

Highlands Newspaper

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Thursday, May 2, 2013

How Highlands employees' salaries compare to 'like' positions in Franklin and Sylva

By Davin Eldridge and Kim Lewicki

At the Town Board budget workshop meeting Thursday, April 25, the board voted unani-

mously to nix the salary study it had OK'd at its March meeting.

During the March Town Board meeting, Town Manager Bob Frye asked permission to

have a salary study done since the last one was done in 2006. The estimated cost was \$12,000 and it was to begin in June of this year. The board OK'd it with little fan-

fare.

However, during the budget workshop meeting, where a 3% COLA increase has been figured

• See SALARIES page 9

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Macon County schools to contract private drug screenings for athletes

By Davin Eldridge

Starting next year, Macon County Public Schools will use an outside contractor to drug-screen its athletes.

The new drug-testing service, performed by Preventative Drug Testing Services, LLC (PDTS) will screen all athletes within the system. This will prove to be cost effective in the long run for Macon County Public Schools, said director of personnel Dan Moore at last week's Board of Education meeting.

While the service is estimated to cost roughly \$450 more than what it cost the school system to perform the tests itself, Macon County Public Schools will save manhours and thus personnel payroll and will forego any allegations of mishandling or favoritism.

"Having a third party con-

duct the test also allows any risk of accusations of bias to be eliminated, which is why I started to do them instead of the school's athletic director in the first place," said Moore.

Currently, it is the policy of Macon County Public Schools to drug test every active athlete within the system, every year, from middle school through high school. Last year, school administrators administered 1,076 screenings on student athletes.

According to a Macon County Schools cost analysis handout, the cost of in-house student athlete drug screenings, was approximately \$7.95 per test. In the event any test needed to be sent to a state-approved lab for further confirmation, it cost an additional \$37 for confirmation of results. This academic year, Macon County Schools spent a total of \$9,405.20, which included tests kits and lab confirmations.

Under PDTS services, the school system will spend \$8.52 per kit and an additional \$30 for lab confirmations but district personnel would be freed up to do other tasks.

The contract, officially entered into on April 22 by Macon

• See DRUG page 10



Dori Moschuris and Matther Harner pose with eight, wiggling puppies born to the red dog seen roaming downtown Highlands for weeks prior to and after delivery. The entire family now resides at the Cashiers-Highlands Humane Society and may be visited there. Photo by Sarah Valentine

'Red Dog' Rescue

By Marty Boone

A posse of caring Highlanders was recently out in force attempting to capture a pregnant red dog, possibly a Vizsla mix, seen roaming the streets of town for several weeks.

Though many tried, none could catch the dog before she delivered her pups, and several more days of worried searching ensued before the litter was located under a storage building belonging to Matthew Harner.

Matthew was finally able to win the mother's confidence and

coax her into a crate; next, because the crawl-space under the building was so small and the puppies unreachable, Matthew cut an opening in the floor above their nest and crawled in, handing out a total of eight, two-week-old pups one by one.

After such a long chase, the successful rescue was an occasion for jubilation, except for one detail; Matthew found himself stuck under the house, with only his feet sticking out the small hole he had cut. After a brief debate, the other

• See RED DOG page 4

Town Board takes first stab at FY 2013-'14 budget

OK's free utilities to 3 entities

If the Town Board OK'd all the capital projects and expenditures on the FY 2013-'14 wish list, the town's budget would be in the red with a deficit of \$543,801 – meaning that's how much would be funded from the undesignated fund balance.

So during the April 25 and subsequent budget workshop meetings – the next of which is May 9 at 3 p.m. in the Community Building – commissioners will chip away at the numbers.

The biggest news out of last Thursday's meeting involved four subjects.

The commissioners accepted the employees choice of insurance plans which will save the town \$225,000 a year. This was already reflected in the proposed budget. Employees chose Plan B, which is 100% employee coverage, 50% dependent coverage, a 50/50 split on the deductible

• See BUDGET page 11

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• THE PLATEAU'S POSITION •

• FORUM •

• LETTERS •

Something's amiss in the town of Highlands

At Thursday's budget workshop meeting, the Town Board gave some organizations a perk but not others.

At Commissioner Brian Stiehler's recommendation, the board voted 3-1 to give the Chamber of Commerce, the Highlands Playhouse and the ABC Store free utilities beginning July 1, 2013. Commissioners Stiehler, Gary Drake and Eric Pierson voted yes. Commissioner John Dotson voted no; Commissioner Amy Patterson was absent.

I have always thought the struggling Highlands Playhouse should have free utilities because the Performing Art Center isn't charged utilities and they are "like" organizations. But giving the Chamber of Commerce and the ABC Store a free ride just doesn't seem fair to the rest of the businesses and residents in town who feel the weight of their utility bill every month.

The Chamber of Commerce receives somewhere in the neighborhood of \$450,000 a year in room tax money and receives annual dues from its members. Plus, since it moved to its new location at First and Main streets, now a town-owned building, it doesn't pay rent, so why does it need a break on utilities, too?

Stiehler opened the discussion saying the town should give free utilities to entities in town-owned buildings. According to Stiehler, the Chamber and the Playhouse should be rewarded for bringing a lot of people to town. It should be noted that Stiehler is chairman of the Chamber board and he sits on the Playhouse board. It should also be noted that Commissioner Drake's wife, Wanda, is the treasurer of the Playhouse board.

Stiehler went on to say that the ABC Store benefits the town since its profits go to the town's General Fund and are used for law enforcement, recreation and the scholarship fund. The amount varies depending on the ABC Store's bottom line and now that Cashiers is going to have an ABC Store, the competition may affect the store's profits.

Mayor David Wilkes was all for the



idea, admitting that he had a soft spot for the ABC Store. Wilkes relinquished his long-held ABC Board position when he was elected mayor. Once the town determined the store had to move, Wilkes was the force behind it moving to its present location in Highlands Plaza believing it would increase business.

But the truth is, if every business in town deserved free utilities because of competition cutting into their profits, there would be a line out Town Hall's door and around the block a few times.

• See FORUM page 8

About that little rate or tax increase in the proposed budget

Dear Editor,

I went to the Town Board meeting last Thursday where budget lines for the coming year were reviewed. The Commissioners voted to adjust the employee/dependent health insurance plan to save money next year and for the longterm. Just how much town employees with the family coverage will have to pay was hard for me to ascertain, but reducing the town's commitment has been emphasized for months as a critical priority. Other town improvement projects were also prioritized.

Then there was final item on the agenda. With a 3-1 vote (Commissioner John Dotson voted no and Commissioner Amy Patterson was absent), the Town Board

granted free utilities to three non-profits two which occupy town property that were judged beneficial to the community – the Highlands Playhouse, the ABC Store and the Chamber of Commerce. Other non-profits were not included.

Nevertheless, I left the meeting with a warm fuzzy feeling that things were just fine. Friday morning I looked on the kitchen table and noticed a large home utility bill. It hit me like a ton of bricks. I thought to myself, "Wait a minute. What's going on here?" With all the talk about the tight town budget and the recent problems with delinquent electric bills, why is the Town Board giving away free utilities, regardless of any well meant intentions? Isn't such a plan tantamount to a utility rate or a tax increase? Some folks will have to pay for those "free" utilities. Water and power cost money. Utility profits go to the Town Enterprise Fund which in turn helps hold town taxes down. The Town Board approval of free utilities can be viewed, albeit small, as an indirect tax increase for paying utility customers.

If the board believes the free utility plan is essential, allow customers to voluntarily participate. Why not send a bill with a check box to have a dollar or two of a bill to go for free utilities to government approved non-profits? Better yet, include another check box for assisting folks having difficulty paying their utility bills.

About a decade ago Highlands had a long standing policy of providing free utilities to designated churches and non-profits. Upon review the Town Board found inconsistencies with the policy and voted to charge all customers the same rate. That was a consistent and fair decision then, and it still is now.

Patrick Taylor
Highlands Resident

Don't change the floodplain ordinance

Dear Editor,

I am a full-time resident of Otto and I spoke last Thursday at the Planning Board

• See LETTERS page 8

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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• OBITUARIES •

John Gray Simpson

John Gray Simpson, 44, of Highlands, NC and formerly of Tampa, FL, died April 24, 2013. He was a sixth-generation Floridian descended from four pioneer Florida families: Lesley, Cleaveland, Wootton and Bryan.

He was predeceased by his grandparents, Hazel W. and Thomas E. Gray and Geraldine L. and Arthur A. Simpson all of Tampa, and is survived by his parents, Jane and Nathan Simpson, his brother, Nathan Bryan Simpson, Jr., his aunts, Allen Simpson Murray and Hazel Gray Hanlon, and his uncle, Arthur A. Simpson, Jr. and many loving cousins and friends.

He was a graduate of H. B. Plant High School where he became a state champion tennis player and of Emory University with a B.S. in finance. He was employed by Lykes Pasco Packing Co., Tampa Electric Company and Old Edwards Inn and Hospitality Group.

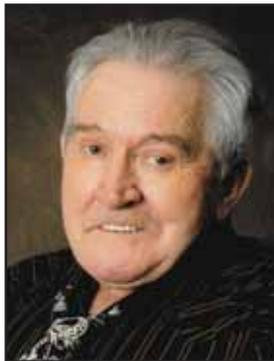
He was a member of St. Andrews Episcopal Church of Tampa, the Merrymakers Club and Ye Mystic Krewe of Gasparilla.

Funeral services were conducted by the Rev. John Reese at St. Andrews Episcopal Church, Tampa on Tuesday, April 30 with internment at Myrtle Hill Memorial Park.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made in his name to St. Andrews Episcopal Church Foundation or to charities of choice. Bryant-Grant Funeral Home of Franklin and Highlands, NC and Blount and Curry Funeral Home, MacDill Chapel of Tampa were in charge of arrangements.

James Edgar Sharp

James Edgar Sharp, age 85, of Cullowhee, NC, died Thursday, May 2, 2013. He was born in Jackson County, the son of the late Herbert and Martha Wiggins Sharp. He was a retired electrician for Duke Energy; he loved the Atlanta Braves, and was a caddy master at Sapphire Country Club for a number of years. He was a US Army Veteran and a member of Cashiers Church of God. He was married to Vylena McCall Moffitt Sharp, who passed away in 1995.



He is survived by his step-children, Azilea Fugate of Cashiers, NC, Willean Stiwinter and her husband Jim of Cullowhee, NC, Marvin Moffitt and his wife Judy of Cullowhee, NC and Cleamon Moffitt of Cashiers, NC; 15 grandchildren, 26 great-grandchildren and 35 great-great-grandchildren also survive.

Billy Floyd Houston

Billy Floyd Houston, 69, of Highlands, NC died Sunday, April 28, 2013. Born in Macon County, he was the son of the late Donald Gordon and Mary Elizabeth Rogers Houston. He was a caretaker; he liked gardening, cooking, hunting and fishing and liked to draw pictures of birds. He was of the Methodist faith.

Mr. Houston is survived by four sisters, Shirley Murphy and husband Tom of

Westchester, OH, Betty Henry and husband Mickey of Highlands, Donna Houston of Highlands and Kathy McConnell and husband Don of Franklin and four brothers, Wiley Houston and wife Diann of Franklin, Gary Houston and wife Patty of Highlands, Jimmy Houston of Highlands and Robert Houston and wife Sharon of Pickens, SC.

Graveside services were held, Wednes-

In addition to his parents and wife, he was preceded in death by two step-daughters, Mattie Moffitt and Irene Hughey, two step-sons, Junior Moffitt and Eugene Moffitt, a sister, Evelyn Carver, and three brothers, Ernest, Dewey and John Sharp.

Funeral services were held Saturday, April 27th at Cashiers Church of God, with Rev. Delbert McCall and Rev. Ned Pressley officiating. Burial was in Lower Zachary Cemetery. Pallbearers were Cliff Moffitt, Jamie Stiwinter, Randy Moffitt, Tony Moffitt, Blaine Teaster, and Todd Moss.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Cashiers Church of God Kids Club, PO Box 231, Cashiers, NC 28717.

Bryant-Grant Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements.



Billy Houston

day, May 1, 2013 at Buck Creek Baptist Church Cemetery with Rev. Jamie Passmore officiating. Pallbearers were Algie Bolick, Shawn Keener, Scotty Keener, Harold Ammons, David Leffler, Hunter Leffler and Ralph Rogers.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to Buck Creek Baptist Church Cemetery Fund, c/o Geneva Vaughn, 133 Embers Drive, Highlands, NC 28741 or Highlands-Cashiers Hospital, 190 Hospital Drive, Highlands, NC 28741.

Bryant-Grant Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements.

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... RED DOG from page 1

members of the rescue party decided then to rescue this very good sport, who came up dirt-covered and a little bruised but laughing over being dragged out feet-first!

The furry family has attained a fairy-godmother in the person of Ann Watkins, who has stepped up with a generous donation toward their care and spay/neuter.

The mother dog, dubbed "April" for her April 1st delivery date, and all eight adorable, healthy pups are now safely ensconced at the no-kill, Cashiers-Highlands Humane Society (CHHS), where they will be available for adoption in two months, after they are fully weaned, vaccinated, and spayed or neutered.

April, who has turned out to be an absolutely loving, sweet dog, will also be available at the same time.

The public is invited to visit the shelter and help socialize the pups during shelter operation hours, Monday through Saturday, 9a-4p.



The mother of the pups, now named April.

Photo by Marty Boone.

First 'Tag and Tax together' combined bills to arrive in mail for July payments

New bill will have new look

Check your mail for something new and make sure your car is road ready. The first combined tag and tax notices will soon arrive in North Carolina mailboxes for bills that are due in July.

The new bills will reflect both vehicle property tax information from counties and other taxing jurisdictions, as well as vehicle registration and inspection information. Drivers used to pay for tags and taxes separately. The new program, "Tag & Tax Together," will require one payment for both bills. Both tag renewals and tax payments must be paid in full to renew vehicle registration.

An easy-to-read map of the combined notice posted on the DMV website shows where property tax information is listed and how to find vehicle registration facts. After receiving your entire payment, NCDMV will renew your vehicle registration and forward the property tax portion of your payment directly to your county revenue office.

Vehicle owners can tell if they will be among the first to receive the new bills by checking to see if they have a "7" (for the month of July) sticker on their license tag. With each month that passes, additional vehicle owners will receive the new notice when their renewal is due. By mid-2014, the program should include all North Carolina vehicle owners.

The DMV website features frequently-asked questions about the combined billing program and contact information for county revenue offices across the state. A Spanish version of the questions has also been posted. (Vea una version en Español de las preguntas más frecuentes.) DMV has produced a video to help explain the new pro-

•See TAG & TAX page 15

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• LEGISLATIVE UPDATE ... IN THEIR WORDS •

Why I filed Senate Bill 594

By NC Senator Jim Davis

I recently filed Senate Bill 594 which requires applicants to pass a drug test in order to receive cash benefits and job training through the Work First program.

There is overwhelming support for this bill. Arguments against the bill make it sound like I want to punish poor people. Nothing could be further from the truth. Every child deserves a drug free home. Every job training program deserves unimpaired participants. And no taxpayer deserves to have his hard earned money used to fund destructive and illegal behaviors.

Work First allows qualifying families to get a one-time payment equivalent of up to three months worth of Work First benefits and cash.

Senate Bill 594 protects the rights of qualified individuals to receive temporary assistance for their needy families, including federally funded job training. With this bill, recipients of Work First benefits must not abuse drugs. This is not an unreasonable expectation.

Senate Bill 594 includes safeguards to ensure that participants in the Work First program are serious about their desire to get back to work and support themselves and their families. Applicants who test negative for drugs will be reimbursed for the cost of testing. Applicants who test positive for drugs are not reimbursed and may reapply after one year, or sooner if they complete a drug treatment program and retest negative for drugs.

Unfortunately, the e-mail copied below (profanity redacted) is typical of many who have contacted me in opposition to Senate Bill 594.

"Dear Representative Davis,

"Allow me to express my sincere disgust with your proposal to drug-test welfare recipients. In a recent move in Florida to do the same thing, a mere 108 of 4,086 failed the test. Really, I just have



one more question for you, Rep. Davis; when the [profanity] are you miserable Republican [profanity] going to STOP demonizing the Poor and the Down-on-their-luck, and start doing SOMETHING to help them?

"In closing, I am a well-educated, steadily-employed (18 years w/same company) white male, 48 years old, with a fiance, from South Charlotte -- and

I don't hate the Poor.

"QUIT DEMONIZING THE POOR, [profanity]!

Sincerely,
Karl [last name]"

Although Karl's profanity and stunning disrespect did not merit him this response, I offer Senator Thom Goolsby's thoughts on the subject:

"Opponents of the bill complained about how unfair it was to ask applicants to demonstrate that they were not addicted to drugs. Further, they claimed that the testing was not necessary based upon a somewhat similar law in Florida.

"In the Sunshine State, 98% of applicants passed the drug test. Opponents of the proposed law claimed that this result was proof that no drug test was needed.

"Sit back for just one minute and think about the lunacy of this argument.

"You would have to be high on drugs to apply for a program and spend \$50 on a test that you know you will fail. In fact, 2% of the applicants in Florida were apparently high and fell into that category!

"Sheer logic dictates that in order to receive the most benefit from any government program, the limited funds should go to the most qualified individuals. Drug use is not and never will be an indicator of potential success in the job market [emphasis added]."

No, I do not want to punish poor people. And I for sure do not want to punish the efforts of North Carolina's hard working taxpayers. They have already suffered enough. Senate Bill 594 is a beginning.

Win a Kindle! Deadline extended

Calling all middle school age students in Highlands and Cashiers! There is still time to enter the "If I Were a Book" writing contest in either the prose or poetry categories. The deadline for entries is May 13 and the entry may be up to 325 words in length.

The First Place winner in each category will not only win a Kindle, but also will be published in the Laurel Magazine and will be invited to read his or her entry at "Poetry Night" at the library in Cashiers on August 15.

Call Kathie Blozan at 743-1765 for further information and to obtain an entry form. The submission must begin with the words "If I were a book." All middle school students in Cashiers and Highlands, including home-schoolers are eligible. The contest is being sponsored by the Cashiers Writers Group and the Friends of the Albert Carlton-Cashiers Community Library and is a part of the Love Your Library celebration this summer.

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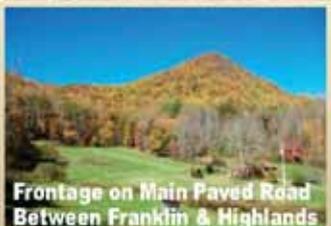


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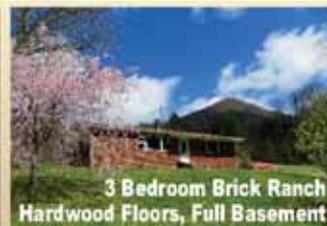
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• INVESTING AT 4,118 FT. •

Highlands, NC Luxury Real Estate: A Bold Prediction

As I mentioned in a recent column, when an interesting phenomenon occurs in the world of Highlands, NC real estate, I investigate to see if there is a trend forming, or if the event was simply a one-time occurrence.

Within the last two weeks, I have experienced firsthand an interesting development in our market, and thus dove into a bit of anecdotal and statistical research to explore the meaning of what I was experiencing – an apparent upsurge in activity in the luxury real estate market.

It began with showing clients (represented by a broker from Asheville) listings of mine priced in the \$2M-\$4M range. I had the opportunity to talk with the Buyers



Susie de Ville
 Owner/Broker-in-Charge
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about what it was they were searching for in their investment in our area, their thinking about the market now, their life quality decisions, and their timing. I found them to be fascinating, lovely individuals and was riveted by their responses – in particular, their comments about investment choice and timing.

With children grown (or nearly so), early retirement on the horizon, and a truly passionate desire to live their best lives now, they had delved deeply into searching

for the perfect retreat wherein they would spend at least half of each year. Well educated, well traveled, and seeking respite and rejuvenation, these Buyers had zeroed in on the Highlands area as their ultimate luxury destination and escape.

Shortly thereafter, I received a call from a Buyer prospect who had a luxury home in another market under contract and was ready to reinvest in our area. She knew precisely what she wanted in a luxury home and was willing to pay well beyond her price range to obtain the property that fit all of her parameters.

While searching for properties that fit her criteria, it became clear to me that, seemingly overnight, we just may have an inventory crunch in the luxury market.

Doing a search in the \$1M and up range in the entire Highlands-Cashiers market yielded 242 results. No shortage there, right? When it became clear that my Buyer client was going to be in the \$2M and above range in order to find the property she truly wanted, my search yielded 72 results. And when she made the decision to focus only on properties in Highlands, we were down to 25 results. When we combed through those, there really were only a handful that were possible matches. Interesting!

As of this writing, there are six properties in the Highlands-Cashiers MLS that are being shown as under contract in the \$1M and up range. I believe this is an indication of where our market is heading. I predict that luxury sales will surpass everyone's expectations this year – surprisingly

• See INVESTING page 17



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• COACH'S CORNER •

Duke-UNC...the MOVIE

As I was cleaning out some old stuff I came across this column that I had written in 2008, and it was interesting to read because so much has changed since this point. Since 2008 Krzyzewski has won a 4th National Championship in 2010 and coached the US Olympic team to 2 gold medals. I thought I would revisit this idea by making changes to the original column and putting those changes in italics.

PLOT SUMMARY

A young Mike Krzyzewski arrives at Duke in an attempt to rebuild a fallen program. His success is limited as he battles rival North Carolina and Hall of Fame Coach Dean Smith. Things finally turn around in 1986 and Krzyzewski has a decade of national success and accolade. Unfortunately, in 1995 a health crisis causes Krzyzewski's empire to fall. Krzyzewski's wife convinces him to change his priorities, and he returns with a vengeance. The new Krzyzewski becomes the villain of college basketball, the intensity that once radiated within him now out of control. After Dean Smith retires, Krzyzewski battles coaches Bill Guthridge and Matt Doherty successfully, but has trouble accepting his role as the "elder coach" in the area. The arrival of Hall of Fame Coach Roy Williams to the Tar Heels brings new intensity to the rivalry, and incompe-



Ryan Potts
tryanpotts@hotmail.com

tent assistant coaches along with recruiting losses allow North Carolina to regain their dominance. Now faced with lack of success at Duke and attempting to make one last run, Krzyzewski seeks the advice of his former rival, who has become perhaps the most beloved and revered coach in basketball history and is unfortunately battling a terrible disease. While looking at the movie from the perspective of a Duke fan, I would think that the last 5 years would have been looked at as a feel-good ending to the movie, with perhaps the 2012 Olympics being the end, etc. However, what I think is most important for this movie would be to humanize the coaches that we as fans have been programmed to de-humanize into giant caricatures of themselves.

CAST

Dean Smith - I'm going with Dustin Hoffman on this one. He has the acting chops, and a little make-up could go a long way.

Duke Athletic Director Tom Butters - Brian Dennehy, who can also double for Bob Knight if we need a cameo.

Mickie Krzyzewski - I'm changing this one to Lynda Carter

Bill Guthridge - Chevy Chase (In a serious role) Still like this one as well

Roy Williams - William H Macy - Can say 'dadgum' with the best of them, and can bring the acting depth required to play the part. It's hard to cover up Roy's intensity with the folksy charm - but Macy would pull it off. Still a great choice, but I think Dennis Quaid could pull it off as well.

Matt Doherty - Matt Dillon. Dillon already has the eyebrows, but a little touch of gray in the hair and he could pass for Doherty easily.

Wojo - Sean Astin (from Rudy) Could there be anyone else? I may change this to Jonah Hill or Jason Sudekis - either one could provide comic relief.

And finally, for the part of Coach K, I'm going with Andy Garcia, who can definitely bring the intensity. I've always been fascinated with Krzyzewski, because he has changed so much during his career. I'm reminded of the line from The Dark Knight, "you either die a hero or live long enough to see yourself become the Villain." However, the chances that Coach K could end

up in a Bobby Bowden or Bob Knight (circa IU) situation could be just as likely. Whatever the case, it would make for an interesting story. I still think it would - while I'm sure UNC fans would jump at the chance to mock Coach K in a movie as shameless promotion, I think there is an interesting dynamic in the way that Dean Smith made the transition from hero, to villain, to hero once again. I think Coach K is in the process of making the same transition, but a lot of that will depend on how well he handles his retirement. His legacy will be shaped by whether or not he rides off into the sunset like Smith did or if he hangs on for too long like Joe Paterno and Bobby Bowden.

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•See HS SPORTS page 18

• HS SPORTS •

Highlander Baseball closes season

By Ryan Potts

The Highlands Highlander baseball team finished out their season with a thrilling 7-6 loss to the visiting Tallulah Falls Indians. Highlands honored their two Seniors, Catcher/Pitcher Taylor Osteen and First Baseman Parker Sims after the game, and it was a game in which the Highlanders demonstrated the vast improvement that they have

made over the season.

The Highlanders struck first, getting a first inning run when Osteen's attempt at stealing home forced a balk resulting in a run. Highlands then added to the lead on a towering home run from Sophomore Tanner Stephens. Starting pitcher Davis Moore held the Indians in check for three innings, but they scratched out three runs in the fourth to take a 3-2 lead.

After Tallulah Falls pushed ahead two more runs to go up 5-2, the Highlanders rallied in the bottom of the fifth as a couple of hits followed by a double from Stephens tied the game at 5 all. The Indians scored two more runs in the 6th, but the Highlanders mounted one more rally in the bottom of the seventh. Osteen walked to start

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... FORUM continued from page 2

As to those nonprofits who "bring people to town," what about The Bascom which was recently cited for making Highlands an ArtPlace destination? What about the Historical Society – tourists love history. What about the Center for Life Enrichment which resides in the Peggy Crosby Center?

Stiehler's initial statement that organizations in town-owned buildings should be given free utilities was blown out of the water when he added the ABC Store to the scenario, so what about The Peggy Crosby Center, the Highlands Community Child Development Center? All these nonprofits have value and bring something to the town – if not directly bringing people in they are servicing those who live here. Don't their merits count? Don't the people who live here count?

Years ago, the Town Board voted to nix free utilities to churches and nonprofits to keep fees fair to all. But Thursday night three of the commissioners decided special treatment was the way to go.

What adds insult to injury is the board spent a good 20 minutes discussing how much money the town should spend on weight room equipment at the Civic Center.

The equipment is about 25 years old

and needs to be replaced. In addition, the room itself needs a face lift. But instead of budgeting for the project, the town is willing to let citizens raise money to buy the new equipment and replace the floor. What? A town as rich as Highlands, a town that is notoriously in the black needs its citizens to foot the bill for improvements at its Civic Center – this in addition to the taxes they already pay?

Estimates for the weight room make-over are about \$22,000. The board agreed to give up to \$7,000 and expects the citizens who want the weight room improved to pay the rest.

About five years ago, the town sprang for new exercise equipment and a make-over in the exercise room across the hall from the weight room, but now commissioners can't see fit to improve the weight room at its own expense.

Town Manager Bob Frye said giving free utilities to the Chamber of Commerce, The Playhouse and the ABC Store will cost the town in the vicinity of \$14,000 or so annually.

So the town can't make a one-time investment in its Civic Center but it can give away utility revenue year after year? Interesting.

... LETTERS continued from page 2

meeting voicing my opinion and concern over the proposed amendment to the Floodplain Ordinance that would allow filling in the floodplain. I am for keeping the ordinance as it currently stands.

I am a local biologist and an avid outdoorsman.

Historically, throughout the world, we have abused our floodplains. In many cities, including Franklin, downtowns are built on the floodplain, or filled floodplain. Over time, as human population has grown, we have learned what's wrong with this way of development. We're probably not going to move Pittsburgh, but we can profit from earlier mistakes. This is a large part of what motivated Macon County, and many other municipalities, to adopt a Floodplain Ordinance.

Our floodplain ordinance leaves plenty of room for debate as to how it should be applied. This is good - there is every reason to be able to discuss how individual floodplain parcels can be used, what can or should be planted or built, and how the risks associated with floodplain development should be assessed and distributed.

Floodplain filling is a distinct case. When you propose to fill a floodplain area, this is no longer a discussion about use. It is

a question of circumventing the ordinance by eliminating an inconveniently located portion of floodplain. It is a direct attack on the logic which led to creating a Floodplain Ordinance. It is, in essence "fixing the map."

When working in the stream, many landowners tell me about what their upstream neighbor has done to the creek and how it impacts their land. The main principal "For every action there is an equal and opposite reaction" also applies to water. When you fill a portion of the flood plain, you are removing that area from the flood plain – at least until a large flood comes along and decides to reclaim it.

Call me cynical, but if we allow filling of the floodplain, I foresee in the near future the turning of neighbor against neighbor. The first person downstream that chooses not to, or cannot afford to fill their portion will be negatively impacted. If you are going to remove the prohibition on flood plain filling, better strike the whole ordinance and abandon the pretense of trying to protect the flood plain, the downstream residents and infrastructure, the river and the common good.

Jason Meador
Otto, NC

... SALARIES continued from page 1

into the FY 2013-'14 budget, commissioners changed their minds.

"Why don't we do away with the salary study?" asked Commissioner John Dotson. "We pay well, we offer a good benefit package and if we are giving a 3% COLA raise, why are we checking to see if our employees are being paid enough?"

Commissioner Brian Stiehler chimed in asking if the board really needed the data a study would provide. "Is that information what we want to know? What if we are on the higher end?"

Commissioner Gary Drake said the information would be good to know either way but said no employee has come to him about being underpaid.

Of course according to town policy he and the other commissioners implemented, employees aren't to communicate with board members about work problem. Under the Town Manager system of government employees are to go to their supervisor who in turn may move to forward the issue to the Town Manager.

Frye said if a salary study was performed, comparisons would be made between towns like Highlands in the state and country.

"Highlands is different from a lot of places for a lot of reasons," he said. "For one, the population issues."

Stiehler said he understood that comparing municipalities close to Highlands would be like comparing apples and oranges but said it's more likely people would jump to those towns than to towns in California.

In the end, the salary study was nixed which will save the town \$12,000 in the FY 2013-'14 budget.

If the board agrees to fund the 3% COLA raise, it will cost the town \$84,000 this next fiscal year.

Commissioner Drake suggested leaving the COLA allotment in the preliminary budget for now but wanted to discuss it further asking what a 2% or 1% COLA increase would cost.

Employees got a 3% COLA raise last year but no COLA raise two years prior to that.

The next budget workshop meeting is Thursday, May 9 at 3 p.m. in the Community Building.

Meanwhile the statistics comparing the salaries of employees for the towns of Highlands, Franklin and Sylva follow.

There are a total of 55 employee positions for the Town of Highlands, with annual salaries ranging from \$22,214.40 to \$95,430 spanning grades 6-26. There are 62 full-time and 10 part-time employees.

Highlands, a town of approximately

1,000 in the off season, has a population of roughly 30,000 during tourism months.

The following figures reflect beginning-range to end-range salaries paid the municipal employees of Highlands, Franklin and Sylva, comparatively and respectfully.

It should be noted that the figures for each position are based upon education and experience:

Town of Highlands

- Grade 6: Recreation Maintenance, Janitor Workers make from \$22,214-\$35,547 annually.

- Grade 8: Civic Center Desk make from \$24,523-\$39,228 annually.

- Grade 9: Police Part Time Officer, Meter Reader, Sanitation Equipment Operator, Maintenance Technician make from \$25,523-41,225 annually.

- Grade 10: Parking Enforcement Officer, Water and Sewage Maintenance Worker/Equipment Operator, Lead Meter Reader, Tree Trimmer, Civic Center Coordinator, Recreation Maintenance Technician, OSHA Safety Compliance Officer make from \$27,102-\$43,305 annually.

- Grade 11: Water Plant Operator, Assistant Sanitation Superintendent make from \$28,454-\$45,510 annually.

- Grade 12: Administrative Assistant, Human Resources Administrative Assistant, Police Administrative Assistant, Police Patrol Officer, Assistant Water, Sewer Field Superintendent, Assistant Street Superintendent, Assistant Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator make from \$29,889-\$47,798 annually.

- Grade 13: Master Police Officer, School Resource Officer, Assistant Chief Water Plant Operator, Tree Trimmer Crew Leader, Fire Fighter, Utility Customer Service Representative make between \$29,889.50 and \$47,798.40 annually.

- Grade 14: Sanitation Superintendent, Police Lieutenant make between \$32,988 and \$52,748.80 annually.

- Grade 15: Captain of Support Services, Captain of Field Operations, Water/Sewer Field Superintendent, Street Superintendent make between \$34,694.40 and \$55,432 annually.

- Grade 16: Chief Water Plant Operator, Chief Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator, Standard Town Clerk/Secretary to Mayor and Town Manager make between \$36,420.80 and \$58,240 annually.

- Grade 17: Line Technician First Class, GIS/Field Technician make between \$38,272 and \$61,193 annually.

- Grade 18: Line Crew Chief makes between \$40,206.40 and \$64,272 annual-

• See SALARIES page 10



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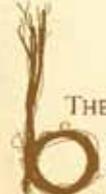

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... SALARIES continued from page 9

ly.

- Grade 19: Recreation Director, Assistant Treasurer, Planning & Development Code Official, Finance Director, MIS/GIS Director, Uncertified Town Clerk/Secretary to Mayor and Town Manager made between \$42,244.80 and \$67,537.60 annually.

- Grade 20: Electric Distribution Superintendent make between \$44,387.20 and \$70,948.80 annually.

- Grade 21: Certified Town Clerk/Secretary to Mayor and Town Manager make between \$46,633.60 and \$74,526.40 annually.

- Grade 22: Police Chief makes between \$49,004.80 and \$78,332.80 annually.

- Grade 23: Planning & Development Director, Human Resources Director make between \$51,459 and \$82,284.80 annually.

- Grade 26: Town Administrator, Public Services Administrator make between \$59,696 and \$95,430 annually.

Town of Franklin

Town of Franklin has 23 positions and employs 53 full time employees and two part-time employees.

- Custodians make between \$21,531 and \$33,285 annually.

- Public Works Laborer makes between \$22,616 and \$34,963 annually.

- Laborer makes between \$23,500 and \$36,329 annually.

- Heavy Equipment Operator makes between \$24,834 and \$38,392 annually.

- Customer Service Representative makes between \$24,834 and \$38,392 annually.

- Firefighter makes between \$28,500 and \$44,059 annually.

- Water Treatment Operator makes between \$28,500 and \$44,059 annually.

- Waste Water Treatment Operator makes approximately \$29,070 and \$44,940 annually.

- Police Officer makes between \$29,500 and \$45,606 annually.

- Public Works Supervisor makes between \$29,500 and \$45,606 annually.

- Main Street Program Executive Director makes between \$31,823 and \$49,197 annually.

- Tax Collector makes between \$31,823 and \$49,197 annually.

- Detective makes between \$33,500 and \$51,790.

- Police Sergeant makes between \$33,500 and \$51,790 annually.

- Chief Water Treatment Plant Operator makes between \$35,500 and \$54,881 annually.

- Waste Water Superintendent makes between \$35,500 and \$54,881 annually.

- Internet Technology Director makes between \$43,660 and \$65,522 annually.

- Town Planner makes between \$43,660 and \$65,552 annually.

- Assistant to Town Manager makes between \$43,660 and \$65,552 annually.

- Police Captain makes between \$59,630 and \$92,186 annually.

- Finance Officer makes between \$59,630 and \$92,186 annually.

- Public Works Director makes between \$59,630 and \$92,186 annually.

- Fire and Rescue Chief makes between \$59,630 and \$92,186 annually.

Town of Sylva

The town of Sylva has 17 positions and employs 23 full-time employees and four part-time employees.

- Town Manager makes between \$57,218 and \$63,083 annually.

- Finance Office, Deputy Tax Collector makes between \$43,977 and \$57,531 annually.

- Town Clerk, Tax Collector, Personnel Tech, Accounts Payable make between \$33,867 and \$41,963 annually.

- Public Works Director makes between \$41,883 and \$56,128 annually.

- Crew Leader makes between \$30,817 and \$34,825 annually.

- Senior Maintenance Technicians make between \$28,049 and \$32,470 annually.

- Maintenance Technicians make between \$24,373 and \$24,982 annually.

- Police Chief makes between \$43,040 and \$52,182 annually.

- Assistant Police Chief makes between \$39,040 and \$46,324 annually.

- Lieutenant makes between \$33,867 and \$38,395 annually.

- Detectives make between \$33,867 and \$35,561 annually.

- Police Sergeants make between \$33,867 and \$34,714 annually.

- Police Officers make between \$30,817 and \$38,975

... DRUG continued from page 1

Schools, will keep all screenings confidential and allow either party to terminate the contract at any time.

"I think it will be a great thing to have a third party conduct the tests, which is something we have tried to do for some time now," said BOE Chairman Jim Breedlove. "And the fact that we can end the contract whenever we want, is definitely a plus."

Unless otherwise terminated, the agreement with PDS will continue until

... BUDGET continued from page 1

which is \$10,000 so it's \$5,000 for the town and \$5,000 per employee.

Next, instead of investing in traditional fiber infrastructure to further its broadband plans, the town is considering erecting towers as part of a wireless broadband system. This is the newest technology and so original figures for the fiber project were whittled down for now.

As part of a fundraising campaign to upgrade the weight room at the Civic Center, commissioners OK'd an extended membership plan for Rec Park usage for those who contribute to the project. A \$500 donation to the weight room project will get a 4-year membership; \$750 a 6-year membership; \$1,000 an 8-year membership and \$2,000 a lifetime membership.

Recreation Director Lester Norris said he believes the number of citizens who will buy memberships at the normal price if the weight room is up to par will outweigh the discount given for the initial fundraising.

Commissioners also agreed to budget up to \$7,000 for weight room equipment and renovation and require citizens who want to use the weight room to come up with the rest. The total is estimated at \$22,000. Commissioner Brian Stiehler said so far \$6,000 has been raised.

Finally, at Commissioner Stiehler's recommendation, the Chamber of Commerce, the ABC Store and the Highlands Playhouse will each get free utilities as of July 1, 2013. He reasoned that they are either entities that occupy town-owned buildings or are quasi-governmental in nature – specifically the ABC Store.

He said the Cashiers ABC Store will likely cut into Highlands' ABC Store's profits and said he would "hate to see the county take over the store if it doesn't make enough money."

Mayor David Wilkes, who sat on the ABC Board for years, said the county wouldn't take over the store but the state may determine that small ABC stores could be served better with one umbrella board rather than the way it is set up now where each store is overseen by one board.

Stiehler went on to say that since the Chamber of Commerce and the Highlands Playhouse bring people to town, they deserved free utilities. No mention was made of any other nonprofits.

Though gifting the three entities free utilities will cost the town around \$14,000 a year, commissioners voted 3-1 to grant the reprieve effective July 1, 2013. Commissioners Stiehler, Drake and Pierson voted yes; Commissioner John Dotson voted no. Commissioner Amy Patterson was absent.

Town Manager Bob Frye said he drew up an initial budget working on the premise that though revenues are flat, there will not be a tax or fee increase for FY 2013-'14; but based figures on a 3% COLA increase for all employees, which will cost the town \$84,000. Commissioners agreed to keep the 3% COLA in the proposed budget for now but asked what a 1% or 2% COLA would cost.

Also included in the preliminary budget was nonprofit allocations. Like last year, commissioners opted to allocate \$15,000 to nonprofits. Five nonprofits applied for funding: HCCDC, the Peggy Crosby Center, the Emergency Council, the H-C Hospital and the Greenway. Three will be awarded \$5,000 – HCCDC, the Peggy Crosby Center and the Emergency Council.

Frye said as "painful as it was" the electric rate increases have stabilized the Electric Fund but it needs to be regenerated for another year before it is in the position to be used as a slush fund where money can be transferred to other departments for projects.

Though put in as "maybe" in the Water Department budget, the Big Bear Pen water line will likely be replaced for \$200,000. Currently, the line lies on top of granite alongside the road and it freezes often. "More and more people are staying longer but when the water freezes they leave," said Commissioner Gary Drake.

Two replacement vehicles are scheduled for the Police Department now that there is a rotating replacement schedule. Two Ford Tauruses outfitted as police cars costs \$65,000. Commissioners Stiehler and Drake agreed one vehicle was in dire shape and needed to be replaced but questioned the need for two. They were reminded that the rotation schedule agreed to maintains the integrity of the fleet which saves money in the long run.

The Parks and Recreation budget includes Civic Center HVAC upgrades and exterior door replacements as well as a new pool with a 50/50 split from the county for a total of \$225,000 – assuming the county's offer still stands, said Frye. "If not, we will pull the pool out of the budget. But if it's a go, we could close the pool when school goes into session which will give us about a year to build a new pool and have it opened for Memorial Day weekend next year."

Nixed from the budget is \$12,000 for the salary study. (See story "How Highlands employees' salaries compare to 'like' positions in Franklin and Sylva" on page one.)

In the end, the \$543,801 figure dropped to \$550,801 but the final figure for definitive projects is far from ready.

– Kim Lewicki

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• HIGHLANDS AREA UPCOMING EVENTS •

A creative collaboration in Southern Lights Exhibition at The Bascom



A chance meeting of four artists at a painting workshop has resulted in the creative collaboration that produced Southern Lights, a colorful exhibition at The Bascom, June 22 through September 1. Charlotte Foust, Martica Griffin, Krista Harris and Audrey Phillips have woven their various talents and styles together to form the selected compositions, based on their common Southern roots.

Inspired by the distinct sense of place that defines the South, these four talented artists explore color and mark-making in their abstract expressionist art.

The artists, joined together by their common backgrounds and interests, have distinct styles, yet each person's work has a connected thread of line and mark. The viewer will be rewarded by finding these connections in each painting. Each work will complement the others in the exhibition when viewed as a whole. Their mission is to make a piece that allows the viewer to feel they are elsewhere—somewhere that they've never been, somewhere they'd like to go, somewhere they've been but forgotten.

The artworks are based on abstraction, making them open to the viewer's interpretation and imagination.

Come meet the artists as they demonstrate their painting techniques on The Bascom Terrace Saturday, June 22, from 11 am to 2 pm, and during the same time on Monday and Tuesday, June 24 and 25. The public is also invited to the Opening Reception on Saturday, June 22, from 5-7 pm at The Bascom. Experience their South through this exciting assemblage of colorful compositions.

In conjunction with this exhibition, the Center for Life Enrichment (CLE), Highlands, will host a lecture by Steve Aimone, whose workshop brought the four Southern Lights artists together. On Thursday, July 25, from 4-5 pm, Aimone will speak on The Spiritual Language of Art: Understanding Nonobjective Painting, at the CLE Lecture Hall: \$15 for CLE and Bascom members; \$20 for non-members. For more information on this talk, go to their website www.clehighlands.com or call CLE at 828-526-8811.

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.

Monday & Wednesday

- Hatha Yoga – Body n' Soul. 7:45a at First Presbyterian Church. R.Y.T and Y.A. (828) 482-2128. (8/29)

Monday & Thursday

- Hatha Yoga – Body n' Soul. 10:45a at the Episcopal Church of the Incarnation. R.Y.T and Y.A. (828) 482-2128. (8/29)

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 am.

- Men's interdenominational Bible Study at 8:30 a.m. at First Baptist Church.

- The Homegrown Buds, a homeschool 4-H club, meets at noon at the Macon County Library on Siler Road in Franklin at 1 p.m.

- Mah Jong games will be held, open to the public, at the Albert Carlton Cashiers-Community Library at 1 p.m.

1st Wednesday

- Movies at the Hudson Library. Children/ Family movies at 3:30 p.m. Free in-

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

3rd Wednesday

- Movies at the Hudson Library. Recently released movies at 2 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

- 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 Diane 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 invited.

Thurs., May 2

- Taize at HUMC at 5:30p.
- The Rotary Club of Highlands and the Highlands-Cashiers Humane Society will join forces to benefit a mutual goal: Saving pets! Cats and Dogs Rotary Bingo to be held on Thursday from 6:30-8:30p at the Highlands Community Building

Friday, May 3

- Angel Medical Center Blood Drive (120 Riverview Street; Franklin, NC 28734) 8 am – 5 pm Please contact Barbara Hall at (828) 369-4166; 1800RedCross or log onto www.redcrossblood.org for an appointment.

- The High Mountain Squares will dance this Friday night at the Macon County Community Building on Route 441 South from 6:30-9 p.m. Bob Morrison from Winder, GA will be the caller. Mike McDonald and Debbie McClain will be calling the Round and Line Dancing. We dance Western Style Square Dancing, main/stream and plus levels. Everyone is welcome. For information call 828-349-0905.

Saturday, May 4

- The REACH truck will be at the Com-

munity Building in Highlands next to the ball field from 11a to 2p to collect towels, bedding, kitchen items as well as clothing for men, women and children.

- The Family of Stars Relay Team is hosting a Womanless Beauty Pageant at the Franklin High School Fine Arts Center, Saturday, at 6:30 p.m. Admission is \$5 for adults and \$3 for children. Come out for some fun and laughs and help fight cancer. Proceeds will go to the Relay for Life of Franklin, NC.

- The Stella & Dot Summer Collection, including the highly anticipated bag collection, will debut Saturday from 9:30 to 11:30 am at Main Street Coffee & Tea, 26 East Main Street, Franklin, NC. Money will be raised for cancer research; prizes and tasty treats will be available for you to enjoy while you Shop for a Cause. Bring your family and friends and drop by to show your support for Macon County and the American Cancer Society. Hosted by Erin Dublino, Main Street Coffee & Tea, and Stella & Dot Stylist Amanda Show. For more info, call Erin @ 828-200-3421 or Amanda @ 828-371-1989. "Shop for a cause. Small actions make a big difference."

- The Nantahala Hiking Club will take an 8-mile strenuous hike with elevation changes of 1300/1900 ft., half of the hikers starting from Beech Gap and the other from Deep Gap on the Appalachian Trail, exchanging car keys halfway to eliminate a car shuttle. Meet at Westgate Plaza in Franklin at 9 a.m. Call leaders Bill and Sharon Van Horn, 369-1983, for reservations. Visitors welcome but no pet please. Rain date: May 11.

Monday, May 6

- Rotary Club of Highland's Annual Golf Tournament at the Highlands Country Club. Registration, the driving range and the practice green will open at 11 am with a noon shotgun start. Lunch at the turn and beverages on the course, and a HCC logo Tervis Tumbler. There will be closest to the pin and long drive competitions, raffles and Mulligans on sale for only \$5. Entry fee is \$150 per player and ALL proceeds benefit the Rotary Club of Highlands. Sign up alone or as part of a foursome. Contact Joyce Baillargeon at 828-526-0501 or email jbailargeon@highlandscountryclub.com

- Entry Deadline for the "If I were a book" writing contest sponsored by The Cashiers Writer's Group and the Friends of the Albert Carlton Cashiers Community Library. There are two categories: poetry and prose. The piece(s) must begin with the words "If I were a book," and can be as long as 325 words. Forms are available at the library or by calling Kathie Blozan at 743-1765. Teachers in Cashiers and Highlands also have

• HIGHLANDS AREA UPCOMING EVENTS •

forms. Homeschoolers are encouraged to submit work as well. The contest is a part of the "Love Your Library" week in June. Winners of the middle school writing contest will be invited to read their work at Poetry Night at the Cashiers Library. First place winners will receive a Kindle and have their work published in the Laurel Magazine. Second place winners will receive a gift certificate for Chapter 2 Book Store.

Sun. May 5

• The Nantahala Hiking Club will take a 2.5-mile easy-to-moderate hike with an elevation change of 500 ft. on Jack Rabbit Mt trail around Lake Chatuge (GA) and over the mountain. Meet at Westgate Plaza in Franklin at 2 p.m. Drive 60 miles round trip. Call leader Kay Corelli, 369-6820, for reservations. Visitors welcome but no pets please.

Thursday, May 9

• Keller Williams Realty Blood Drive (1573 Highlands Road; Franklin, NC) 1-5:30 pm Please contact Connie Coker at (828) 524-0100 or log onto www.redcrossblood.org to schedule an appointment.

• The May meeting of The Western North Carolina Woodturners Club will meet on Thursday at 6 PM at the Blue Ridge School, in Glenville, N.C. Drive to the back of the school to the woodworking shop. Visitors are always welcomed. The club meets every second Thursday at 6 P.M., March through November.

Saturday, May 11

• The Nantahala Hiking Club will take a 6-mile moderate hike with an elevation change of 300 ft. along Panther Creek to Panther Creek Falls near Tallulah Falls, GA. Meet at Westgate Plaza in Franklin at 9 am. Drive 65 miles round trip. Bring water and lunch. Call leader Gail Lehman, 524-5298, for reservations. Visitors welcome but no pets please.

• The Nantahala Hiking Club will take a 4-mile moderate hike with an elevation change of 500 ft. to Lower Whitewater Falls from Bad Creek parking area for views of the falls and Lake Jocassee. Meet at Cashiers Rec. Center parking lot at 10 a.m. Drive 22 miles round trip. Call leaders Mike and Susan Kettles, 743-1079, for reservations. Visitors welcome but no pets please.

Sunday, May 12

• At Paoletti's, Mother's Day Special. Pre-Fixe Menu for \$39, includes both a soup & salad and choices of two small plate entrees, followed by choice of dessert. Call 526-4906 for reservations.

• The Nantahala Hiking Club will take a 6-mile moderate-to-strenuous hike on the

Bartram Trail, with elevation change of 750 ft., from Wallace Branch up a ridge for views of the Nantahala Mountains and Mill Creek Community. Meet at Westgate Plaza in Franklin at 2 p.m. Drive 6-miles round trip. Call leader Joyce Jacques, 410-852-7510, for reservations. Visitors welcome but no pets please

Wed., May 15

• Free movie at the Hudson Library. "Sarah's Key." Rated PG-13..

Thurs.-Sat., May 16-18

• At The Bascom, Collective Spirits, a premier spring wine and food event. For additional information regarding events and participating chefs and vintners, please visit collectivespirits.com. For ticketing information, call the ticket office at 828-787-2896. For other Collective Spirits inquiries, contact Claire Cameron, Events Manager, at 828-787-2882 or ccameron@thebascom.org.

Thurs., May 16

• Taize at Our Lady of the Mountains Catholic Church at 5:30p.

• "When Sugar Met Salt" – Balance the Salt you Eat & Help Steady Blood Sugar Too! Macon County Public Health will be offering this fun and easy class about how to lighten up on sodium and help manage diabetes. Join Jessi Bassett, Registered Dietitian at Macon County Public Health for a live cooking demo and yummy dinner on Thursday, May 16th from 5:30-7 pm. Learn how the salt in your foods can make a difference in your blood sugar. This event is free but registration is required. Call Macon County Public Health @ 349-2425 today to reserve your spot!

Fri. May 17

• The Nantahala Hiking Club will take a 4-mile easy hike with an elevation change of 150 ft. on the Little Tennessee River Greenway from Tassee Shelter to the Library Loop and back. Meet at the Tassee Shelter on Ulco Dr. in Franklin at 6:30 a.m. with binoculars for bird-watching. Call leader Kathy Ratcliff, 349-3380, for reservations. Visitors welcome but no pets please.

Sun. May 18

• The Nantahala Hiking Club will take a 13-mile strenuous hike to Mt. LeConte, with an elevation change of 3,500 ft., climbing from Grotto Falls on the Trillium Gap Trail and descending via Rainbow Falls Trail. Meet at Dillsboro Huddle House at 8 am. Drive 172 miles round trip. Call leader Don O'Neal, 828-586-5723, for reservations. Able visitors welcome, but no pets please.

Sunday, May 19

• Martinis and Mozart at Wolfgang's Restaurant and Wine Bistro. Tickets are \$85 per person. Enjoy martinis, wine and the Bistro's speciality hors d'oeuvres. Call the HC-

CMF office for reservations at 828-526-9060.

• The Nantahala Hiking Club will take a 2.5-mile easy hike on the Kimsey Creek Trail to view spring wildflowers on a mostly level woodland trail with a very short climb and small creek crossing. Meet at Westgate Plaza in Franklin at 2 pm. Drive 30 miles round trip. Call leader Kay Coriell, 369-6820, for reservations. Visitors welcome but no pets please.

Monday, May 20

• Mountain View Intermediate School Blood Drive (161 Clarks Chapel Road; Franklin, NC) 2 – 6:30 pm Please contact Sandy Keener at (828) 349-1325 for further information or to schedule an appointment.

Wed., May 22

• Highlands-Cashiers Hospital free health screening for Highlands and Scaly Mountain beginning at 7:15a at the Jane Woodruff Clinic. Pre-registration required; call (828) 526-1435 or visiting the Hospital's website at www.highlandscashiershospital.org.

Thurs. - Sun., May 23-26

• At the Highlands Playhouse, daMon on the Keys. An evening of daMon Goff showcasing Broadway standards from Gershwin to Sondheim. For ticket information call 526-9443.

Thursday, May 23

• Franklin Community Blood Drive held at First United Methodist Church-Franklin (69 Lotla Street; Franklin, NC) 12:30-5 pm Please call (828) 369-9559; 1800RedCross or log onto www.redcrossblood.org

Friday, May 24

• Junaluskee Lodge #145 Blood Drive (Church Street; Franklin, NC) 10 am – 2 pm Please call Scott Montieth at (828) 421-3026 for further information or to schedule an appointment.

Sat. & Sun., May 25-26

• The 5th annual Spring Cashiers Arts & Crafts Fair will be held at the Cashiers Village Green. Sponsored by the Rotary Club of Cashiers Valley, the Spring Arts and Crafts Fair will run from 10am to 5pm both Saturday and Sunday; rain or shine. This Spring juried event will be showcasing some of the finest artisans of the Southeast. With more than 60 exhibitors, featured art media will include: clay, wood, fibers, metal, glass, watercolor, oils, photography; and take the form of jewelry, clothing, furniture, quilts, pottery, and home décor. One can expect to find folk art with mountain themes, from paintings and metal art, wooden bowls and ceramics, to homemade jams and relishes among other things. Artisans interested in participating in this show, should email: artsandcrafts@cashiersrotary.org

Gear up for Collective Spirits at The Bascom premier spring wine & food event with guest vintners

More than 500 lucky oenophiles will be wine and dined on May 16-18 at The Bascom's annual Collective Spirits fundraiser. The festivities kick off on Thursday evening with exclusive benefactor-only dinners featuring renowned chefs and notable wines. Chefs include Susan Spicer of New Orleans' Bayona restaurant, Elliott Moss of The Admiral in Asheville, James Beard award winner, Sean Brock of Husk in Charleston, Reagan Browell of The Willcox Inn in Aiken (SC), Patrick Owens of Charleston's Opal and Chris Hall of Local Three in Atlanta. These dinners are even more sought after due to their locations in some of Highlands' and Cashiers' finest private homes.

Friday begins with two educational tasting seminars in the classrooms at The Bascom. Friday evening will include a VIP Wine Tasting of rare and collectible restaurant-only wine-list wines, followed by the Stock Your Cellar Wine Market and Tasting on the Terrace at The Bascom. The Market will spotlight dozens of award-winning vintners, who will offer tastings and hard-to-find wines for sale by the discounted case. A seated dinner on Saturday at Highlands Country Club will culminate in a live auction conducted by wine specialist Greg Quiroga of Reynolds-Buckley in California. In May 2010, Quiroga built up a six-figure seed fund for The Bascom's mountain plateau outreach and educational programs benefiting underserved children and families. There is never a charge for gallery exhibitions at The Bascom, which is open year round, seven days a week. More than 40,000 people, including residents of the Highlands-Cashiers plateau, area children youth and adults, and visitors to the community are served each year. Expect even more re-

sults from the proceeds, which will continue to enrich the life of the region's residents through The Bascom's high-quality educational programs, many at no cost to the community.

Saturday's live auction items are a fabulous mix of glamorous trips to luxury destinations, exclusive gourmet dinners, private wine tastings hosted by the vintners themselves and carefully curated wine collections. The Bascom announces its Collective Spirits 2013 vintners, with special Guest of Honor winemaker Rick Sayre of the Rodney Strong Winery.

Please mark your calendar for the Collective Spirits events: Thursday, May 16 – Private Wine Dinners (Benefactors only*) – 6 pm; Friday, May 17 – Educational Tasting Seminars – 1 pm and 3 pm; Friday, May 17 – Stock Your Cellar Wine Market and Tasting (\$100 per person) – 6 pm; Saturday, May 18 – Gala Dinner and Auction (\$275 per person) – 6 pm *Benefactor packages start at \$2,500

For more information about events and participating chefs and vintners, please visit collectivespirits.com. For ticketing information, call 828-787-2896. For other Collective Spirits inquiries, contact Claire Cameron, Events Manager, at 828-787-2882.

Thousands of year-round and seasonal residents experience The Bascom through classes, workshops, events and exhibitions. A non-profit cultural center acclaimed for its barn-like architecture on a beautiful six-acre campus, The Bascom is open year-round, Monday through Saturday, 10 am to 5 pm, and Sunday, noon to 5 pm. For more information, or for more details on all Bascom activities, visit www.TheBascom.org or call 828-526-4949.

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Sneaky signs of Sleep Apnea

By Dr. Joseph Wilbanks, DDS

When family members down the hall complain about your snoring it is a good sign that you might have a sleep breathing disorder like obstructive sleep apnea. But what are the sneaky signs of sleep apnea? The American Sleep Apnea Association estimates that more than 20 million adults may suffer from sleep apnea so it is important to learn about this common disorder.

People with sleep apnea stop breathing during sleep. Those with mild sleep apnea may only stop breathing a few times but some people can experience this hundreds of times each night. When a sleeper with sleep apnea stops breathing the body becomes starved for oxygen and the brain briefly awakens the sleeper to begin breathing again. The problem is that the sleeper doesn't remember these episodes — they only know that they feel exhausted all the time.

Most people think that snoring is annoying, but harmless. The truth is that loud snoring is a sign of obstructive sleep apnea. Sleep apnea has been linked to heart disease, stroke, diabetes, weight gain and depression. Diagnosing and treating obstructive sleep apnea can make major improvements in a patient's overall health and feeling of well-being.

Some sneaky signs of sleep apnea include waking with a sore throat or cotton mouth, morning headaches, trouble paying attention or focusing (especially common in children with sleep apnea), being more irritable or depressed than usual, gaining weight or developing diabetes. Obstructive sleep apnea sufferers are typically sleepy throughout the day which puts them at a higher risk for accidents.

Treating obstructive sleep apnea may involve a CPAP machine which is a wonderful treatment for the disorder. Unfortunately, about half of patients who are pre-



scribed CPAP find it impossible to sleep with the masks and hoses and cannot use the machine.

Oral appliance therapy from a dentist who is trained in treating sleep apnea is a comfortable and effective alternative.

- Find out more about oral appliance therapy to treat obstructive sleep apnea by contacting Wilbanks Smile Center in Toccoa, GA today at 706-886-9439.

Clean teeth reduce risk of Atrial Fibrillation

Is there a relationship between clean teeth and heart health? The answer is yes when talking about atrial fibrillation according to a new study in the International Journal of Cardiology.

The authors of the study went so far as to propose lowering the risk of developing atrial fibrillation, a common cardiac condition, by simply having your teeth cleaned at least once a year. "Oral infections due to poor oral hygiene may also predispose patients to

new-onset AF by adding to the inflammatory burden of the individuals" said the researchers.

Other studies have also linked inflammation and atrial fibrillation, including animal studies that showed an increase in susceptibility for the condition among subjects with gum disease. "Poor oral hygiene is the major cause of periodontal disease, which has been found to be a potential risk factor for coronary heart disease, ischemic stroke, and peripheral vascular disease," the Taiwanese study authors wrote. "Systemic inflammation could represent the underlying mechanism that links oral health and cardiovascular disease."

We are told to eat right, exercise and avoid smoking in order to preserve the health of our hearts. Let's add regular dental visits to that list – probably the easiest one to achieve!

- Please contact Toccoa, GA full service dental office Wilbanks Smile Center today at 800-884-9439 today to schedule your visit. Don't worry if it has been a while since you've had a cleaning, we'll be happy to get you back on schedule.

... TAG & TAX continued from page 4

gram.

The result of a law first passed by the General Assembly in 2005, the combination goes into effect this summer following the incorporation of county tax rates into the vehicle registration system. It is designed to provide easy one-time payment of vehicle tags and property taxes across the state.

In addition to the "Tag & Tax Together" information on the website, NCDMV, the N.C. Department of Revenue and North Carolina's 100 counties are working together to get the word out about the new combined program.

Key facts about the program:

- The new Tag and Tax Together program is for your vehicle prop-

erty tax only and does not affect your mortgage or home property tax.

- Your vehicle tax will be due at the same time your vehicle registration is due. The due date will be printed on the new renewal notice that you receive in the mail.

- Your vehicle's annual registration renewal fees will remain the same. The increase in your bill is from the addition of the vehicle property tax.

- No owner will have to pay taxes twice in the same tax year for the same vehicle. It is important to look at the vehicle property tax year rather than the calendar year. By law, the tax year for your vehicle begins the first month after your previous registration expires. While it is possible to pay twice in a calendar year, no vehicle owner will pay twice in the same tax year or for the same 12-month period.

Nursing school scholarships now available

The Judy Moore Memorial Scholarship Endowment Committee is accepting scholarship applications for the 2013 year. The endowment is an affiliate of the NC Community Foundation.

This Scholarship Program for Nurses was established in 1997 as a memorial to Judy Moore, RN who was killed in a tragic accident in 1996. A resident of Macon County, Judy was an inspiration to both nurses and patients in her role as a Community Health Nurse III and as an OB-GYN Nurse Practitioner. Since the first award in August of 1998, the scholarship has been given to 24 individuals (some have been awarded funding more

than one year) and over \$21,000 has been issued.

At least \$1,000 in scholarship funds will be made available for the 2013 year. The application deadline is Wednesday June 12, 2013 for both undergraduate and graduate scholarships. Applicants must have completed their first semester in the Nursing Program and have met other eligibility requirements.

Applications are available on line via the NC Community Foundation site - www.nccommunityfoundation.org or get additional information by calling Anne Hyder at 828 - 524-6564

Last chance to register for free health screening

Spots still remain for Highlands-Cashiers Hospital's free health screening of the summer for residents of the Highlands and Scaly Mountain communities coming up Saturday, May 22nd at Highlands-Cashiers Hospital's Jane Woodruff Clinic, Level One.

The screening, beginning at 7:15am, is completely free, but preregistration is required. There is still time to sign up, and those interested in taking advantage of the event can call (828) 526-1435 during regular business hours, or sign up on the hospital's website at www.highlandscashiershospital.org. Participants will be checked

for height and weight, BMI (body mass index), blood pressure, blood oxygen saturation level, cholesterol and triglyceride levels, glucose (blood sugar) levels, and white and red blood cell counts (to detect anemia and infection). Men over the age of 45 will also receive a blood test to detect prostate cancer (PSA).

In addition to the various tests, a dietitian/nutritionist will be on hand to discuss healthy eating and exercise habits, and a physical therapist will be available to evaluate balance and strength. Hearing tests and ear examinations will also be conducted at the screening.

REACH truck coming to Highlands May 4

Supplies are needed for the REACH shelter and resale shop in Franklin.

On May 4, the REACH truck will be at the Community Building next to the ballfield from 11a to 2p. Needed are household supplies such as towels, bedding and kitchen items, as well as clothing for men, women and children. These are used by families displaced by abuse and are sold in the re-sale shop - REACH for Bargains in Franklin. Chad Lucas of Lucas Patton Designs for transforming the resale shop into a more efficient and attractive place.

Last year, REACH of Macon County helped 500 victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. More than 150 adults and children were sheltered for more than 2,000 nights.

Look for the Red Roof and the Covered Wagon!

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• SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING •

No pain, no gain is tough message

Father Dean Cesa
Our Lady of the
Mountains Catholic
Church



Spreading and living the Christian message is not a particularly popular thing, nor is it easy – otherwise I suppose we would see a lot more practicing Christians. You must undergo hardship to enter the kingdom. It is a no pain no gain sort of message. But living this life of sacrifice has tremendous worth, both here and hereafter. Remember the words of John F. Kennedy as he proposed going to the moon: We do these things not because they are easy but because they are hard.

Picture the first apostles who, true to their calling as apostles, were sent out to spread the good news about Jesus Christ. In particular there are Paul and Barnabas. Their mission is not taken on in a casual way but comes from their community, preceded by prayer and fasting. The result of their sacrifice is wonderful. The door of faith is opened not just to those Jews they visit, but to everyone in all of the towns they visited. Those who heard and accepted the message knew what was at the heart of that message: Blessedness is not that everything be easy, but an acceptance of the struggle to remain faithful to the person and teachings of Jesus

A beautiful illustration of this can be found in the celebration of a wedding. You know, grooms are prevented sometimes by superstition from seeing the bride. It is like the anticipation of heaven – like the happiness of a wedding day. There are no tears, well maybe tears of joy. Getting to a wedding day is not so easy. But it is a new beginning and we like new things. A new life together which will require new sacrifices. All of this is really summed up in the sacrifice of Jesus. He is glorified by the suffering he endured. He gives us a new commandment. Love one another. As I have loved you, so you should love one another. Maybe “as” is not his best word to use here. He is not just an example for us to imitate, of how his sacrifice for us demonstrates his love for us. His love makes it possible for us to love. It empowers our love. True, he showed us the way to love. But without his self-sacrificing love, we could not love. And this love is not fleeting, blissful and giddy, as one might characterize the early stages of attraction and the start of a relationship. Those who have been married a while know it is not always easy. But it is not devoid of joy. The sacrifices themselves done in love bring their own joy. Love requires sacrifices every day. More importantly, you know that it is worth the sacrifice. This creates a cycle of love. In response to the love Jesus gives, we love and spread that love. That love returns to us in the love we receive from others also empowered by Jesus. We love because we are loved. We must love in order to attain love.

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.

BUCK CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH

Sundays: School – 10 a.m.; Worship – 11
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Catered dinner - Wed. 6pm

CHAPEL OF SKY VALLEY

Sky Valley, GA
Church: 706-746-2999
Sundays: 10 a.m. – Worship
Holy Communion 1st Sunday of the month
Wednesdays: 9 a.m. Healing and Prayer w/Holy Communion

CHRIST ANGLICAN CHURCH

Rector: Jim Murphy, 252-671-4011
Worshipping at the facilities of Whiteside Presbyterian Church,
Cashiers
Sun.: Holy Communion - 9 a.m.; Adult Forum - 10:45 at Buck's
Coffee Cafe, Cashiers
Mon.: Bible Study & Supper at homes - 6 p.m.
Wed.: Men's Bible Study -8:30 a.m., First Baptist Church
Thurs.: Women's Prayer Group - 10 a.m., Whiteside Presbyterian
Church; Healing Service at noon

CLEAR CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH

Pastor Jim Kinard
Sundays: School – 10 a.m.; Worship – 11
Wednesdays -- 7 p.m.

COMMUNITY BIBLE CHURCH

www.cbchighlands.com • 526-4685
3645 Cashiers Rd, Highlands, NC
Senior Pastor Gary Hewins
Sun.: 9:30am: Sunday School
10:30am: Middle & High School; 10:45am: Children's Program.,
10:45am: Worship Service

EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF THE INCARNATION

Rev. Bruce Walker • 526-2968
Sundays: Holy Eucharist Rite I (chapel), 8 am, 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

(Off Franklin/Highlands Rd)
Rev. Carson Gibson
Sunday School – 10 am, Worship Service – 11 am
Bible Study – 6 pm

HIGHLANDS ASSEMBLY OF GOD

Randy Reed, Pastor
828-421-9172 • 165 S. Sixth Street
Sundays: Worship – 11

HIGHLANDS CENTRAL BAPTIST CHURCH

Pastor Dan Robinson
670 N. 4th Street (next to the Highlands Civic Center)
Sunday: Morning Worship 10:45 a., Evening Worship, 6:30 p.
Wednesday: Prayer Service, 6:30 p.

HIGHLANDS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Pastor Paul Christy 526-3376
Sun: School 9:45a.; Worship 8:30, 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)

HOLY FAMILY LUTHERAN CHURCH – ELCA

Chaplain Margaret Howell
2152 Dillard Road – 526-9741
Sundays: Sunday School and Adult discussion group 9:30 a.m.;
Worship/Communion – 10:30

HEALING SERVICE on the 5th Sunday of the month.

MACEDONIA BAPTIST CHURCH

8 miles south of Highlands on N.C. 28 S in Satolah
Pastor Roy Lowe, (828) 526-8425
Sundays: School – 10 a.m.; Worship – 11
Choir – 6 p.m.

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

MOUNTAIN SYNAGOGUE

St. Cyprian's Episcopal Church, Franklin
828-369-9270 or 828-293-5197

MOUNTAIN BIBLE CHURCH

Pastor: Clayton Lopez • 828-743-9704
Independent Bible Church
Sundays:10:30 a.m. at Big Ridge Baptist Church, 4224 Big Ridge
Road (4.5 miles from NC 107)
Weds: Bible Study 6:30 p.m.; Youth Group 6 p.m.

OUR LADY OF THE MOUNTAINS CATHOLIC CHURCH

Rev. Dean Cesa, pastor – Parish office: 526-2418
Mass: – Sun: 11 a.m.; Thurs & Fri.: 9 a.

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... DRUG continued from page 10

July 1, 2014, and will automatically be renewed for a period of one year. "In the event of termination, the company shall be paid for all tests administered and fees incurred through the date of the notice of termination, and shall cease all testing as of the date of the said notice," reads the contract.

The contract also holds that all student athletes subject to testing must be notified of the policy and given a consent form. Each student athlete and their parents or guardian must sign and return the form to the coach before being allowed to participate in any practice session.

At the beginning of any athletic season, all student athletes will be tested with the date chosen by the principal of the student's respective school. Any student who does not complete the test without a "valid reason" will be considered to have "refused the test."

Following initial screenings at the beginning of each sport season, random tests will be administered to student athletes throughout the year. All tests will be administered in student restrooms by PDTS employees.

In a letter from PDTS owner Bruce McCauley, the test boasts having a 99% accuracy rating and FDA clearance. The test, which screens for all major illicit substances including methamphetamines, marijuana and opiates, will produce initial results within two hours of administration.

During the 2012-13 academic year, 513 drug screens were administered at Franklin High School. One student athlete opted to leave the school sports program after an initial test; 17 other results came out negative and three results returned positive. All 20 tests were sent to state laboratories for confirmation. Two students who tested positively for drug use dropped out of their

sports programs, while one consented to disciplinary measures by the school so that they could participate in coming seasons.

At Highlands School, 204 drug screens were administered to student athletes, resulting in one student-athlete's results being forwarded to a state lab for confirmation. The result turned out negative. One additional student athlete was cited for use, and is ineligible to participate in interscholastic sports for one year.

Thirty student athletes were tested at Nantahala School. No testing results were forwarded to a state lab for further analysis because they were all negative.

At Macon Middle School, 329 student athletes were tested. Two student athlete results were forwarded to a state approved lab for further analysis and both results were negative.

Other business Superintendent Dr. Jim Duncan announced the reassignment/

transfer of Union Academy's Principal Kris Reis, to Assistant Principal of Franklin High School, effective as of July 1.

On a motion made by Gary Shields and seconded by Melissa Evans, the board unanimously moved to continue their meeting

to Monday, May 13th at 5:30 p.m. in the board room of the Macon County Schools Administrative Offices at which time various matters of the board will be considered, namely personnel matters.

... INVESTING from page 6

so, in fact. I further predict that by fall we are going to see inventory shortfalls in this price point, echoing what is happening in many of our feeder markets throughout the southeast.

If you are a luxury property owner and have been sitting on the sidelines pondering selling, I do believe now is an opportune time to launch! It will be intriguing to continue to watch this market recover in all price points, and see if inventory shortfalls do, in fact, materialize.

• Susie deVille, ME, ABR, SFR, is Owner/Broker-in-Charge

of White Oak Realty Group. Her areas of expertise include real estate investments, niche marketing, social media, and strategic property positioning. An expert in entrepreneurship and anthropology, Susie applies her acumen in human behavior toward negotiating and advocating on behalf of her clients. White Oak Realty Group's sales office is located at 125 South Fourth Street in the heart of the retail district in Highlands. For more information, visit WhiteOakRG.com or call (828) 526-8118.



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• HS SPRING SPORTS •

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Girls Baseball

Ann Marie Osteen, Kassie Vinson, McKinley Mosely, Kristin Grimm, Paige Moss, Autumn Houston, Ann Marie Crowe, McKayla Hensely, Carrie McClure, Emily Shuler, Ali Cutshaw, April Moss, Kimberly Griffin, Ryan Gearhart -- Head Coach



Girls Soccer

Hayden Bates, Caroline Christy, Cara Hedden, Ellie Cate Beavers, Mary Gillan Renfro, Bella Lupoli, Karaline Shomaker, Rebekah Parks, Emily Gabbard, Jessica Tilson, Kirstyn Lamb, Ashlee Maitland, Whitney Billingsley, Courtney Henry, Adrienne Gibson, Becca Johnson, Jeff Weller -- Head Coach



... HS SPORTS continued from page 7

the inning, and Moore brought him home with a double to the deepest portion of the ballpark. With the tying run in scoring position, the Highlanders could not tie the game, and fell 7-6.

Lady Highlanders Soccer splits pair of games

The Lady Highlanders dropped a heartbreaker to Walhalla, SC last week by a score of 2-1. The Lady Highlanders tied the game at 1-1 after Hayden Bates hammered home a goal off of an

assist from Kirstyn Lamb. Unfortunately for the Lady Highlanders, a hand ball near midfield combined with the rainy conditions allowed Walhalla to take the match with a late goal.

Highlands bounced back nicely with a big 1-0 win over the Brevard Lady Blue Devils. Mary Gillian Renfro scored the game's lone goal, and the Highlander defense was stout in making the shutout hold up. The Lady Highlanders will host a home playoff game on May 8th. Highlands will honor their senior athletes at this playoff game.

• BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NEWS •

Rotary's 'Scholars of the Month'



The Rotary Club of Highlands honored the April Highlands School Scholars of the Month at its April 23 meeting. Pictured from left: Thomas Jessup, School Counselor, Rebecca Johnson, Interact club President, Taylor Osteen, high school winner, Katie Jane Earp, kindergarten school winner, Katlin Moss, middle school winner, and Rotary President, Brian Stiehler.

MC Health Dept. recognizes names citizen 'Health Hero'



As a part of April's celebration of Public Health Month, Mr. Bill Van Horn was honored by Macon County Public Health with the 2013 Public Health Hero award. Mr. Van Horn was recognized for promoting physical fitness and a healthy, active lifestyle in our community. Mr. Van Horn was cited for his efforts to promote hiking, and in particular, his work to develop hiking resources and programs to interest youth in hiking. Mr. Van Horn was presented with a gift certificate and award at the April 23rd Board of Health meeting. Pictured are (L-R) Rhonda Blanton, nominator; Dr. Frank Killian, Vice-Chair of the Macon County Board of Health; Mr. Bill Van Horn; and Mr. Jim Bruckner, Health Director.

Caterpillar recognized by Macon Pride for recycling program



Macon Pride recognizes Caterpillar Precision Seals at Industrial Park for exemplary 100% recycling program. Listed below are employees from left: front row: Judy Blanton, Dwight Tallent, Monica Elkins, Joel Ostroff, Macon Co. Recycling Coordinator. Back row: Joey Hurst, Darrell Gregory, Terry Riggins, Craig Burrell.

In addition to large volumes of recycled paper, metals and lubricants, Caterpillar has placed nearly a dozen stations around the plant for employees' convenience to recycle beverage containers and mixed paper used daily. Senior Associate for Environmental Health and Safety, Curtis Green, stated "At Caterpillar in Franklin, NC, we take the responsibility of being an environmental steward seriously by placing a strong focus on our social responsibility. Sustainable development is achieved through the employees' desire and passion to create a culture that reaches beyond the walls of our working environment. We strive for 100% recycling at our facility by utilizing Macon County recycling program and other environmental-friendly organizations."

Bingo big win for Literacy



On Thursday, March 14, the Rotary Club of Highlands partnered with the Literacy Council to sponsor Bingo. All proceeds went to support literacy for children and adults in our community.

Pictured are Judy Joyner and Tonya Hensley, directors of the Literacy Council, Rotary President and Literacy Council President Brian Stiehler, his daughter Anna, with winners of the Super Bingo game Jeannie Chambers and Jodie Cook.

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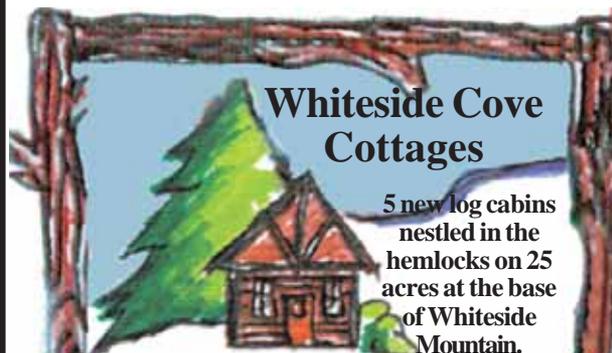
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... CLASSIFIEDS from page 21

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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. 23

• At 6:30 p.m., a breaking and entering of a home on Laurel Heights was reported where a Honda/XL250R motorcycle valued at \$3,000 was stolen.

April 11

• At 3 p.m., officers responded to a two-vehicle accident at US 64 and Big Bearpen Road.

April 13

• At 12:47 p.m. officers responded to a call from the Highlands Quick Mart regarding someone trespassing and communicating threats.

• At noon, vandalism to private property was reported on Bowery Road where chairs and a picnic table were burned and tools, toys, and a canoe were thrown into the lake.

April 16

• At 4:16 p.m., officers responded to a two-vehicle accident at the Farmers Market at First and Main streets.

April 17

• At 11:53 p.m., drunk and disorderly conduct was reported by staff at The Ugly Dog on S. 4th Street.

April 18

• At 9:29 a.m., the theft of an automobile valued at \$50,000 was reported. It was missing from a parking lot on S. 4th St.

April 19

• At 12:10 p.m., doors at a residence on Choc-taw Road were reported damaged with marks.

April 21

• At 8:30 p.m., Tawny Perez, 21, of Highlands, was arrested for failure to appear in court.

• At 7:27 p.m., vandalism of cemetery tomb doors was reported at Highlands Memorial Park where someone forced entry into a cremation tomb.

The Highlands Fire & Rescue Dept. log entries from April 17.

April 17

• At 10:42 a.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm accidentally set off by a resident on Whiteside Mountain Road.

• At 12:42 p.m., the dept. responded to a report of heavy smoke in the area of Satulah Ridge. The smoke was do to burning leaves in a barrel.

April 18

• At 9:44 a.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm set off by a worker dealing with water flow regulation at the hospital.

April 19

• At 11:23 a.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm set off by burning food at a residence on Short Off Road.

• At 12:59 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm accidentally set off by a worker at an establish-

ment on Church Street.

April 20

• At 8:10 a.m., the dept. responded to a chimney fire at a residence on Hickory Drive. The heat of the fire cracked the flue.

• At 2:38 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to assist EMS with a medical call at a residence on Hickory Street where a 57 year old female had passed out. She was transported to the hospital.

• At 9:13 p.m., the dept. provided mutual aid to Scaly Fire and Rescue for a chimney fire on Bartram Ridge Dr. The call was cancelled en route.

April 21

• At 3:30 p.m., the dept. responded to a report of a large amount of smoke in the area of Wingina Place. No problem was found.

April 23

• At 3:18 p.m., the dept. responded to the call of a small brush fire on Horse Cove Road caused by truck exhaust. It was extinguished.

April 24

• At 6:35 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to assist EMS with a call at a residence on Highlands Point.

• At 6:01 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to assist EMS at residence on Oak Street.

April 25

• At 5:33 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to assist EMS with a medical call at a residence on Club House Trail. EMS transported to the hospital.

April 26

• At 10:04 a.m., the dept. responded to a keypad medical emergency set off by mistake by workers at a residence on Pineland Drive. The call was cancelled en route.

April 27

• At 5:53 a.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Upper Brushy Face. It was false.

• At 3:43 p.m., the dept. provided mutual aid to Cashiers Fire Dept. for a chimney fire. The call was cancelled en route.

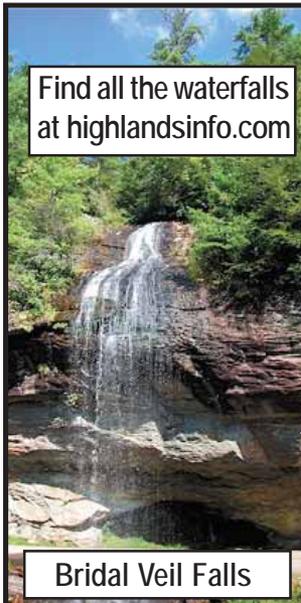
April 29

• At 2:46 p.m, the dept. was first-responders to assist EMS with a medical call at a residence on Wildwood Drive. EMS transported to the hospital.

• THANKS •

The family of Tommy Houston wants to thank the Highlands community for its support during the recent benefit at the Rec Park.

- The Houston Family



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Rotary Golf Tourny this Monday!
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On Monday, May 6, the Rotary Club of Highland's Annual Golf Tournament at the Highlands Country Club. Registration, the driving range and the practice green will open at 11 am with a noon shotgun start. Lunch at the turn and beverages on the course, and a HCC logo Tervis Tumbler. There will be closest to the pin and long drive competitions, raffles and Mulligans on sale for only \$5. Entry fee is \$150 per player and ALL proceeds benefit the Rotary Club of Highlands. Sign up alone or as part of a foursome. Contact Joyce Baillargeon at 828-526-0501.

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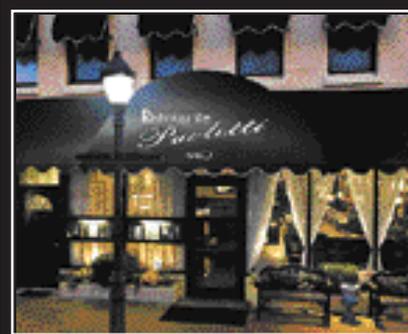
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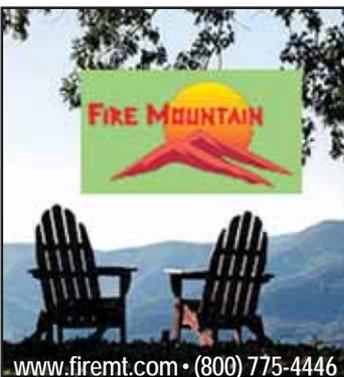
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