Town Board moves to restructure the ABC Board

“At a Special Called Town Board meeting, Wed., Jan. 29, commissioners accepted a letter of resignation from one ABC Board member, removed another and expanded the board from three members to five members.

“The Town Board doesn’t want to manage the ABC Board or the operations of the ABC Store – by statute that is not our charge,” said Mayor Patrick Taylor. “But the Town Board’s responsibility is to appoint qualified members who will in turn oversee the finances, operations and policies of the ABC Store. In recent weeks the Town Board and the general public have been made aware of major problems with the ABC Board that if left uncorrected could have a very negative impact on the successful operation of the ABC Store.”

Taylor went on to say that the Town Board had been hopeful that the ABC Board could have continued with this much effort to make sure us it’s US,” said Commissioner Amy Patterson. “So the government does its part, the community does its part and when its willing to put up this much effort to make sure the town knows what’s going on, I think we should support that.”

Basically, the group wants to develop structures in the main park area that will facilitate day-to-day use.

Depending on funding, initial construction projects could include: walkways through the park, trellises and arbors, picnic tables, benches, an interactive park area that will facilitate day-to-day use.

Several projects in the works will soon change the face of Highlands – and in a good way.

At the last Town Board meeting, commissioners OK’d the Founders Park Coalition’s request to begin fundraising so phase 1 of Kelsey-Hutchinson Park can become a reality.

“This is the best way communities work. It isn’t them or us it’s US,” said Commissioner Amy Patterson. “So the government does its part, the community does its part and when its willing to put up this much effort to make sure the town knows what’s going on, I think we should support that.”

Basically, the group wants to develop structures in the main park area that will facilitate day-use.

Depending on funding, initial construction projects could include: walkways through the park, trellises and arbors, picnic tables, benches, an interactive park area that will facilitate day-to-day use.

Changing the face of Highlands

Several projects in the works will soon change the face of Highlands – and in a good way.

At the last Town Board meeting, commissioners OK’d the Founders Park Coalition’s request to begin fundraising so phase 1 of Kelsey-Hutchinson Park can become a reality.

“This is the best way communities work. It isn’t them or us it’s US,” said Commissioner Amy Patterson. “So the government does its part, the community does its part and when its willing to put up this much effort to make sure the town knows what’s going on, I think we should support that.”

Basically, the group wants to develop structures in the main park area that will facilitate day-use.

Depending on funding, initial construction projects could include: walkways through the park, trellises and arbors, picnic tables, benches, an interactive park area that will facilitate day-to-day use.

Filing for May Primary begins next week

Notice is hereby given that Filing Notice of Candidacy for the 2014 Primary Elections will begin at noon on Monday, February 10, 2014 and will end noon Friday, February 28, 2014 in accordance with G.S. 163-106(c).

The seats that are open for filing at the Macon County Board of Elections office are:

Sheriff: One (1) seat open, filing fee for this office is $638.88.

Register of Deeds: One (1) seat open, filing fee for this office is $411.83.

Clerk of Superior Court: One (1) seat open, filing fee for this office is $834.00.

County Commissioner District 1: One (1) seat open, filing fee for this office is $98.65.

County Commissioner District 2: Two (2) seats open, filing fee for this office is $98.65.

NC Senate, District 50: One (1) seat open, filing fee for this office is $207.00.

NC House of Representatives, District 120: One (1) seat open, filing fee for this office is $207.00.

Contenders will go against Sheriff Robert Holland, Register of Deeds Todd Raby, Clerk of Superior Court Vic Perry, District One County Commissioner Jim Tate, District Two County Commissioner Ronnie Beale and Ron.
Dear Editor,

The alleged embezzlement of around $50,000 from Macon County taxpayers by a county employee highlights incompetency within the county’s “award winning” Finance Department. The allegations in Judge Letts’ search warrant for the Macon County Board of Elections (BOE) office lay out the damning details.

The alleged embezzler wrote at least 29 “check requests” between July 2013 and mid-January 2014 with insufficient documentation and no or forged signature authorizations. Without hesitation Finance’s accounts payable (A/P) issued checks totaling around $50,000 to sham vendors. The checks were given to the embezzler who allegedly pocketed the money.

Macon County, with over 400 employees and a budget of nearly $60 million annually, has a Finance Department using purchase order (PO) and payment procedures appropriate for a “mom and pop” shop. Why would the county’s Finance Department process any “check requests” except in very limited and carefully controlled circumstances? To handle 29 “check requests” from one employee over a short period is astounding. Especially since many didn’t meet authorization requirements, involved “vendors” who weren’t vetted, receipt of services wasn’t verified, and checks weren’t mailed to the vendors.

Was there a co-conspirator within the Finance Department? Will any Finance Department employees be disciplined for failure to follow procedures? Are there any written procedures?

“Check requests” are ripe for fraud and at least one employee figured that out. How many other undetected embezzlements have occurred, or are occurring, within Macon County government?

The county manager must hire an independent forensic auditor, or an auditor from the Office of the State Auditor, to thoroughly review all aspects of Macon County’s Finance Department. The forensic auditor must assure everyone that no other illegal activities have occurred or are occurring, and assure that all purchasing procedures in the Finance Department are brought up to 21st century standards.

Until a forensic audit is completed, corrective actions are implemented, and a public report is issued to county residents answering all questions raised, residents should have no confidence that the county’s Finance Department is protecting taxpayers’ money.

Vic Drummond
Franklin, NC

The facts about the ABC Store

Dear Editor,

It seems that there is only one side of the story getting out concerning the ABC Store woes.

In response to the letter entitled “Don’t Kill the Messenger” in the Jan. 30 edition of Highlands Newspaper, the blame for the loss of funds being given to benefactors of ABC store is the fault of employees and benefits. This is just not true.

First: ABC board brought in two consultants (Mike Myrick and Sara Brewer) for suggestions of saving money for store. The benefit policies were mentioned to which the two consultants stated that the ABC store policies should mirror Town of Highlands policies. Guess what, they are the same. Years of service equals hours of vacation and sick leave. That policy has been at the ABC store for the past 20 plus years. So I do not think that is the problem. I believe quite of few businesses offer benefit packages, banks, construction companies, telephone, retail, post office, etc.

Second: Wanting to cut employees pay 25% is enormous especially since the employee pay is not the source for the loss of funds to benefactors of ABC store. I am not sure you will find many (if any) employees that would be happy about a 25% pay cut anywhere in the USA.

Third: To answer the question about all parts of benefit package being true. I guess the gentleman was referring to the part about an employee taking 4 months of time off in a year and being paid for that time. No, that statement was not true.

To earn that much vacation and sick leave, an employee would have to be employed for 15 or more years. The only time an employee can take sick leave is for Dr. or dentist appointments, at home sick or in hospital. I am not positive but in the 30 plus years the ABC store has been in operation you will probably not find abuse of sick leave or vacation time earned. I know of one employee that used sick leave earned (God rest his soul).

Fourth: The benefactors of ABC store are still receiving funds, maybe not as much as four or five years ago. So let’s look back to see what has changed at ABC store in the last 5 years. Employee benefit package has not changed, same number of employees, store moved. Oh wait that may be the problem. The store moved from a Town owned building paying $1 per year rent to a bigger, nicer, better location store and paying $40 - 80,000 per year rent. Maybe that is where the extra funds to benefactors is going and not the fault of ABC Store employees.

Last: It was mentioned that ABC store benefits might be part of problem of funding State Retirement system. I truly do not believe 4 employees of Highlands ABC have hurt the State Retirement system. That problem is more than likely in Raleigh, NC.

Skip Keener
Highlands
• OBITUARY •

Dennis Herman Matthews

Dennis Herman Matthews was greeted by a smiling Jesus on Thursday, January 23rd. He died during heart surgery and joins his wife of 59 years, Julie. Dennis was born October 1, 1930 in Philadelphia; however, he spent most of his adult life in Jacksonville and also Highlands, NC.

Dennis began his career as a co-op student at Georgia Tech and graduated in 1954 with a Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering (he was a member of the Pi Kappa Alpha fraternity and the Army ROTC). He began attending First United Methodist Church in Jacksonville where he married his wife Julie Hawes of Tallahassee. He served in the US Army as a Second Lieutenant in the Signal Corps and was stationed at Fort Monmouth, NJ and later at Fort Gordon in Augusta, GA. Dennis began his career with Florida Machine & Foundry in 1954 after starting there as a co-op student while attending Georgia Tech. He returned to Jacksonville in 1957 and began a long career, initially with the foundry and also with FLECO, retiring in 1995 with Balderson, a division of Caterpillar. Dennis traveled extensively to Europe, Latin America, and South America where he developed his love for foreign languages, which he used to skillfully communicate with other cultures around the world.

Dennis lived a life of precision and passion serving God through many years of volunteer work in the community; including public schools, Boy Scouts, HabiJax, mission work in Bolivia, and at First United Methodist Church in Jacksonville and Highlands United Methodist Church in Highlands, NC.

His love language was a four letter word: W-O-R-K. Never more evident than at First United Methodist Church, where Dennis served for more than 50 years, holding various leadership positions at both churches.

Dennis' passion for music spanned a lifetime, beginning with assembly in the first grade, the Glee Club at Georgia Tech, and as a member of the choirs at both churches. He shared his talents by performing at weddings, funerals, and parties by delighting everyone with his beautiful baritone voice. He was still singing solos at the age of 83 and now joins the heavenly choir. Dennis was a man of deep faith and integrity. He provided an example of how to live a life of honor to his children, grandchildren, and friends.

Survivors include: his sister Iris Kern (Al), of Ocean Ridge, FL; sister-in-law, Ola Hawes Joyce (Jim) of Tallahassee, FL; and four children: David Thomas Matthews (Meg) of Roswell, GA; twin daughters: Lucie Matthews Patton (Chuck) of Winston-Salem, NC and Leslie Matthews Kiely (Neil) of Mountain Lakes, NJ; and Jefferson Hawes Matthews (Betsy) of Jacksonville; and the proud grandfather of seven grandchildren: Catherine Matthews Isbill (Jonathan) and Lindsay Russell Matthews of Atlanta; Cameron Matthews Kiely and Reed Hampton Kiely of Mountain Lakes, NJ and Spencer Robert Kiely of NYC; Charles Collett Patton and Baker VanBuren Patton of Chapel Hill, NC; and many nieces and nephews.

A memorial service was held in celebration of the outstanding life that Dennis lived on Tuesday, January 28th at First United Methodist Church in Jacksonville. Memorial gifts to honor Dennis’ love and commitment to his church can be made to First United Methodist Church, 225 E. Duval St., Jacksonville, FL 32202, (904) 356-5618. Please sign the guestbook at Jacksonville.com.

Alvin Crowe, Jr.

Alvin Crowe, Jr., 78, of Franklin, died Friday, January 31, 2014. Born in Macon County, he was the son of the late Alvin Calvin Crowe, Sr. and Pearl Reed Crowe. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by a brother, Morris Crowe and a sister, Doris Crowe Picklesimer. Alvin was a member of Pleasant Hill Baptist Church; he was a retired painter and he loved NASCAR, going to the beach and camping.

He is survived by his wife of 36 years,
Featuring WEEKLY SPECIALS and refreshing drinks in our Rainforest Margarita & Mojito Bar! Go to www.elaztecahighlands.com for more information.

Serving Lunch and Dinner Year-Round!
Gourmet Foods, Full Service Bar
NEW LOCATION in Town Square at 343-D Main St.

Serving Lunch Daily
11:30a to 4p
(Closed Wednesday)
Serving Dinner
Mon-Sat, beginning at
5:30p
(Closed Wednesday)

Winter Hours: Tues.-Sun. 5-9p

New Winter Hours:
Closed Sunday, Monday and Tuesday
OPEN
Wednesday through Saturday
11a to 8p

Thank you for your continued support.
We look forward to serving you in 2014!
Follow us at www.Facebook.com/CaffeRel for weekly specials and updates.
459 East Main Street, Franklin, NC 28734
828-369-9446
BREAKFAST
FULL BREAKFAST MADE TO ORDER EVERY MORNING UNTIL 10:30
FRESH EGGS, WAFFLES, FRENCH TOAST, BACON, SAUSAGE, HAM BISCUITS, MUFFINS, CROSSANTS ESPRESSO BAR AND COFFEE ROASTED IN-HOUSE

LUNCH
GRILL
MONDAY THROUGH SATURDAY STARTING AT 11:00 UNTIL CLOSE, SUNDAYS FROM 11:00 TO 4:00
FRESH ANGUS BURGERS FRESH NATURAL CHICKEN BREASTS CHICKEN TENDERS COOKED TO ORDER HAND CUT FRIES, SALADS, HOMEMADE SOUPS, DAILY SPECIALS

DELI
SERVING ALL DAY
FRESH CUT NATURAL MEATS, HOMEMADE DELI SALADS PANINI, MELTS, HOMEMADE POTATO CHIPS, DAILY SOUP SPECIALS

WOOD FIRE PIZZA OVEN
EVERY DAY FROM 11:00 TO CLOSE
AUTHENTIC NEapolitan PIZZA MADE FROM SCRATCH FRESH MOZZARELLA, BASIL, CRUSHED TOMATOES HOMEMADE ITALIAN SAUSAGE, PANCETTA, AND DAILY SPECIALS

SUNDAY SKILLET FRIED CHICKEN
EVERY SUNDAY FROM 11:00AM UNTIL WE SELL OUT FRESH ORGANIC HAND CUT, HAND BREADED CHICKEN COOKED IN A CAST IRON SKILLET. SERVED WITH GREEN BEANS, MASHED POTATOES AND GRAVY WITH A WARM HONEY BISCUIT...$8.95

DINNER TO GO
A DIFFERENT FULL DINNER EVERY NIGHT. SERVES FOUR SERVING MONDAY THROUGH SATURDAY FROM 4:30 UNTIL WE SELL OUT - CALL AHEAD TO RESERVE

MONDAY: CHOOSE EITHER: FOUR CHICKEN AND FOUR CHEESE ENCHILADAS REFRID BEANS, MONTEREY RICE, HOMEMADE TORTILLA CHIPS, SALSA, SHREDDED LETTUCE, TOMATOES, SOUR CREAM OR... 24 BUFFALO WINGS OR 2 LBS CHICKEN TENDERS AND HAND CUT FRIES $18.95 SERVES FOUR

TUESDAY: MADE IN-HOUSE ITALIAN SAUSAGE LASAGNA AND A LARGE HOUSE SALAD $18.95 SERVES FOUR

WEDNESDAY: CHICKEN OR STEAK POT PIE AND A LARGE SALAD $18.95 SERVES FOUR

THURSDAY: ROASTED MEATLOAF WITH MASHED POTATOES, GRAVY AND A LARGE SALAD $18.95 SERVES FOUR

FRIDAY: WILD CAUGHT FRIED SHRIMP, BAKED POTATOES, HUSH PUPPIES, AND COLESLAW $21.95 SERVES FOUR

SATURDAY: IN-HOUSE SMOKED BBQ, COLESLAW, APPLE & BACON BAKED BEANS, AND YEAST ROLLS $18.95 SERVES FOUR

MONDAY THROUGH THURSDAY: TWO WOOD FIRE PIZZAS, FOUR HAND-MADE BREAD STICKS WITH HOUSE TOMATO SAUCE, AND A HOUSE SALAD $19.99 SERVES FOUR

WINE MARKET
AN EXCELLENT, COMPREHENSIVE SELECTION OF WINE WITH THE BEST PRICES IN TOWN, AND RUN BY A KNOWLEDGEABLE STAFF. BEER AND WINE AVAILABLE BY THE GLASS WHILE YOU SHOP AND DINE.

PREPARED FOODS
A LARGE SELECTION OF TAKE-AWAY ITEMS FULLY PREPARED, READY TO TAKE HOME INCLUDING GRILLED PORK LOINS, HOME MADE MAC AND CHEESE, MASHED POTATOES, HERB RUBBED CHICKEN, MADE IN HOUSE BBQ, CHICKEN SALAD DELI SALADS AND MUCH MORE

BUTCHER
WE SELL ONLY 100% PREMIUM ANGUS BEEF, HAND CUT IN-HOUSE. STOCK UP FOR THE WEEKEND EVERY THURSDAY WITH 35% ALL STEAKS AND GROUND BEEF. THEN STOP BY THE TAKE OUT CASE TO COMPLETE YOUR DINNER WITH TWICE BAKED POTATOES, FRESH SALADS AND MORE.

ARTISAN OIL AND VINEGAR
OVER 40 EXTRA VIRGIN OLIVE OILS AND VINEGARS TO CHOOSE FROM - ALL AVAILABLE TO SAMPLE.

SPECIALTY CHEESES
DOZENS OF CHEESES, TAPENADES, OLIVES AND SPECIALTY ITEMS TO CHOOSE FROM INCLUDING OUR MADE IN HOUSE CRACKERS.

MOUNTAIN FRESH GROCERY
OPEN MONDAY THROUGH SATURDAY 7AM TO 8PM, SUNDAY 8AM TO 6PM
CORNER OF FIFTH & MAIN, HIGHLANDS NC • 828.526.2400 • www.mfgro.com
fountain for kids, a monument plaza to the town's founders, drinking fountain(s), a picnic pavilion, a permanent performance pavilion/bandstand, walkway lighting, plantings and landscaping throughout.

Though formal fundraising is only now just beginning, about $30,000 has already been pledged in money and in-kind work. To participate, send donations to Highlands Land Trust, PO Box 1703, Highlands, NC 28741 and put "Founders Park" in the memo line.

Donning its Appearance Commission hat for the first time since the Appearance Commission was dissolved and the Planning Board took on its duties, the Planning Board considered the look and design of three new projects – Cyprus Restaurant's new Main Street façade, the First Presbyterian Church's Memorial Garden and Old Edwards Inn's exterior additions to its new property – 200 Main.

Cyprus International Restaurant
Cyprus Restaurant is moving to the old Oak Street Café location on Main Street and erecting a free standing deck over the Extreme Threads building next door which can then be accessed from a staircase in the alley next to Extreme Threads or from inside the restaurant proper. Obviously this will allow for outdoor seating.

The only aspect of the project the Planning Board considered was the new deck and the new parking arrangement off Oak Street. Nothing is changing on the old Oak Street building façade.

Owner Nick Figel said after 11½ years on NC 106 he is excited about becoming part of downtown Highlands and contributing to the energy of the district.

Since parking on Main Street is always an issue, Figel will be demolishing the outside deck on the back of the building which was accessed from Oak Street and replacing it with grass pavers for parking.

All members were impressed with the design which includes a vertical copper sign spelling out the name C-Y-P-R-U-S and an edgy, upscale deck which includes a wall of copper on the side of the restaurant adjacent to the deck.

Though metal is allowed for signage, it isn’t on the list of approved materials for exteriors.

Figel explained that copper is part of Cyprus's theme and its peasant food preparation and said the patina of the copper will evolve over time and will have a “warm” quality which compliments the restaurant’s color scheme.

Planning Director Josh Ward said allowing copper on a wall would mean changing the Unified Development Code which – including a public hearing, etc. – would take 90-120 days to finalize.

Since Figel's next step is the Zoning Board of Adjustment where he will apply for a Special Use Permit, member Tony Potts asked if he could request a variance for the copper.

Ward said the Zoning Board can’t vary from the town's code, and without the copper Figel can still make use of the property – which is the only reason a variance might be issued.

The board unanimously approved the appearance of the project and went on record saying it wanted the Town Board to consider allowing the copper wall and recommended the Town Board review the request.

First Presbyterian Church Memorial Garden
Landscape Architect Hank Ross presented the plans for the Presbyterian church's new Memorial Garden on the corner of Fifth and Church streets.

The property is currently a wood and shrub triangle that houses the Kelsey Rock under which is a time capsule.

The garden is being developed as a burial place for cremains but also as a public green space which will include a Celtic cross, a pond-less water feature, a monument, and lots of greenery.

There will be space for 90 cremains boxes which will be set along the back of the garden.

The board approved the design unanimously.

OEI's 200 Main pool
The Old Edwards Hospitality Group has purchased High Mountain Lodge on the corner of 2nd and Main streets and is currently renovating the structure including a new metal roof.

Last Monday the Planning Board considered the landscape plan which will include two terraces on the Main Street side of the motel, a small privacy deck at the entrance of the Honeymoon Suite facing 2nd Street and a swimming pool on the Oak Street side.

The pool will be situated where the boulder outcrops now exist along Oak Street. Including terraces around the pool the total square footage will be 5,000 sq. ft. The pool itself will be 1,300 sq. ft. and will be surrounded by a 48” high railing.

The terraces on the Main Street side will be situated around a water feature and will provide 1,700 sq. ft. of public space for guests.

The board unanimously approved the plans.

Members of the Planning Board were also asked to consider extending the restricted parking regulations in the...FACE continued from page 1
Macon County Commissioner Jim Tate announces his bid for Re-Election!

Jim, Allison, Ethan and Eliza

“Commissioner Tate has a proven record of working hard for Macon County. Through common sense leadership, Jim has supported our schools, our county employees, our sheriff’s department and our recreation enhancements. He did so while keeping our tax rates the lowest in the state of North Carolina. I will proudly vote to keep Jim Tate our Commissioner.”

— Kyle Garner, Franklin, N.C.

The following residents are proud to support the re-election campaign of Macon County Commissioner Jim Tate:

Brandon & Jessica Peek
Karl & Janet Gillespie
Kevin & Beth Corbin
Craig Hambrick
Kyle & Lauren Garner
Jimmy & Katie Deal
Brian Bateman
Bill & Patti Harrell
Richard & Francis Harrell
Sammie & David Leffler
Jim & Brenda Garner
David Wilkes
John & Anita Lupoli
Mike & Becki Bryson
Stephen & Carol Lucas
Jeff & Christy Weller
Bert & Stephanie McCall
Brad & Ashley Hyde
Michael & Belinda Gaines
Fred & Pam Goldsmith
Ashley Hornsby Welch
Clyde & Sarah Fricks
Gary Shields
Chris & Mandy Hanners
Chris & Angie Gilbert
Roberta Swank
Matt Koledzik
Paul & Melissa Corbin
Joe & Devon Deal
Alan & Jessica Bradley
David & Judy Houston
Josh & Crystal Teem
Steve & Kim Chenoweth
Doug Cabe
Dean & Glenda Cook
Kelly & Dayna Corbin
Melissa Evans
Harold & Dean Corbin
Orville Jr. & Carolyn Coward
John & Julie Tastinger
Lewis Penland Sr.
Ben & Jean Swafford
Robin Jenkins
Derek & Irena Taylor
Richard & Melissa Delany
Billy & Sherry Vanhook
Eric Moberg
John & Mandy Underwood
Susan Duncan
Tony & Terri Potts
James (Popcorn) & Leesa Manley
Lenny Jordan

Join the Tate for Commissioner campaign and add your name to the list!
Call Commissioner Tate at 828-371-0773 or email him at jamesptate@aol.com.

Paid for by Tate for Commissioner
...LETTERS continued from page 2

local families were notified of this group organizing, and have not been involved in their procedures. They say this group is comprised of business owners, but there were several businesses that were not notified or included in this group.

With regard to “downtown Scaly Mountain,” there is not, nor has there ever been a “town.” We are a crossroads community. When they state there has been a decline in the area with businesses closing, there have also been others to open, like the Highlands Aerial Park, Mountain Laurel Rest Bed and Breakfast, The Vineyard at 37 High Holly and Annie’s Café, all opening in 2013. None of these owners were present at this meeting. In all, two have closed, and four have opened, all without the help of this organization and all in the community of Scaly Mountain.

Mr. Coram points out that Bartram has a historical basis, but maybe he is unaware that there is controversy over whether William Bartram actually ever hiked through our area.

Mr. Coram states he wants “to sketch out a viable future for the community”. “If we don’t respect our past, it’s hard to build a future.”

With regard to getting membership dues and members, who will be included in this membership? To date there are between 438 signatures opposing the name change. No one is opposed to progress in our community as witnessed by our support of the businesses we currently have. The opposition is when a small group comprised of 11 people, vote to change this community, and think they can do so without respecting the opinions of ALL of the people that make Scaly Mountain what it is.

Pat Leaptrot
Scaly Mountain

\[\text{\bf \textit{Thank You}}\]

Our pizza ‘party’ was a success!

I just wanted to thank all the people who worked, and bought and hopefully enjoyed the pizzas. We made 78 pizzas and ate three, selling 75. We grossed $2,800 and had about $400 in costs, including 5 more pizza pans which will be used for years.

The $2,600 profit in Bolivia is equivalent to one month’s budget at the foster home, two airline flights to Bolivia, half a house, two ecological above ground toilets, 6 months of private school for 6 of our boys, or medicines and other material for the jail for a year. In other words, a very successful project. Thank you all once again. Steve and Michelle Hott will be going to Montero from March 9 to the 18th, and the larger group will be there from May 15 to June 30 if anyone is wanting to come or get more information. You can call me at 526-3605 or email at rucker@dnnet.net. The cost for the trip is about $2,000 which includes transportation and R&B in Bolivia.

Dr. John Baumrucker
Highlands

Thanks for a ‘New’ Bookworm

Dear Editor,

My latest hero has almost single handedly set up our new used bookstore in Highlands,

It is a sight to behold. Wonderful light, shelving full of nice books and helpful volunteers to serve you.

If you have never met Delaine Mehder you need to do so. She took on the job of moving the Bookworm from its former location to its new one at Falls on Main, across from the Hudson Library.

As some of you know, the Bookworm profits go straight to the library, and the library board voted to make this move. Delaine took on this mammoth job with almost no help. Imagine setting up a bookstore all by yourself with an occasional helping hand.

I never once heard her complain or wish she could quit. I wish I could be so kind and energetic.

So, do go buy books at the Bookworm. The prices are good. The selection is as varied as any you could find, and the service is helpful.

And if you see Delaine, tell her thank you. A million thank yous wouldn’t be enough.

Glenda Bell
Highlands

The Bookworm has moved and is now open!

We have relocated to 555 E. Main Street in the “Falls on Main” shopping area across the street from the Hudson Library. The move makes us more visible to the community and its visitors and shoppers. We are continuing to offer a large inventory of all types of books, movies, CDs etc. and to count on the community for your generous contribution of these items. Dedicated volunteers staff the Bookworm and we are always looking for more. If interested please contact Delaine Mehder at 828-482-0326. Volunteers are needed for morning and afternoon hours.

We also need volunteers to work as substitutes. You can be a year round or summer resident. Our winter hours will remain Tuesday through Saturday from 10-4. Drop by during these hours to bring your donations of gently used books or to find new ones. What can be more relaxing than curling up in front of the fire with a good book during a cold, winter day? Please stop in for a visit and we will help you find one! And remember all proceeds go to the Hudson Library.

Glenda Bell
Highlands


THE MET: Live in HD at the Highlands PAC
Saturday, February 8

Renée Fleming sings her first Live in HD performance of one of her signature roles, the title character in Dvořák's sumptuously melodic Rusalka. The story of the opera, which is about a water spirit's tragic romance with a human prince, is drawn from several folktales including Hans Christian Andersen's “The Little Mermaid.” Star conductor Yannick Nézet-Séguin leads a cast that also includes Piotr Beczala as the handsome Prince Rusalka yearns to love; Dolora Zajick as the cackling swamp witch Ježibaba; Emily Magee as the Foreign Princess, Rusalka's rival; and John Relyea as Rusalka's father, the Water Sprite. Fleming won the Met's National Council Auditions in 1988. Portraying a wa
ter nymph who gives up a life of enchantment to pursue mortal love with a handsome prince, Ms. Fleming sang with tonal splendor and commendable ease.” — The New York Times

“As the Rusalka, soprano Renée Fleming looked and sounded ethereal, her cool, sil
evory voice ideally suited to the role of a creature longing for a human soul. Even in the second act, when her character is made mute by a magic spell, Fleming movingly portrayed the miserable outsider. Of course, she sings, too — ravishingly in the opera's most famous aria, “Song to the Moon,” in which the Rusalka laments her loneliness.” — New York Post

Pre-Opera Discussion begins at 12:30 pm lead by Beverly Pittman and the MET Opera Live in HD begins at 12:55 pm. Tickets are $24 and are available online: www.highlandsopc.org or by Calling 828.526.9047.

Due to the generosity of PAC Opera Guild Underwriters, students are FREE.

Falling Waters is a 52-acre community

A peaceful sanctuary tucked in the mountains just 2.8 miles from Main Street, Highlands, NC. Secluded but not remote. Well forested with mature hardwoods, Rhododendron, Mountain Laurel and wild flowers that take turns showing off through the seasons; two waterfalls & several creeks. Gentle land, easy building sites, and a great place to take a walk.

Falling Waters is protected by the North Carolina Planned Community Act and our own covenants designed to enhance your enjoyment and future property values. Owner financing available.

Welcome...Come Visit!
From Main St., take Hwy. 106 (The Dillard Road) 1.8 miles just past the Glen Falls sign, turn right on Mt. Laurel Dr., go 3 tenths of a mile turn left on Moonlight. The entrance is on the right.

www.highlandspac.org
Contact (onsite owner) or your broker for plats, prices & a guided tour.
828-508-9952.

...MISSION continued from page 1

...OBITUARIES from page 3

Joyce Queen Crowe; six children, Robert Alvin Crowe of Arlington, TX, Ronnie Alan Crowe of Franklin, Kenneth Marvin Crowe of Highlands, Cheryl Crowe Jenkins of Franklin, Brian David Crowe of Atlanta, GA and Kayla Crowe McClain of Otto; three brothers, Joe Crowe of Nassau, VA, Wayne Crowe and Merlin Crowe both of Highlands; two aunts, Pauline Partain and Ruby Prince both of Atkins, SC; 13 grandchildren; five great grandchildren and many nieces and nephews.

Funeral Service were held at 2 p.m. Tuesday, February 4, at Pleasant Hill Baptist Church. Rev. Eddie Stillwell, Rev. Bill Faulkner and Rev. Frank Rodriguez officiated. Burial was in the church cemetery.

Pallbearers were Robert Crowe, Kenneth Crowe, Brian Crowe, Eddie Miller, Tony Elkins, Jason Woodard, Michael Bradley, Josh McClain, and Kale Stinecell.

Memorial donations can be made to the Pleasant Hill Baptist Church, “Senior Fund,” 142 Pleasant Hill Church Rd. Franklin, NC 28734.

Macon Funeral Home was in charge of the arrangements.

...ABC BOARD from page 1

resolve its internal problems and move forward in a cooperative manner, but given recent events, it has become apparent that that is not possible.

“We didn’t want to become involved with these controversies but we have a duty to make sure the ABC system functions properly. This meeting today isn’t being held to solve internal problems with the ABC system – that has to be done by a functioning ABC Board,” he said. “Nevertheless, we are here to help reor

• See ABC BOARD page 11

...”
One way of looking at the gospel story—following the spectacular claim of the Incarnation of God in Jesus Christ that we have just celebrated at Christmastide, and echoed in the season of Epiphany which proclaims that the Incarnation is a gift to all humankind—is to understand it as a lens through which to look at the choices that face us—given this new reality that God is on the loose. Mark, for example, considers this ‘in-breaking’ of God so important that he repeats it at the end of his gospel. When Jesus dies on the cross, the temple curtain—the boundary that separated the Holy of Holies from the worshipping congregation, a place so sacred that the high priest could only enter once a year on the Day of Atonement—is similarly ripped apart. And just so we won’t miss the way Mark bookends his gospel with this message, he uses the same Greek word to signify the torn temple curtain that he did to talk about the torn apart heavens. God, according to Mark, is on the loose, breaking down all kinds of barriers—even and perhaps most particularly the ones we construct with our religion.

During the time in which Mark wrote, one of the most important choices that people faced was how to deal with the Roman occupying forces. Some people chose the path of resisting the Romans. They believed that the in-breaking of God would eventually take the form of throwing off the Roman domination. Others were more sobered by the dominance of the Romans and consequently more measured in their response to that occupation. They chose the way of accommodation, trying to live alongside the Romans, hoping that God would vindicate their efforts in the future. At that point Israel might return to be as she once had been, governed under her own laws and religious practices.

But Mark presents a third way in which Jesus embodies God’s boundary-breaking, transformative message to Israel and to all humankind. Jesus isn’t interested in returning to business as usual before the Roman occupation. Nor is he a zealot who is going to lead the charge to throw off this foreign power. He is instead the one who is willing to go to any lengths to break down barriers—especially religious.
...SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING continued from page 10

bars—that separate people from one another.

Jesus calls people to repent, literally to turn their lives around, to let go of the baggage that weighs them down. His call to repentance doesn’t have the edge of judgment or fear that John the Baptist had evoked before him but is instead characterized by a voice from God—You are my beloved. The call to repentance from Jesus is not an ‘ought’ or a ‘should’ but a gift to be claimed. It is, in short, a second chance, a singular opportunity to find abundant life.

It is, finally, something that can only be done for him and for only one reason—he is a beloved and forgiven child of God.

As we move further into this New Year, carrying our own anxieties and regrets from the past, scaling the cliff of an exile of our own making, it’s an important reminder that we don’t have to live our lives that way.

...ABC BOARD continued from 9

The board unanimously adopted a resolution removing long-standing ABC Board member Georgia Sanders.

Both Mayor Taylor and Commissioner Brian Stiehler thanked her for her many years of service.

“She has served the interests of Highlands and the community for almost 30 years,” said Taylor.

Next the board unanimously adopted a resolution removing Jack Calloway from the ABC Board effective immediately.

“To both Jack and Georgia this isn’t anything personal, we’ve just gotten to the point where if we don’t make a change the board can’t operate efficiently,” said Commissioner Stiehler. “Both are great people and have a lot to offer and have offered to the community. We appreciate their service but at this time we need to go in another direction.”

Mayor Taylor said he met with Calloway personally and expressed the concerns that are outlined in the resolution.

“I had a second meeting with him and Town Manager Bob Frye and Mr. Calloway was unwilling to step down and so we have to move forward with this resolution today,” he said.

• See ABC BOARD page 14
**J&J Lawn and Landscaping**  
Serving Highlands & Cashiers for since 1988!  
Phone: 526-2251  
Fax: 828-526-8764  
Email: JJlawn1663@frontier.com  

John Shearl, Owner • 1663 S. 4th St. Highlands

---

**J&M Towing Service**  
24-Hour Towing  
Local and Long Distance Hauls  

Owner-Operator Jeff Miller  
526-0374 • 342-0583

---

**Highlands Automotive**  
Service & Repair  
NC Inspection Station  
828-787-2360  
2851 Cashiers Road • highlandsautomotive.com

---

**Allan Dearth & Sons Generator Sales & Service, Inc.**  
(828) 526-4138 or (828) 200-3551  

Walls • Fireplaces • Patios • Piers  
All Rock Work • Stucco

---

**Larry Houston Rock Work**  
(828) 526-4138 or (828) 200-3551

---

**Grading & Excavating • Certified Clearwater Contractor**  
www.wilsongrading.com

---

**Edwin Wilson**  
Cell (828) 421-3643

---

**U Call We Haul Junk Removal & Property Cleanout Service**  
Total House Cleanout Services, Attics, Basements, Garages, Yard Debris, etc. We'll take your Trash & Save you some Cash! Cheaper than a Dumpster & we do all the work  
**We also Specialize in Small Demolition**  
and Removal of Mobile Homes, Barns, Sheds, Above Ground Swimming Pools, etc.  
**We also Cater in Minor Landscaping.**  
Small Tree & Brush Removal and all types of Yard Debris, including Metal, Wood, etc.  
If You Need it Gone, Call Today for a Cleaner Tomorrow!  
(828) 200-5268

---

**American Upholstery**  
• Residential or Commercial  
• Over 40 Years Experience  
• Fast & Dependable  
• Free Estimates  
• Free Pick-up & Delivery  
(Owners: Morris & Rachel Bible)  
(864) 638-9661 cell: (864) 710-9106

---

**Deluxe, Indoor Climate Controlled Self Storage**  
• Units Available • Highlands Storage Village  
526-4555 • Cashiers Rd.
You know us as RUNNERS, but don’t forget we are also NC REAL ESTATE BROKERS. You can count on us every step of the way to get you to the finish line. We train hard for races, and we will work equally hard for you!

Richard Betz 828-526-5213
Martha Betz 828-200-1411
Country Club Properties
betzrealtor@gmail.com

Whiteside Cove
Cottages
5 new log cabins nestled in the hemlocks on 25 acres at the base of Whiteside Mountain.

800-805-3558 • 828-526-2222

Positions Now Available
ER and Med/Surg Registered Nurses
Radiologic Technologist
Receptionist
Activities Assistant
Inpatient Coder

Full benefits available after 60 days of full time employment

The Lost Hiker on Carolina Way.
• At 3:45 p.m., Ezequiel Lopez Para, 40, of Highlands, was arrested for driving with a license revoked after a DWI and covering a license plate with a tinted cover. He was held at the Macon County Detention Center on a $1,000 secured bond. His court date is March 5, 2014.

Jan. 23
• At 5:59 p.m., a resident at Pinebrook Condominiums called police about a noise violation complaint.

Jan. 25
• At 11:30 a.m., officers investigated a theft of a John Boat valued at $900 from a residence on Munger Road.

Jan. 26
• At 1:28 p.m., officers responded to a call about someone possessing drug paraphernalia and drugs with the intent to sell or deliver on Hicks Road.

Jan. 28
• At 11:24 a.m., officers responded to a two-vehicle accident on US 64 west.
• At 11:18 a.m., officers responded to a one-vehicle accident on US 64 west.
• At 1 p.m., officers responded to a one-vehicle accident on NC 28 south.
• At 1 p.m., officers responded to a one-vehicle accident on NC 28 south.

The Highlands Fire & Rescue Dept. log entries from Jan. 28
Jan 28
• At 11:26 a.m., the dept. responded to a vehicle accident on South Old Walhalla Road. There were no injuries only traffic control.
• At 4:19 p.m., the dept. responded to a vehicle accident on US 64 west. There were no injuries only traffic control.

Jan. 30
• At 5:15 a.m., the dept. provided mutual aid to the Cashiers Fire Dept. on a structure fire on Pine Creek Road.

Nantahla Tire & Car Care
• Oil changes • Brakes • Tires
• Light Car & Truck Repair
828-526-0283
518 Dillard Road, Highlands
nantire1@aol.com

Poinsettia responds to warmth, light and lots of TLC
Three years ago Lucy and Olin Vinson bought a typical 10” high, two-stemmed poinsettia to brighten up the holidays. Now the plant is a shrub that lives on and takes up most of their warm, sunny, enclosed back porch. Lucy said she’s never pruned it, but says she will this year because it’s literally taking over the porch where she and Olin spend much of their time throughout the year. Lucy says all she’s ever done is water the plant, but plant lovers will say it is thriving because it feels like part of the family!

Photo by Kim Lewicki

Highlands PD log entries from Jan. 10. Only the names of persons arrested, issued a Class-3 misdemeanor, or public officials have been used.

Jan. 10
• At 4 p.m., officers received a call about a larceny at a residence on Happoldt Drive where a flat screen TV valued at $500 was missing.

Jan. 22
• At 11 p.m., an incident of trespassing was reported at
According to the resolution, cause for his removal from the ABC Board was due to conduct including vulgar and profane language in the presence of other ABC Board members during official meetings despite repeated requests by ABC Board members to refrain from the use of foul language; due to ABC Board members who have stated publicly that due to Calloway’s actions it is difficult to work on the board and that employees have sought redress from the Highlands Town Board rather than the ABC Board itself; that his behavior has made other board members afraid to convene and attend ABC Board meetings and it is that fear that cripples the ABC Board’s ability to function properly.

In conclusion, the resolution reads “Without Calloway’s removal, the ABC Board will cease to function in the manner required by the laws of the State of North Carolina.”

Expanding the board from three to five members with three-year staggered terms is allowed by statute and the ABC Commission which oversees the state’s ABC Boards.

“The procedure is very simple,” said Town Attorney JK Coward. If the Town Board decides it wants to do this it can simply appoint two more members.

“A five-member board brings a better perspective and consensus than a three-member board. I suspect there were times when having a three-member board it got down to a two against one situation in some cases which added to tension,” said Mayor Taylor. “I think having a broader base will really help the board function properly.”

Eric Pierson who sat on the ABC Board prior to being elected to the Town Board, said he agreed with Taylor.

“There were issues that came down to 2-1 and it’s tough. You want to have unanimous decisions but it didn’t always work out that way. It did cause conflict. I think expanding the board will give a greater overview and hopefully get some of this stuff worked out,” he said.

Appointed to the ABC Board is Tom Clark, who is taking over for Jack Calloway and whose term ends Aug., 17, 2015; John Underwood, who is taking over for Georgia Sanders and whose term ends Aug., 17, 2016; Harry Bears, whose term ends Aug., 17, 2017; and Thomas Craig whose term ends Aug., 17, 2017. Brenda Pierson is retaining her seat on the board.

Commissioner Amy Patterson reminded the board of the unofficial policy to try to put different people on boards so the town doesn’t just “recycle” people. Craig and Underwood both serve on other boards.

Calloway, Pierson and Mayor Taylor agreed saying they all know of people who want to serve but who have other obligations right now.

They agreed that as the current members come off, new people will be considered.

Commissioners said Calloway’s removal from ABC Board doesn’t affect his standing on other boards. He was recently reappointed to the Scholarship Committee.

– Kim Lewicki