE page 5



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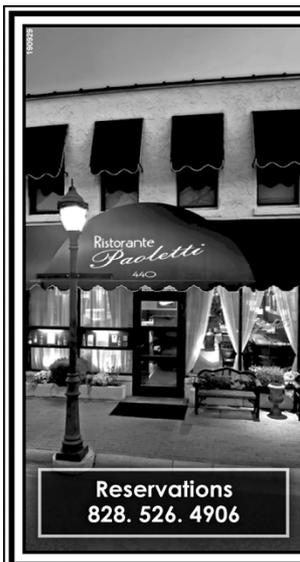
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• THE VIEW FROM HERE •

Robots in our midst

Now it's robots! Not living, breathing bots, but functioning robots. There is a robot to scrub hard surface floors and another to vacuum. There is even a robot, called the Looj, designed to clean your gutters. The gutter bot is small enough to fit inside a gutter. It is propelled on rubber tracks and has an auger on the front to bore through leaves, and whatever other debris might find its way into a gutter. It looks very much like a remote control vehicle we bought Bull for Christmas years ago.

That robot came from Radio Shack and traveled on augers, which were designed to travel grass, pavement, water or snow. It didn't work on any surface we could find. I watched a You Tube of the gutter robot doing its thing. It seems to be more effective than Bull's all terrain vehicle, which was actually a no-terrain vehicle.

The vacuuming robot is called the Roomba. Any lady I have asked said, "They have them at Bed, Bath, and Beyond," and adds, "All my friends who have them, love them. I was disappointed in the appearance of the thing. I imagined an humanoid robot with darting glowing eyes, a mechanical smile, and voice recognition. A little French apron and an upright vacuum would have added a touch of class.

Instead, the Roomba looks like the cans they use to ship movies from theater to theater, except they are bristling with sensors. They're about the size of a big serving platter, and can't be more than two or three inches high. I wonder where the dirt goes? One pass over our living room rug when Marley is shedding would choke the thing. They say it goes under and around furniture and covers every square inch. There is some upgrade gadget that makes it finish one room before starting another. And this is the best part; it returns to its docking station and plugs itself in when it's through. Just turn it on in the morning and come home to clean floors.

Irobot, the manufacturer, claims they sell a lot of them. They used to sell most of their robots to the Army. The Army used them for bomb disposal, which probably also resulted in robot disposal, and to sneak across enemy lines and eaves drop. I can't



Dr. Henry Salzarulo

Feedback is encouraged.

email:

hsalzarulo@aol.com

help imagine a weary group of mujahideen sitting around a camp fire, after a long day of shooting down helicopters, when this little bot sneaks into camp. One mujahideen says to the next, "I didn't know there was a Radio Shack in Kabul. I don't think the Prophet would approve. Do we have any extra bombs?" The Army has pretty much abandoned ground surveillance, which explains why the company is making pool cleaners, sort of a Creepy Crawler with attitude.

The world keeps changing. There was a time when we were impressed with an electric typewriter, then a word processor. This is just the beginning. Who knows what home robots will be capable of in the future? If they build one that carries out the trash, I hope they make it look like a brow-beaten husband. Empty nesters might be interested in one modeled after a teenaged boy. It could scatter dirty clothes all over the room, leave soda cans on expensive furniture, and speak in monosyllables.

I understand Google has produced a driverless car, and that's it has been highway tested. I hope they get a humanoid robot to occupy the driver's seat to give comfort to other motorists. The car itself is a robot, so maybe they could just borrow the mannequin from the Highlands Police Department. A big company like Google could afford a better wig. They could order from Amazon, or bid on eBay.

• THANK YOU •

The family of Overton Chambers II wishes to thank everyone for the love, care, and concern in the way of cards, visits, phone calls, food, memorials and flowers following Tony's death.

We believe Highlands is one of the best places in the world, and you have proven that to each of us with your friendship. We've been deeply touched by your generosity.

The Chambers Family

... WOOLDRIDGE from page 4

ers are concerned with. Almost every school has a scary kid.

Cops know where the whackos are. If this administration is interested in rounding up dangerous psychos, look no further than America's everyday cop; the guy who straps a gun on his hip each day and heads out into a dangerous world. He knows where they are; his life depends on keeping track of them. He just can't do anything about them.

America had many of its crazies put away back in the early '70s until President Reagan thought it was cruel to keep them locked up and turned them loose to breed and grow...like a cancer. Well, America, now it's time to round them up.

So sit back and watch this dark comedy performance unfold. Actually, it's not a comedy if you still have children in school. You have my sympathy.

• After thinking about our "New America" read Fred's mystery/thriller titled Deceived. It's about how things were accomplished during the "Old America." Download it now on your e-reader.

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• JUST HERS •

Hit and Myth

History is cool. No, really! It is. If there's anything I'm disappointed with right now it's that we have so much politics, and not enough history – or at least, interesting, important stuff that we'll remember as history years down the line.

As a fan of all things old and crusty, I was enchanted by the discovery this week of Richard III's skeleton. Was he found near Bosworth Field, where he was killed 500 years ago, or quietly resting beside a country lane? No, that wouldn't be as much fun as where they found him. Richard III is now officially the Plantagenet in the Parking Lot.

The Last of the Plantagenet Dynasty, one of the main players in the Wars of the Roses wound up underneath a "Pay and Display."

OK, OK. It's not as weird as all that. The parking lot was built on the ruins of Greyfriars Church in Leicester, which makes it less strange that Richard III be discovered there. Still, for someone as controversial as Richard III, it makes good reading.

Few historical figures have generated as such heated debate as our Richard. They may have coined the nickname "Tricky Dick" for him centuries before it was bestowed on disgraced former President Richard Nixon (who like all of his brothers, was named for an English king, in his case, Richard the Lionheart). Shakespeare didn't like Richard III, portraying him as a nasty, scheming hunchback who usurped the throne by dispatching of his two nephews in a particularly gruesome way. Bones of two young boys were discovered buried underneath a staircase, and for years it was assumed that their uncle was responsible for the disappearance.

I know. By now, you're thinking "parking lots?" "Staircases?" Are you seeing a pattern here? Considering the wealth these people obviously enjoyed, it's odd they didn't seem able to afford a family plot.

Few people are all good or all bad, and there's much good to say about Richard III. In 1483, he created what we might today call the public defender's office, so that poor people who couldn't otherwise afford legal representation could have their grievances



Michelle Mead-Armor
michiemead@aol.com

heard.

He introduced the concept of bail, to protect suspects before trial, and to keep their property from being seized while awaiting their day in court.

Richard III founded the College of Arms (heraldry, coats of arms, and genealogy), banned restrictions on the printing and selling of books, and

ordered that written laws and statutes be translated from the traditional French into English (yes, the translator in me noted that detail).

Richard and his wife, Anne Neville, endowed King's and Queen's College at Cambridge University, and made grants to the church. For someone who is often portrayed as a "baddie," he seems to have done a lot of good.

Oh, and the hunch back? A case of idiopathic scoliosis, which he developed as a teenager. Kind of makes you put adolescent acne into perspective, doesn't it?

In fact, there is still such controversy regarding Richard III that societies have evolved to try to restore his reputation posthumously. These people are referred to as Ricardians.

People are now questioning the often biased reporting of medieval scholars, who often wrote about historical figures years after their deaths, with little or no proof to back up their claims. Imagine Walter Cronkite writing a biography of Lincoln, and telling us what he was like.

If I were a monk/historian writing about a king who looted the monasteries, for example, I wouldn't particularly paint him in a positive light.

The Tudors who succeeded the Plantagenets did their best to tarnish the memory of Richard III, as you might expect. After all, isn't most history written by the victors? As my favorite Mary Washington professor, Dr. Arthur Tracy used to say, "It all depends on whose ox is being gored."

In America, however, we like our historical figures more on the saintly side. Our history text books are filled with stories of George Washington and the cherry tree. "I cannot tell a lie!" is a line that all American schoolchildren are taught. We grow

• See JUST HERS page 8

Raleigh visits keep Macon County in legislators' sights

Macon County Commission Vice Chair Ronnie Beale serves as Macon County's eyes and ears in Raleigh as the NCACC First Vice President.

He spends a few days each week in the halls of the legislature to keep the county at least in Raleigh's peripheral vision.

At Tuesday night's Macon County Commission meeting, he announced the formation of a new conference of four county commissioners-turned legislators -- of which Senator Jim Davis is one.

"This is important because they know how county government works," said Beale. "We are hopeful they can stand in the gap for the counties."

Also addressed last week was the recent decrease of magistrates in rural counties -- Highlands lost its 1/2 position Jan. 1, 2013.

Beale said the decrease in magistrates has a real effect on involuntary commitments.

"Visiting the magistrate is the first step so this is a real problem. Involuntary commitments

continue to rise and with that so does the Sheriff Office budget. The average stay in the ER is 35-37 hours which is unacceptable for law enforcement and for our citizens," he said.

Video conferencing has been set up with mental health providers to by-pass the magistrate step when it comes to involuntary commitments but the need for a magistrate is still acute.

Though Highlands has video conferencing set up for involuntary commitments, DUIs and domestic violence calls represent the largest number of calls for the police department.

"Catch a DUI in Highlands when they have one officer working and basically Highlands is uncovered because the officer has to come off the mountain," said Beale.

He said the "magistrate talk" will continue in Raleigh when he returns next week.

"We want them to reinstate these rural counties whose magistrates have been cut to three," said Beale. "Now magistrates are averaging 70-80 hours a week and that's

straight salary."

• The NCACC is the official voice of all 100 counties on issues being considered by the General Assembly, Congress and federal and state agencies. Founded in 1908, the Association provides expertise to counties in the areas of lobbying, fiscal and legal research, communications, intergovernmental relations, information technology, field visits and risk management services.

– Kim Lewicki

USFS trail report completed

The U.S. Forest Service National Forests in North Carolina today unveiled the Nantahala and Pisgah National Forests Non-motorized

Trail Strategy report. The report is available online at: www.fs.usda.gov/goto/nctrail-strategy.

• See USFS page 9

... HAM continued from page 1

someone getting money, but a public hearing before the Board of Commissioners (BOC) will happen which is what Mr. Ham has wanted."

Ham alleges that "errors in legal procedure occurred" when the Planning Board made changes to a Conditional Use District plat that houses the Town Place Condominiums (Mesa property) on Hickory Street without a public hearing being held before the BOC and said the dismissal doesn't bring the case to a conclusion. "I can reopen the case anytime within the next year."

Meanwhile, at the Tuesday, Feb. 5 Planning Board meeting, a recommendation to amend the verbiage in the Unified Development Code (UDO), which initiated the suit on Ham's part, was sent to the BOC and will be

heard at the Thursday, Feb. 21 meeting.

Attorney Coward and Town Manager Bob Frye were at the Planning Board meeting to explain why the UDO verbiage should be amended. Coward said the NC General Statutes only allows an elected board to make zoning changes, whereas the UDO allowed the Planning Board to do so, but only for Conditional Use Districts.

Town Planner David Clabo said the proposed changes recommended by the Planning Board will be the subject of a public hearing at the March 21 Town Board meeting.

All amendments to the UDO must have a public hearing prior to adoption by the Town Board.

But this particular process has become rather convoluted.

Coward said the BOC will hear the Planning Board's recommendation at its monthly meeting, as well as comments from the public on Thursday, Feb. 21 and will send it back to the Planning Board for a non-binding recommendation.

Based on the outcome Feb. 21, Coward said the BOC may decide to hold a public hearing at the March 21 meeting to hear the public and vote on the amendment to the conditions of the Conditional Use Zoning district of the Town Place property because the previous petition was handled under the "administrative change" provision that is being eliminated.

At which point the amendment will be proposed by the BOC under the UDO as amended.

– Kim Lewicki

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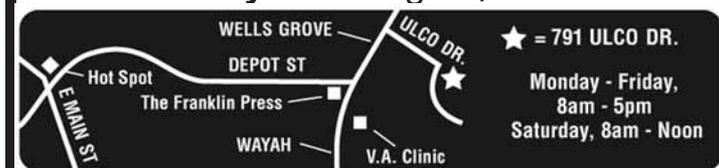
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... JUST HERS continued from page 6

up on stories of Lincoln walking miles to return the few pennies he inadvertently short-changed a customer.

Uncomfortable topics are often ignored, or subjects which may show our icons in a less than favorable light. George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, and Patrick Henry, all fighters for freedom, were slave holders. George Washington conveniently married the richest widow in Virginia (are only women presumed to be gold diggers?) and he was also the biggest whiskey distiller of his day, two facts that might not sit well with some folks. As for Jefferson's long-time affair with his slave Sally Hemmings, who knows if he wouldn't have come out and said,

hand on heart, "I did not have sexual relations with that woman?"

But, let's get back to our Brit. It seems a bit sad to be the King of England, and be missing for 500 years. Perhaps there are worse things than being buried in parking lots, no matter how much Joni Mitchell had mouths them in her song "Big Yellow Taxi."

As someone who is a full-time resident of Highlands, and has lived here during The Season, I almost envy Richard III's place of final repose. At least he was able to get a parking spot. Richard III may be best known for his desperate plea, shouted in battle on Bosworth Field, "My horse, my horse, my kingdom for a horse!" I have felt a similar despair in August, shouting, "A parking space, a parking space, my kingdom for a parking space!" On your third or

fourth run around Highlands, looking for a space to stash your vehicle, small frustrations can easily take on historic proportions.

It seems that the towns of Leicester and York are now in a battle royal over who gets Richard III's remains. They might take their cue from another famous Brit who made it big in the Colonies, a gentleman named Leslie Townes Hope, better known as "Bob."

When the legendary centenarian was asked by his wife where he wanted to be buried, Bob Hope couldn't resist a final one-liner. "Surprise me!" he quipped.

• Michelle A. Mead moved to Highlands to marry her college sweetheart, John Armor, after 19 years of living abroad and 11 years in NYC. Michelle is fascinated by history, and hopes to make a little herself.

... I-PADS continued from page 1

classics were free to download. The typical e-textbook download costs \$15, whereas hardback textbooks that the county would traditionally purchase range from \$75 each to \$150 each. Another positive thing about the e-textbook is that it can be updated immediately as opposed to hard copies, which cannot be updated.

McIntyre-Ross is very happy to be part of the pilot program, mainly because it her "seniors are excited about this opportunity to become a paperless classroom." Additionally, said McIntyre-Ross, "our biggest project we will be to use the I-Pad for our research paper, but we have all of our books and plays, will do our research, and are producing our written work on the device as well. This is "business as usual" in most college classrooms today, so our students will be ready when they get there this fall. And think of the trees we are saving!"

The iPads were purchased as part of the 1.5 million that Macon County has earmarked for technology upgrades. Ultimately, the goal is to begin replacing some of the classroom computers with mobile devices and to increase student access to digital learning devices in the classroom.

Each iPad is equipped with

an e-textbook that has features like imbedded instructional videos, interactive pictures and diagrams, interactive 3-D diagrams, built in quizzes, advanced annotation, markup and note taking features.

The e-textbooks also have built in interactive dictionaries, which allows students to immediately touch a word on the page and the definition of the word pops up. With these e-textbooks the definition is literally at a student's fingertips.

Other areas that the county will be looking at with this pilot are compatibility with current applications, utilization with assessments, use of the iPads as student response devices (instant testing and quizzing), use as a research tool, and creating a digital workflow to reduce the use of paper in the classroom.

Internet access on these devices will be filtered for inappropriate material both at school and at home through Macon County Schools' content filtering system. Access to downloads for games, movies and other media for students will be prohibited and controlled through the districts Mobile Device Management (MDM) solution.



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I have already been showing property since January and have two properties

under contract and two more that look very promising. Potential buyers are willing to look in the winter and we are receiving more inquiries than ever even though the "season" as we know it hasn't begun!

So my recommendation to sellers is to list now and keep it listed since buyers are searching year-round. With the down turn in the economy, buyers are familiar with excessive days on the market and it's no longer the big negative it once was.



Pat Allen
Broker-in-charge
Pat Allen Realty
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from Conde Nast, Southern Living, Barrons, and Trip Advisor, just to name a few.

Many clients ask me to call when I know snow is coming so they can come and experience Highlands in the winter. Byers are looking and buyers are buying!

• For information call Pat Allen at Pat Allen Realty Group. 828-200-9179, 828-526-8784 or contact her via email at pat.f.allen@gmail.com. See all her listings at www.patallenrealtygroup.com

... USFS continued from page 7

The report provides information on trail complexes in the Nantahala and Pisgah national forests and summarizes recommendations from stakeholders. The report includes comments from each ranger district on recommendations from the public. Additionally, the report identifies sources of funding, such as grants, which could be used to help maintain trails.

While no decisions on specific trails are being made at this time, the report will serve as a guide for future trail management in the two national forests. The report will be helpful in formulating desired conditions for trail management in the Nantahala and Pisgah National Forests management plan, which is in the process of being revised.

The Trail Strategy process began in 2010 with Forest Service personnel updating the agency's

database of non-motorized NF-SNC trails by verifying location and condition of the existing trail system.

In 2012, the Forest Service held multiple public meetings in all six districts of the Nantahala and Pisgah national forests. During the public meetings, trail enthusiasts and others with knowledge of non-motorized trails in North Carolina had a chance to provide input in the transparent and inclusive process. Organizations that promote nature-based tourism also played a role in development of the Non-motorized Trail Strategy.

During working meetings, collaborators shared the types of trail experiences they enjoy. They also looked at larger landscape and recreation issues to see how existing trails fit on national forest and non-forest lands.

• REAL ESTATE SNAP-SHOTS •

Properties for Sale

Updated Condo with Amenities



Minutes to downtown Highlands. This is a lovely 2 bedroom, 2 bath end unit with a wooded view. This unit has been updated with tile, wood, carpet flooring, & granite counter tops. There is a stone fireplace with gas logs, large storage closet and screened-in porch. Amenities include clubhouse, pool & tennis. Offered at \$249,000. MLS #76224.

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.

Perfect Log Cabin



Comfortable 3 BR/2.5BA log home located in Hemlock Ridge. This home has loads of charm with hardwood floors, tile, carpet and a stone fireplace. Enjoy the 2 large decks and screened in porch for outdoor entertaining. There is a large storage room on the lower level. Offered at \$409,900. MLS #76375.

Mtn View Home Adjoining USFS



This home is situated on 2.28 +/- acres, adjoins USFS, and boasts beautiful mountain views. Lovely & spacious 3BR./3BA with wood floors, cathedral ceiling, brick fireplace with gas logs, and screened porch with mounted TV. Retreat into the master suite with a private sunroom/sitting area, walk-in shower with double shower heads and tile seat. Offered at \$475,000. MLS #75732.

Please contact Susie deVille at (828) 371-2079 or Sheryl Wilson at (828) 337-0706.



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... SWEEPSTAKE continued from page 1

individuals for violations of the Lotteries, Gaming or Video Sweepstakes statutes contained in NC GS 14-289 through 14-309., if you own or operate internet/telephone sweepstakes, video gaming, lotteries or any other gambling operation, by whatever name, that violates NC law, then you are subject to being charged criminally and the equipment used in that operation is subject to being confiscated as evidence or contraband," he stated in the letter.

According to MC Sheriff Office Attorney Brian Welch, prior to Jan. 3, 2013 there were upwards of 20 sweepstake/video parlors in Macon County. "After that date five remained and it is those that received the Sheriff's letter," he said.

Ever since the ban on video sweepstakes, which was set to take effect Dec. 2010, was deemed unenforceable the companies behind the enterprise have been tweaking the software to skirt the law.

Sheriff Holland said his office has had numerous conversations with individuals associated with, or claiming an association with various businesses operating or contemplating operating in Macon County seeking legal advice or asking hypothetical questions about whether various modifications to the machines make them legal.

"The Macon County Sheriff's Office doesn't provide legal advice or answer hypothetical questions," he said. "The NC Supreme Court ruled in the case of Hest Technologies vs. Perdue that NC GS 14-306.4 is constitutionally valid and may be enforced. Deputies have been instructed to investigate complaints and reports of violations and to enforce the law. Our jurisdiction is countywide. We are a complaint-driven agency and will investigate future complaints or reports regarding illegal gambling operations."

According to the NC Attorney General's office it's going to be up to local law enforcement to decide when and how to enforce the ban.

"We won't know for sure what activi-

ties remain legal until an operator is cited for violating the ban and a court is forced to address the issue of just what constitutes a "game" in the context of video sweepstakes," said office representatives.

The statute makes it a crime to "operate . . . an electronic machine" to "[c]onduct a sweepstakes through the use of an entertaining display, including . . . the reveal of a prize."

Industry representatives sued to block implementation of the law, claiming, among other things, that it violated the free speech guarantee of the First Amendment.

The North Carolina Supreme Court ruled on December 14, 2012, that the ban did not violate the sweepstakes operators' free speech rights under the First Amendment. Appellate court rulings become effective after 20 days, meaning that just after New Years' Day local law enforcement could begin enforcing the ban and shutting down video sweepstakes parlors.

However law enforcement agencies waited to see the outcome of the Temporary Restraining Order entered in Davidson County last week before stepping up enforcement.

Attorney General Roy Cooper, said North Carolina's law banning video sweepstakes gambling is "strong" and welcomed the Davidson County Judge Robert Johnson ruling Monday that ended an injunction

that kept law enforcement from moving against the operators of certain machines.

Judge Johnson dismissed a challenge by a sweepstakes software maker on technical grounds late Monday, but Cooper said it reinforces the state's ban on the gambling devices.

"The state Supreme Court decision is a strong one and gives the authority to law enforcement and prosecutors to act on the law," Cooper said, referring to the December 2012 ruling by the state's highest court.

Cooper said his office knows that video poker companies continue to try to change the software to avoid the law.

"I think that's what Judge Johnson was saying pretty clearly, that he was not going to allow that. There's always a question, too, whether the software they say they're running is the software that's actually running much of the time in the sweepstakes area. This is why law enforcement needs to, or certainly has authority, to move forward and investigate," he said.

Sheriff Holland said there is no grace period or grant of immunity for illegal operations conducted in Macon County.

Any person who violates this section is guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor for the first offense and is guilty of a Class H felony for a second offense and a Class G felony for a third or subsequent offense.

— Kim Lewicki



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... CORAM continued from page 1

ful statement about where the law abiding population in the county stands."

This is the largest civil wrongful death award for criminal activity ever awarded in North Carolina.

"Now these gentlemen are business partners with me for life and we are going to have some fun," said Coram. "I will be

going where they go and getting a percentage of the profits."

Though the criminal justice system failed him, he said the benefit in the long run is that this shows people that if you are willing to slug it out in the civil justice system you can take the profit out of the drug business.

"The criminal justice system is so enfeebled it's nearing paralysis due to drugs and drug dealers," he said. "The scope of the drug problem is the criminal justice system is overwhelmed and unless it has a slam dunk situation, it is not interested in pursuing drug criminal activity."

Sheriff Robert Holland said his office has always wanted justice for the Coram family.

"We encouraged a civil action by them from the onset of this investigation which would be separate from any criminal action our office was seeking," he said. "The reality is that the burden of proof is much easier in a civil case than a criminal case. We want justice not only for Elizabeth and her family but for our community. We are not satisfied with only filing charges against those that contributed to her death but wanted and still want to be able to convict them."

He said to file criminal charges only to end with a "Not Guilty" verdict would have only caused greater pain to the Coram family.

"The fact is we are limited in what we can do by the laws of our state. Each crime in the state of North Carolina has specific criteria known as elements and as investigators we must meet each specific element in order to convict an individual of that crime. The lack of evidence in this case prevented our office and the District Attorney's Office from being able to proceed with a successful criminal case, he said."

Though he and his family wanted to pursue some justice for Elizabeth "Lizzie," Coram said the case isn't about revenge. "Lizzie is dead and gone. Nothing is going to bring her back," said Coram. "This is about sending a message that at least in Macon County there are consequences for your actions. Maybe by doing this, someone's daughter or grandchild will not go through what Lizzie did. And that's mainly what this is about."

Coram said if any damages are collected once legal expenses are paid, the money will go to charities in Macon Coun-

•See CORAM page 14



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• HIGHLANDS AREA UPCOMING EVENTS •

Ongoing

• Registration is now open for the 2013 summer Nature Day Camps at the Highlands Nature Center. Five different camps are being offered: "WOW! – a World of Wonder" (ages 4-6), "Amazing Animals" (ages 7-10), "NatureWorks" (ages 8-11), "Mountain Explorers" (ages 10-13), and "Junior Ecologists" (ages 11-14). Most camps are offered more than once during the summer,

and sessions run from Tuesday to Friday each week. For complete schedules, costs, and other information, please call 828-526-2623 or visit the summer camps webpage at www.highlandsbiological.org.

Mon., Wed., Fri.

• Heart Healthy Exercise Class at the Rec Park. 8:30-9:30 a.m. \$20/month.

• Step Aerobics with Tina Rogers at the Rec Park, 8-9 a.m. \$10 per class or \$40 a

month.

• Zumba at the Rec Park, 9:05a-10a. \$5 per class. First class free.

Mondays

• Mountain View Group of Alcoholics Anonymous will be held in the Faith and Fellowship Center of First Presbyterian Church. Enter via the entrance on 5th St. and proceed

a few steps down to the library.

Tuesdays

• Highlands Rotary Club meets at noon at the Highlands Conference Center at noon.

• Closed AA Women's meeting, 5:30 p.m. at the Presbyterian Church at Fifth and Main streets.

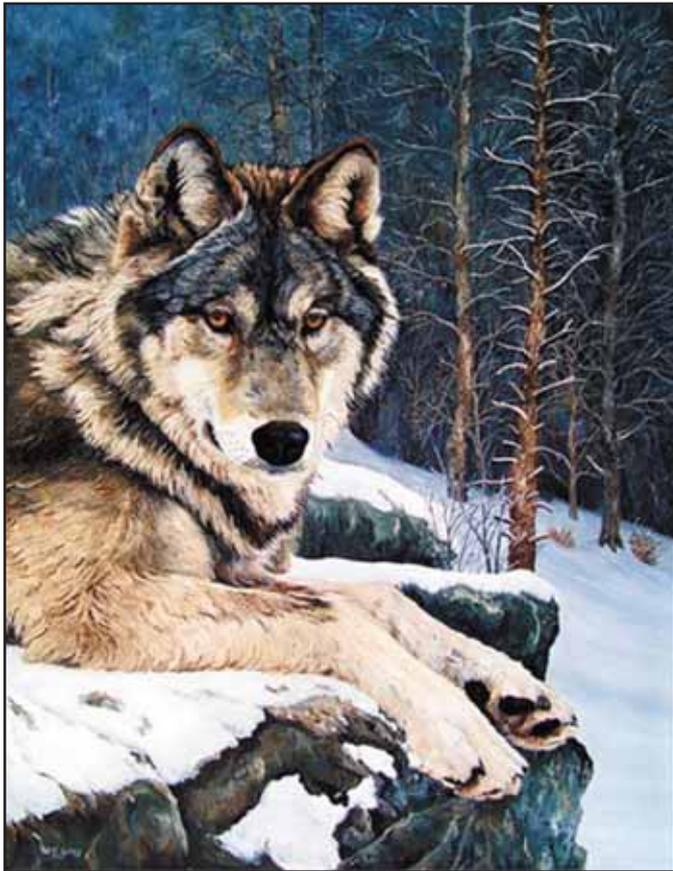
Wednesdays

• The Highlands Mountaintop Rotary meets at 7:30 a.m. in the dining room at the H-C Hospital. Enter the hospital in the main or emergency entrance and follow the signs downstairs. Visitors are welcome. Meetings end at 8:30 a.m.

• Men's interdenominational Bible

• See EVENTS page 12

Art League work at The Bascom



The Art League of Highlands will be well represented in The Bascom's "Regional Art Leagues: Selected Works" exhibit that runs through March 31 in the Bunzl Gallery. The show will include works from several regional guilds and organizations. Art League of Highlands members were invited to submit one of their pieces for consideration, and through member voting five high quality works were chosen from among the many submitted. The Art League's winning entries are: "Rushing Waters", a watercolor by Robin Swaby, "Alpha", an acrylic by Patti Gilley, "Cast Away", a pastel by Sharon Spigel, "Dragonflies", a mixed media piece by Dottie Bruce and "Chimneys", a photograph by Terry Barnes. These remarkable pieces may also be seen on the Art Leagues web site, www.artleagueofhighlands.com.

'Social Security,' HCP's new play opens Feb. 21; PAC Box office open Feb. 14

The box office opens Thursday, February 14, for the Highlands Cashiers Players' production of "Social Security," a laugh-out-loud Broadway comedy in which two sisters face the dilemma of providing care for their widowed mother, Sophie Greengrass, who is not all that easy to live with. Daughter Trudy and husband Martin, played by Marsha Shmalo and Stuart Armor, have taken their turn with Sophie and suddenly arrive at the New York City apartment of art dealers Barbara and husband David, played Jennifer Royce and Lance Trudel, to insist that it is now their turn to take Mother Sophie into their home. The comic sparks begin to fly as the two couples try to work things out, and when Sophie, played by Nancy Gaddy, appears on the scene, there's no stopping the laughs. Later, with the entrance of the elderly minimalist artist Maurice Koenig, played by Dean Zuch, Sophie's life takes an unexpected turn much to the shock of both her daughters.

Opening night for "Social Security" is February 21 at the Performing Arts Center in Highlands, with a catered reception following the performance for the audience, cast, and production team. The play runs Thursday through Sunday, February 21-24, and Friday through Sunday, March 1-3. Weekday and Saturday performances start at 7:30 p.m., Sunday matinees, at 2:30 p.m. The HCP box office will be open for season subscriber reservations Thursday and



In HCP's current play, the comedy "Social Security," the two daughters of Mama Sophie Greengrass disagree about who should have the responsibility of providing a home for their widowed mother. Daughter Barbara (left) is played by Jennifer Royce, daughter Trudy (right) is played by Marsha Shmalo. Nancy Gaddy (seated) plays Mama.

Friday, February 14 and 15. General ticket sales begin Saturday, February 16. The HCP box office, 526-8084, is located at the Performing Arts Center, 507 Chestnut Street in Highlands. Box of-

ice hours, Monday through Saturday, are 10 a.m. till 4 p.m., and on Sunday at 1:30 p.m. On performance days, the box office opens at 6:30 p.m.

• UPCOMING HIGHLANDS AREA EVENTS •

Study at 8:30 a.m. at First Baptist Church.
 • The Homegrown Buds, a homeschool 4-H club, meets at noon at the Macon County Library on Siler Road in Franklin at 1 p.m.
 • Mah Jong games will be held, open to

the public, at the Albert Carlton Cashiers-Community Library at 1 p.m.
3rd Wednesday
 • Movies at the Hudson Library. Recently released movies at 2 p.m. Free including pop-

corn. Bring your own soft drinks. 828-526-3031 for movie information.

1st Wednesday
 • Movies at the Hudson Library. Children/Family movies at 3:30 p.m. Free including popcorn. Bring your own soft drinks. 828-526-3031 for movie information. **Wednesdays & Fridays**

• Open AA meeting at noon at the Presbyterian Church at Fifth and Main streets.

Thursdays, Fri., Sat., Sun.
 • Live music at Altitudes at Skyline Lodge, 470 Skyline Lodge Road off Flat Mountain Road. Call 526-2121.

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

• The Highlands Writers Group meets at 1 p.m. at the Hudson Library. Call Anne Doggett at 526 8009.

• Free dinner at the Cashiers Community Center from 5-7 p.m. Mostly organic, healthy food. Donations accepted. Call 743-5706 for more information. Volunteers needed!

Second Thursdays
 • The regular meeting of Highlands Chapter #284, Order of The Eastern Star is held at 7:30 p.m..

Saturdays
 • At Mountain Fresh Grocery, free wine tastings from 2-4 p.m.

• The Art Room, 45 East Main St. in Franklin is having free Make & Take Classes from 10am to 12:30. Come make a

Card.. Ages 15 and up please! Call Dianne 828-349-3777 or Robin 828-421-9891.

Every Third Saturday
 • The Highlands Memorial Post #370 of the American Legion meets at the Shortoff Baptist Church. Breakfast is at 9 am. Meeting is at 10 a.m. All veterans are invite

Thursday, Feb. 14
 • The League of Women Voters of Macon County will sponsor a program with County Commission Chair, Kevin Corbin. Mr. Corbin who will provide an update on important issues and plans for the coming year. The program will be at noon at Tartan Hall in the Presbyterian Church in Franklin. Attendees are welcome to bring a bag lunch. The public is invited.

Sat., Feb. 16
 • The Highlands Plateau Greenway will have its monthly work trip this Saturday, February 16th. Anyone interested in participating, please register with Ran Shaffner by emailing highlandsgreenway@nctv.com or leaving a message at 828-526-5622. We will continue work on the Mill Creek Trail to Oak Lane. Meet at the large upper parking lot (near the pool entrance) behind the Rec Park at 9a for a brief orientation session. Participants will be furnished the necessary tools and safety equipment. Participants should bring water, rain gear, and a day pack to hold them. Wearing clothes that can get dirty is advised. RSVP since lunch will be provided by funding from the Cullasaja Women's Outreach.

• The Macon County Poultry Club in conjunction with the North Carolina Cooperative extension will hold a "Poultry Class" for anyone interested in raising chickens, turkeys, ducks, geese, or any other type of poultry for recreation and profit are invited to attend the class. The class will begin at 9 am on February 16. Randy Collins with the extensions Graham County center and Keith Wood with the cooperative extensions Cherokee County center will be the instructors. For more information call 828-332-1466 or 828-349-2049.

Tuesday, Feb 19
 • The Highlands Dialogue Winter-Spring discussion series continues on Tuesday at the Hudson Library from 10-11:30 a.m. The Topic: Resolved: The US Must Outlaw the Death Penalty. Based on: "Who Would Jesus Execute?" by Richard Viguerie. Sojourners: January 2013. Handout available at the Library (also e-mailed). Coordinator: John Gaston.

Wed., Feb. 20
 • Free movie at the Hudson Library. "Precious." Rated R.

Thurs., - Sun., Feb. 21-24
 • H-C Players present "Social Security" Thursday through Sunday. Weekday and Sat-

urday performances are at 7:30p., Sunday matinees, at 2:30p. The HCP box office will be open for season subscriber reservations Thursday and Friday, Feb. 14 and 15. General ticket sales begin Saturday, February 16. Call 526-8084.

Thursday, Feb 21
 • Healthy Heart Symposium at the Jane Woodruff Clinic, Level One, Highlands-Cashiers Hospital. Program includes Heart Risk Screening, Lunch and Learn educational talk with Dr. Julie A. Farrow entitled "Women and Heart Health," and an overview of the latest information on prevention, detection and treatment of heart disease provided by HCH Staff and Mission Heart. 11:30am - 2pm. Reservations required. Call Callie Calloway at 526-1313.

• Mary Ann Lalemand, Consumer and Family Advisor with Smoky Mountain Center will discuss Mental Health Services they offer and how to access them at 7 p.m. at 14 W Palmer Street in Franklin.

• Taize at the Episcopal Church of the Incarnation at 5:30p.

Monday, Feb. 25
 • The North Jackson County Republican Monthly Meeting at 6:30 pm at Ryan's in Sylva. Come early to eat. The meeting will start promptly at 6:30 pm.

Tuesday, Feb. 26
 • South Jackson County Republicans will meet at 6:30 PM in the new Cashiers-Glenville Community Recreation Center in Cashiers.

Fri. - Sun., March 1-3
 • Highlands-Cashiers Players Thursday through Friday through Sunday, March 1-3. Weekday and Saturday performances start at 7:30 p.m., Sunday matinees, at 2:30 p.m. Call the HCP box office, 526-8084 for tickets.

Thurs. March 7
 • Taize at HUMC at 5:30p.

Saturday, March 9
 • The Highlands Chamber of Commerce Annual Chili Cook-off from 6:30-9:30pm at the Highlands Community Building. Music by Caribbean Cowboys. For you chili-lovers who would rather eat than cook, tickets will be sold at the door, \$20pp (doors open at 6:30pm) and children 12 and under get in FREE. Soft drinks, beer and wine will be served. If you would like to enter the event as a competitor and fire up your best chili recipe, bake your best batch of cornbread ever or perfect the family's secret salsa recipe, contact Jennifer Smathers by phone at (828)526-2112, email her at visitor@highlandschamber.org.

General 'Social Security' tickets go on sale Feb. 16



Maurice Koenig, 98-year-old artist played by Dean Zuch, meets Sophie Greengrass, the archetypal Jewish Mother played by Nancy Gaddy, who has recently come to stay with her daughter in the Highlands-Cashiers Players' production of the comedy "Social Security," opening February 21 at the Performing Arts Center in Highlands. The show runs Feb. 21-24, and March 1-3. The HCP box office, 526-8084, will be open for season subscriber reservations Thursday and Friday, Feb. 14 and 15. General ticket sales begin Saturday, February 16.



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 Directed by **Mary Adair Leslie**

Box Office **828.526.8084**

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... CORAM continued from page 10

ty. "This is about standing together as a society and saying, there are some consequences for what you are doing," he said.

As the trial got underway, Judge James Downs asked the jury "What amount is the plaintiff's estate entitled to recover for damages as a result of the wrongs listed in the complaint made against the defendants? Since this is an uncontested case, it won't take very long."

Neither Murray, Hicks or counsel on their behalf were present at the trial. However, depositions obtained by Coram's attorney Scott Neumann were used during the proceedings as testimony.

"Part of punitive damages is that if you are selling drugs that can kill, there are consequences," said Attorney Neumann. "In this case we want to show Macon County as a whole that if you sell drugs and even if the cops can't

get you beyond a reasonable doubt you can lose a lot."

Neumann recounted events of July 8 and 9 but also painted a picture of Coram who was battling alcoholism but was "on the mend" and poised to graduate Wofford College that next spring at which time she intended to teach and write.

Coram testified that when home from a summer session break, on the afternoon of July 8, Lizzie said she was going out with friends. And for whatever reason she bought a bottle of wine at 3:30 in afternoon and by 5 p.m. the bottle was gone.

"Hicks and she then drank a six-pack of beer when he got back from work. Later they proceeded to the drug house where drugs were purchased. When they arrived there, they put her in bed. Yet they still gave her drugs," he said. "The primary reason I am sitting here talking to you folks, is they have to pay consequences for

their actions," he said.

In his closing arguments, Neumann said the Corams are a loving family that loved their daughter and they testified truthfully as to her problems.

"They didn't paint her as an angel. She had issues. She was 22 years old. She was on the wagon and then had a relapse. That shouldn't be a death sentence. She should have woken up the next morning with a hangover. She would have pulled out of this and had a wonderful life. It's up to you to determine how much that is worth," he said.

Several witnesses were called to speak to Lizzie's character - childhood and college friends as well as employers. CPA Curtis Mathews was also called to estimate Coram's life worth, had she lived.

Using mortuary tables and NC insurance life expectancy tables as well as what she would have made as a teacher, Mathews suggested \$2.3 million as a place to begin. Neumann asked the jury to consider pain and suffering both by Lizzie and her family as well as legal fees and funeral costs.

According to Coram and deposed testimony, Lizzie and Hicks began partying the afternoon of July 8 which later included a trip to Larry Murray's house where prescription drugs - oxycodone and tramadol - were purchased.

According to the deposed testimony of Murray, both Hicks and Lizzie were highly intoxicated - Lizzie so much so that they put her to bed. Twelve hours after her death Neumann said her blood alcohol level was .20.

Attorney Neumann said Murray sold the pills to Hicks who kept trying to feed them to Lizzie. "She said she didn't want them and then at some point she was either worn down or too drunk and she took them," said Neumann. "That's what killed her."

"If you are a drug dealer or an addict, surely there is still some humanity left in you. And to give this girl all these drugs, who was highly intoxicated -- any fool would know that could kill her and that's what happened. It's off

the charts as to their culpability and what they allowed to happen to this girl who is now dead," he said.

The party continued into the early hours of July 9. Lizzie texted her parents and said she was going to stay at a friend's house that night. Hicks shared a house with Kim Higgs and Kyle Rhodes, who authorities and the Corams say had absolutely nothing to do with Lizzie's death.

In fact under testimony, Higgs said she pleaded with Hicks to call the police as soon as she and Kyle returned home from the grocery store the evening of July 9 and learned that Lizzie had died.

However according to Attorney Neumann, Hicks waited 1 1/2 hours to call the authorities but first had a friend dispose of vials of prescription drugs in the yard.

According to testimony, Lizzie was alive when Hicks went to

work the morning of July 9 but was dead when he returned home that evening around 5:30.

According to the Medical Examiner's report, Elizabeth Coram died at the age of 22 of acute multi-drug toxicity on July 9, 2009 at the home of Adam Hicks on Sassafras Gap Road.

"Ultimately, my hope is that the outcome of this court proceeding will help to provide closure for the Coram family and allow them to begin healing from this tragedy," said Holland. "It should also serve as an example to other drug dealers who are nothing more than a menace to our community."

Holland said the case is still pending and any findings of fact or evidence that came out during the civil case could possibly be used against any suspects involved in a criminal case.

- Kim Lewicki

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HS Boys racking up great season



Highlander Philip Murphy commands the ball during the home game against Cherokee. Highlands won. See more on the HS Basketball season in the Feb. 21 edition of Highlands Newspaper.
Photo by Lisa Osteen

• BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NEWS •

Hospital one beneficiary of Annual Christmas Dinner proceeds



From left: Rick Siegal, Marty Rosenfield, Robin Taylor and Craig James.

As a part of their ongoing effort to give back to the community, Highlands Area Nonprofit Donation Sharing (H.A.N.D.S.) provided a special donation to Highlands-Cashiers Hospital on January 22nd.

With proceeds from the 2012 Highlands Annual Christmas Dinner, Rick Siegal and Marty Rosenfield presented a generous gift of \$5,000 to Robin Taylor, Executive Director of the Foundation and Craig James, President and CEO.

The 11th Annual Christmas Dinner exceeded expectations through sponsors and overall success of the event serving over 400 people and raising \$31,000 to send to local nonprofits within the Highlands area.

“This wonderful occasion has

become a mainstay in Highlands holiday traditions and the Hospital is grateful to be one of the beneficiaries,” said James. Taylor added that being a recipient of this charitable event is truly an honor for the Hospital Foundation and those funds will be used to assure health for all people across our mountain plateau. In addition to the Hospital,

H.A.N.D.S. extended donations to R.E.A.C.H. of Macon County, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Highlands, The Emergency Council of Highlands, The Food Pantry, The Highlands School Library, The Blue Ridge Free Dental Clinic, The Community Care Clinic, The Literacy Council of Highlands and The International Friendship Center.



Rotary Club elects new member

Rotary President Brian Steihler recently welcomed Jacqueline Podzinski as the Rotary Club of Highlands newest member. She moved to Highlands last year from Colorado and is the manager of the Highlands branch of Regions bank. She said “I’m happy to be in Highlands and proud to be a member of Rotary. I’m looking forward to participating in the many activities of our club.”

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• SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING •

To Dream of a Better World

**Father Bruce Walker
Episcopal Church
of the Incarnation**



Just finished re-reading a formative book by Verna Dozier called *The Dream of God*. In it she makes the case for a dream of God that looks much like the peaceable kingdom that the prophets longed for. She also makes the case that working toward that goal is not the work of the clergy alone. Far from it, clergy are better seen as support staff for the real ministers of God, who are, pretty much, everyone else who has a love for God.

She makes it clear that God dreams of a healed world, a world restored to peace with justice, and some of the ancient images of that healed world are those of the prophets. The Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church, Katharine Jefferts Schori, took this one step further by recalling a passage from Isaiah, which offers an "image of people having a picnic on a mountainside, enjoying rich food and well-aged wine. That image of being well-fed is particularly poignant in a world like ours where so many go hungry."

Lent offers us a time to reflect on our lives and our place in the world. It is a time set aside to pray, fast, study, and just as important, a time when we give alms. It's a time to look inward so that we can look outward with more resolve, dedication and love.

Whatever your faith background or even if you feel you have lost your faith, Lent can be a time when you make a conscious effort to revision and return to the dream that God has for us and our planet. As you live your life, perhaps wondering just a little what this season of Lent is all about, I encourage you to think about what really matters in life, not just for yourself, but for those around you.

A lot has been said of Lent being a season of preparation and fasting. Fasting is a whole lot more than just giving up chocolate or alcohol. Limiting or even eliminating ill-tempered or self-indulgent thoughts and ways might prove a more beneficial fast. Being conscious of the impact your life has on others and giving up on ideas that divide or alienate other people has much more potential to make a difference in this world than simply giving up a food item.

With that said, giving us a food item could be a start. When we consider what we are eating and how we are eating it and with whom we are eating, it may bring to mind some changes in how we live that may impact our world in a positive way.

Bishop Schori offers a way to make the dream a real-

• See SPIRITUALLY page 22

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
Sunday night services every 2nd & 4th Sunday at 7
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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Cashiers
Sun.: Holy Communion - 9 a.m.; Adult Forum - 10:45 at Buck's
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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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Sun.: 9:30am: Sunday School
10:30am: Middle & High School; 10:45am: Children's Program.,
10:45am: Worship Service
Wed.: 5pm Dinner (\$7 adult, \$2 child), 6pm CBC University

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Rev. Bruce Walker • 526-2968
Sundays: Education and choir rehearsal, 9 am, Holy Eucharist Rite
II, (sanctuary), 10:30 am
Thursdays: Holy Eucharist, (chapel), 10 am

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

Dr. Mark Ford, 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 Bowman, 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

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Sunday School - 10 am, Worship Service - 11 am
Bible Study - 6 pm

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Randy Reed, Pastor
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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 9:09 & 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)

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Wednesdays: Prayer Mtg. - 7 p.m.

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

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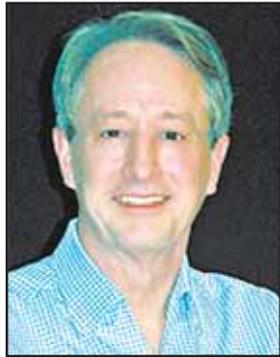
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• HEALTH MATTERS •

Defeating the Tired, Angry Look



Dr. Robert Buchanan
www.PlasticSurgeryToday.com

around the lateral eyes (the "crows' feet") can be eliminated or markedly reduced by injection with Botox®, if there are no permanent lines there. Since this muscle also pulls the brow down, blocking it can cause brow elevation. Transverse forehead lines can also be reduced or eliminated with Botox®; however, one must be exceptionally careful since frequently the reason that the lines are present is that the underlying muscle causing them is holding up the eyebrows. Therefore, if the muscle is relaxed, the eyebrows drop significantly. Sometimes this can be balanced by also treating the muscles that are pulling the eyebrow down. These two injections tend to negate each other as far as brow position, but eliminate the wrinkles.

When the lines are permanent and the use of Botox® will not eliminate them, then a filler such as Juvéderm® or Radiesse®, can plump up the line and eliminate it. Although it is possible to eliminate the line somewhat with just the filler, it is usually best to eliminate the cause, which is the muscle, as well as to fill the resultant crease or fold.

Once the process has evolved to where the lines cannot be eliminated without dropping the brow, then the only option is a brow lift. Fortunately, this procedure has changed dramatically over the last number of years. Initially, the muscle lifting the brow was paralyzed and the brow pulled up with an incision across the entire forehead, just behind the hairline. This

gave a very unnatural appearance. It also caused numbness in a great deal of the scalp.

Presently the procedure is done using an endoscope (a small lighted tube connected to a video screen) through small incisions in the hairline between the nerves. This simply repositions the brow as well as removes the excess muscles that are causing a lot of the lines in the area between the eyebrows. This method also allows us to pull the tissues up more laterally, recreating the normal eyebrow arch, pulling the brow skin out of the upper eyelid and eliminating a lot of the crow's feet. Thus, the procedure generally eliminates the need for Botox®.

Many of the people who see me seeking upper blepharoplasty to remove the excess skin in their upper eyelids need only a brow lift to elevate the skin of the brow back to where it belongs, pulling it out of the upper lid. This restores the normal curve laterally and removes a great deal of the skin within the lid. Even if there is extra skin, the amount that needs to be removed is minimal.

This has prevented one of the major stigmata of upper blepharoplasty, the hollow eye. When a needed brow lift was not done, the tendency in the past has been to simply resect lots of fat to try to recreate a normal looking lid. This was never totally successful and created an upper lid that looked quite gaunt. By pulling the tissues upward and laterally and flattening the crows' feet, we can improve the lateral orbits significantly better than with just a blepharoplasty alone.

The brow thus has the potential of making us look quite old, tired, or angry, or it can make us look young and rejuvenated. The approach to achieving this varies by the underlying cause and can be as simple as minimal skin care or injection or as complex as brow lift combined with an upper blepharoplasty.

• Dr. Buchanan is experienced with both injectables, including Botox®, Juvéderm®, and Radiesse®, as well as skin care,

brow lift and blepharoplasty. All of his brow lifts are done endoscopically through very small incisions, with very rapid recovery

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• BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NEWS •

Eastern Star donates to Rotary Club



The local chapter of Eastern Star, Highlands Chapter No. 284, presented a check for \$1,000 to Brian Stiehler, Rotary Club president, for Rotary Scholarships in honor of Dr. Walter Wilson. Dr. Wilson was a long-time member of the Eastern Star Chapter and also a member of the Rotary Club. His nephew, Dennis (Doc) Wilson, is instrumental in assisting the Eastern Star chapter with its annual BBQ scholarship fundraiser held every October. Similar funds are also being donated to the Eastern Star Grand Chapter Scholarship Fund in honor of Dr. Wilson. Pictured are: Jim Shearon, Ambassador of Italy and Past Grand Patron of the Grand Chapter of North Carolina, Order of the Eastern Star, Naomi Chastain, Worthy Matron of the Highlands Chapter, Dennis Wilson, and Brian Stiehler.

The 11th Annual Highlands Christmas was the best yet!



Thank you Highlands! Thank you to The Highlands Country Club for allowing us to use the Hudson House and all of the support they lent us throughout the event; to all who dined with us; to all who sponsored with monetary contributions; to all the wholesale vendors who contributed food; to Mountain Fresh and Bryson's; and to the amazing volunteers who gave their time and efforts.

Thank you to The Highlander, and the Highlands Newspaper, and WHLC for their generous donations of print and air time. This event would never work if it were not

for all of you. We generated \$34,500 dollars. After expenses, \$31,000 will go to local non-profits in the Highlands community.

Beneficiaries this year include R.E.A.C.H. of Macon County; Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Highlands; The H-CHO-spital; The Emergency Council of Highlands; The Highlands School library; The Food Pantry; The free dental clinics; The Community Care Clinic of Highlands; The International Friendship Center; and the Literacy Council of Highlands.

Thank you and see you next year!

Rotary Club of Highlands donates to Literacy



On January 8, the Rotary Club of Highlands made a donation to The Literacy Council of Highlands to help defer the cost of its recently acquired additional space at the Peggy Crosby Center.

Pictured receiving the grant from Rotary President Brian Stiehler is Literacy Council Executive Director, Tonya Hensley.

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• BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NEWS •

H-C Land Trust receives grant from local sustainability organization

The Highlands-Cashiers Land Trust recently received a \$3000 grant from Sustainability For Generations to Come (SFGC). A Western North Carolina based organization, SFGC was formed to support the preservation of open lands and conservation efforts in the mountain region.



Tim Campbell with HCLT Executive Director Gary Wein.

Mountain. It was feared that the top of the mountain was ripe for the construction of a hotel on the summit. This would have destroyed the view for all and disturbed critical habitat for native wildlife. Since 1909 the Land Trust has gone on to protect over 2400 acres in some 70 places.

HCLT will use this grant to support its on-going stewardship mission says Executive Director Gary Wein.

SFGC partners are Mark Harrill and Tommy Soffield of Boone, Tim Campbell of Dillsboro, Jeff Murphy of Waynesville, and R.K. Whitehead of Gainesville, Georgia. To learn more about the Land Trust and to become a member visit them online at www.hicashlt.org or call (828) 526-1111. Together we are saving mountains.

"For more than a century, the Highlands-Cashiers Land Trust has been saving and conserving the natural and scenic places in and around these special mountain towns. We are so pleased to be able to support them and the very important work they do", said SFGC partner Tim Campbell.

The Land Trust, one of the oldest in the United States, began land preservation in 1909 when with the help of the Highlands community they purchased Satulah

Rotary scholars of the month



The Rotary Club of Highlands honored the January Highlands School Scholars of the Month at its January 29 meeting. Pictured from left are: Thomas Jessup, School Counselor, Austin Vinson, high school winner, Brenna Wilson, middle school winner, James Earp, elementary school winner, and club President, Brian Stiehler

Proceeds disbursed from Christmas dinner



Highlands School Media Specialist Carol Bowen accepts a check for \$2,000, a portion of the proceeds from the Highlands Annual Christmas Dinner from Marty Rosenfield, on right, and Ricky Siegel to benefit the Highlands School Library.

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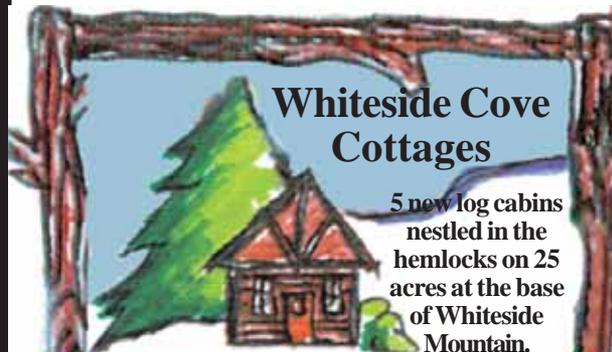
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• BIZ/ORG NEWS •

2013 Mystery Dinner Theater Tickets and Sponsorships Available

It's going to be a Dangerous Night on a remote desert isle in the Caribbean where a private cruise ship has arrived by mistake. Watch out for smugglers, crooked business professionals, and even a murderer. You can expect special guest appearances by Franklin Mayor Joe Collins, Sheriff Robbie Holland, and more. With your help, perhaps the Chief of the Island Police will be able to solve the crime.

The Macon County Community Foundation Players are back for the 2013 Mystery Dinner Theater. The production will take place at Fat Buddies BBQ in Franklin on February 22nd & 23rd and again on March 2nd, all performances are at 6:30 p.m. Tickets are \$40.00 per person, and include dinner. Reserve your tickets or tables in advance, by calling Karen Stiwinter at (828) 524-5200.

The Community Foundation is pleased to announce that sponsorships are available for this year's play. You can sponsor as an individual, a business, or a company, and your donation is 100 percent tax deductible. As a sponsor, your name/company name will appear on the playbill (size determined by sponsorship level), which will be viewed by more than 250 people.

Your sponsorship of this fundraiser helps the Foundation provide grants to support worthy non-profit organizations in Macon County. In 2012, the Foundation was able to assist more than 15 programs in need and they hope to reach even more this year- with your help! For more information on the sponsorship levels (starting as low as \$50) or to become a sponsor, please contact Regina Lupoli at Regina@LupoliInc.com or (828) 526-4532 by February 8.

- About the North Carolina Community Foundation:

The NCCF is the single statewide community foundation serving North Carolina and has made nearly \$68 million in grants since its inception in 1988. With more than \$156 million in assets, the NCCF sustains over 1,000 funds and endowments established to provide long-term support of a broad range of community needs, nonprofit organizations, institutions and scholarships. The NCCF partners with 60 affiliate foundations to provide local resource allocation and community assistance in 67 counties across the state. An important component of NCCF's mission is to ensure that rural philanthropy has a voice at local, regional and national levels. For more information, visit nccommunityfoundation.org and Facebook and follow us on Twitter @NCCF.

... CLASSIFIEDS from page 21

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... SPIRITUALLY continued from page 16

ity. Many people in the church have engaged in an act of solidarity with the poor by trying to live on a food stamp budget for a week. That's about \$4 a person per day. It is very difficult to find adequate calories and reasonably nutritious food for that kind of a budget. But it would be an act of solidarity with those who do go without every day and every week. An act of solidarity like that might increase your consciousness about those who go hungry, it might increase your own consciousness about what you eat, and it might provide an opportunity to share some of what you save from that kind of eating with those who go without.

It may invoke a dream that speaks to a peaceable kingdom; one where people of all nations and all races and all creeds live together in peace and harmony. Recognizing the plight of those who are hungry, those who ache for recognition and dignity, and those who struggle for peace creates an open space in our hearts for God to work in our lives. And this is the real preparation of Lent.

This Lent, your preparation and mine can be an act of solidarity with the least of these. As you engage this season of Lent, along with the bishop, I would encourage you to pray, to fast, and act in solidarity with those who go without. Learn more, give alms, and share what you have. Be conscious about what you eat.

Lent is the ancient season of preparation. It is a season of solidarity with all God's creation. So prepare yourself by fasting on evil thoughts, evil words and evil deeds. Feast instead on good thoughts, good words and good deeds. Stand in solidarity with those you share life with, especially those who are hungry, troubled or have any other adversity that limits their potential, dignity and life in the king-

• POLICE & FIRE REPORTS •

Highlands PD log entries from Jan. 23. Only the names of persons arrested, issued a Class-3 misdemeanor, or public officials have been used.

Jan. 25

- At 4:35 p.m., officers responded to a one-vehicle accident on Bowery Road.

Feb. 2

- At 4:37 p.m., officers responded to a two-vehicle accident on US 64 west.

- At 9:54 p.m., Carleton L. Burrell, 56, of Charlotte, NC, was arrested for DWI on N. 4th Street. He was issued a \$500 secured bond. A court date is set for 3/6/2013.

Feb. 4

- At 8:10 p.m., a case involving defrauding an innkeeper (The Lost Hiker) was closed concerning someone not paying a bill for \$97.68 back in November.

Feb. 9

- At 7:58 p.m., Rene Carlos Vazquez-Garza, 36, of Scaly Mountain, was arrested for driving while license revoked without headlights on. He was issued a \$1,500 secured bond. His court date is March 6, 2013.

- During the week 9 citations were issued.

The Highlands Fire & Rescue Dept. log entries from Jan. 29.

Jan. 29

- At 11:43 a.m., the dept. responded to a possible vehicle fire in the wheel of a van on Buck Creek Road. It was extinguished by the occupants.

Jan. 30/31

- At 2:01 a.m. and 5:37 p.m., the dept. provided mutual aid to Cashiers. Both calls were cancelled en route.

Feb. 1

- At 9:34 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Country Club Drive. It was set off by the garage heat sensor. There was no problem.

Feb. 2

- A little after midnight, the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Falls Drive. It was due to a water problem.

- At 2:50 a.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm on County Club Drive. It was due to the garage heat sensor. There was no problem.

- At 9:17 a.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm on County Club Drive. It was due to the garage heat sensor with a low battery.

- At 5:24 p.m., the dept. responded to a call about a vehicle that had slid off NC 28 south. There were no injuries.

- At 4:39 p.m., the dept. responded to multiple cars sliding off NC 28 south. There were no injuries.

- At 10:10 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Upper Brushy Face Road but it was due to a fire in the fireplace while the damper was closed.

Feb. 4

- At 9:29 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to assist EMS with a medical call at a residence on Oak Street. EMS transported to the hospital.

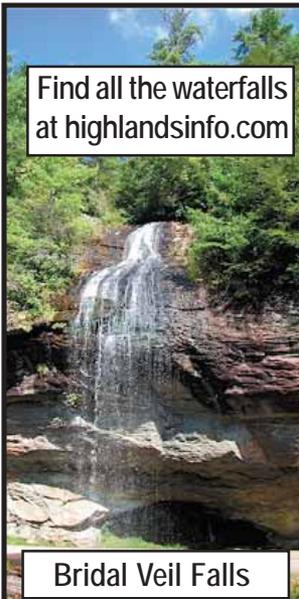
Feb. 10

- At 1:32 a.m., the dept. responded to a one-vehicle accident with two injuries on Hicks Road. EMS transported to the hospital.

- At 6:57 p.m., the dept. provided mutual aid to Scaly FD to search for lost hikers on the Bartram Trail. They were found before arrival.

Feb. 11

- At 11:21 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to assist EMS with a call at a residence on Whiteside Cove Road where someone had fallen. EMS transported to the hospital.



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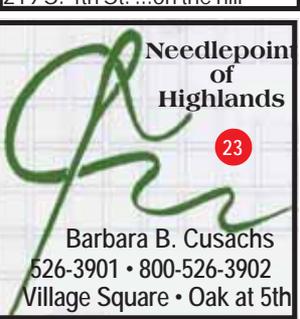


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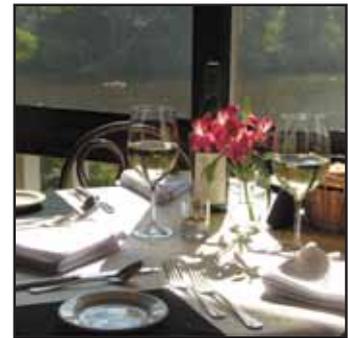
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