

Highlands Newspaper

FREE Every Thursday

Volume 11, Number 18

Real-Time News, Weather & WebCams: HighlandsInfo.com

Thurs., May 1, 2014

Thurs., May 1

• Taize service at Highlands United Methodist Church at 5:30 p.m.

Fri. & Sat., May 2-3

• The Highlands Biological Foundation's "Wildflower Whimsy," guided garden tours, a lecture, live plant auction and reception (with live music), and guided wildflower walks, Friday from 5pm until 8pm, and Saturday from 10am until 2pm.

Fri., May 2

• Local musicians of classic country music, golden oldies and gospel tunes at the Hudson Library on Friday at 1:30 p.m.

Sat., May 3

• Audubon's weekly bird spotting trip. Carpool from the parking area behind the Highlands Town Hall at 7:30 AM. If questions, call Michelle at 828-743-9670.

Sun., May 4

• Shortoff Baptist Church at the 6pm worship service the Cogdill Family Singers for a night of Gospel Music and Singing.

• The NC Bartram Trail Society is sponsoring a wildflower hike on Sunday afternoon from 2 to 6 p.m. led by noted botanist and former WCU professor Dan Pittillo. Meet at 2 p.m. at Jones Gap parking area.

Thurs., May 6

• The Center for Life Enrichment's Facebook for the Absolute Beginner, 6-8p. \$35 member, /\$50 nonmember. Call 828-526-8811 to register.

Board votes 4-1 to accept Williams' offer

It's final. At the Town Board's budget meeting Thursday, April 24, commissioners voted 4 to 1 (Commissioner Amy Patterson voted no) to accept Art and Angela Williams offer to cover the pool so it can be used year-round.

However, the vote didn't come easily.

According to Town Manager Bob Frye, a glassed-domed enclosure is planned with sliding panels that will be open during the warm months and closed in the cooler

months.

Talk among commissioners, the mayor and Frye revolved around operational expenses for the year-round pool – both utility- and staff-wise.

•See WILLIAMS page 8

BOE approves lottery method to select 25% of teachers

By Brittany Burns

Still hoping for an injunction, Macon County's Board of Education formally approved the district's selection plan to identify 25 percent of teachers to be awarded a four-year contract and bonuses totaling \$5,000.

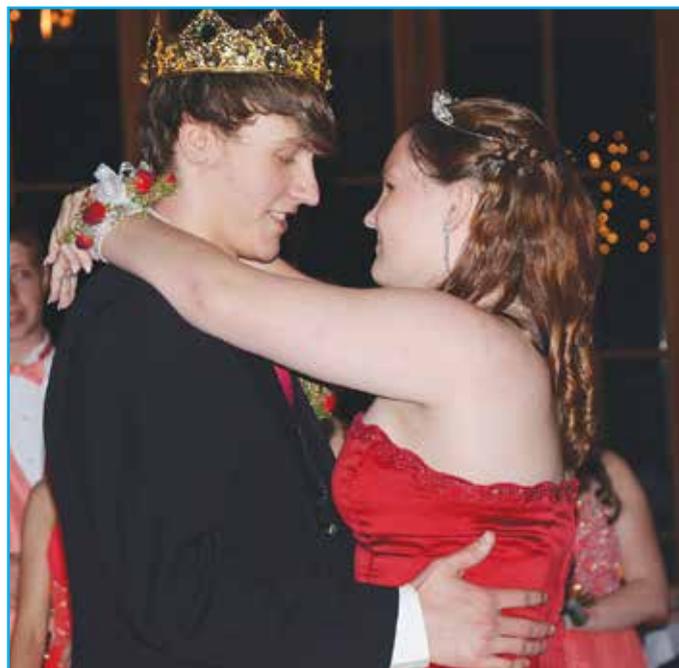
"I think we should move forward with approving a plan in the event that the state doesn't intervene with an injunction," said Superintendent Dr. Chris Baldwin. "Guilford County was able to receive an injunction but we don't know how or if that will affect the rest of districts in the state."

Special Superior Court Judge Richard Doughton issued an injunction last week that permits Guilford County Schools to evade the state mandate lawmakers passed last year as part of the state budget that requires districts to offer teachers' multi-year contracts to replace the teacher tenure system.

Macon County Board of Education Attorney John Henning Jr. agreed with Baldwin saying that despite Guilford's County injunction, Macon County should move forward under the assumption that

• See LOTTERY pg 5

King & Queen for the night



Craig Forster and Emily Dorsey were crowned King and Queen at the Highlands School prom held at the Highlands Falls Country Club Friday, April 25. See photos on page 6.

Photo by Monica Vinson

Tests show MC student athletes' drug use declining

By Brittany Burns

Drug use among student athletes in Macon County appears to be decreasing, according to the 2013-14 drug testing results released during Monday night's Board of Education meeting. Macon County employs the practice of drug testing all student athletes instead of randomly selecting athletes at various times

throughout the year.

"I think the drug testing program continues to be an effective practice and is giving our athletes an opportunity and reason to say no to drugs," said Dan Moore, who oversees the testing for the district. This year's numbers are down and that is great."

Board of Education Chair

•See DRUG page 10

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Capital projects & help from county part of budget talk

If commissioners budget for everything on the town's capital projects wish list for 2014-'15 it would cost about \$496,000.

At the first budget work session for FY 2014-'15 held Thursday, April 24, Mayor Pat Taylor said the purpose of the meeting was for staff to present items for inclusion in the upcoming budget.

Present at the meeting were homeowners from the Chowan Road area who asked the town do whatever it needs to do to reopen the road. They cited decreasing home values and the inability to sell homes on the road due to its uncertainty.

Due to a crumbling embankment, the two-way road was partially closed for safety reasons until a solution to its problem could be found. Since then, NC DOT has offered to help with the project both financially and with equipment but it would take at least \$150,000 from the town.

The board heard the homeowners concerns but didn't rule on the request. They presented a petition with 17 signatures as well as letters asking that their request be taken seriously.

Members of the Founders Park coalition whose purpose is to build-out Kelsey-Hutchinson

•See BUDGET page 16

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• THE PLATEAU'S POSITION •

• MAYOR ON DUTY •

• LETTERS •



Let's live healthy in Highlands all year long

Mayor Pat Taylor

The Leading the Way to Wellness Kickoff for community walking was held this past Saturday in front of town hall. We had a great turnout of about 40 participants who walked one and a quarter miles. County Commissioner Jimmy Tate and I participated. We will be holding a series of community walks in the coming weeks. My walks will be on Tuesdays at 5 pm. Jimmy will walk on Wednesdays at 5:30 pm. Both walks will originate in front of town hall. As Commissioner Tate said on Saturday, we both will be happy to answer any questions while walking. So come and join us!

I want to thank the Macon County Department of Public Health and Health Tracks of Highlands/Cashiers Hospital for organizing the event. I also want to thank the Highlands Greenway and B.E.A.R. Coalition for having information tables at the kickoff. Like so often, we had many fine local businesses that provided door prizes at the end of the walk.

I stated at the kickoff that this year our nation has debated how to "pay" for healthcare. The other issue for discussion should be how can each of us "play" for better personal health. Folks in communities need to get out and play by doing sports activities, especially our kids. Whether we are athletes or not, everyone can get out and walk in beautiful Highlands.

Research has shown communities with organized walking programs have better health profiles than those that don't. We have several walking groups and activities already, and this program is another effort to get more folks active throughout the county. Our recreation department provides several of these types of activities for us.

In a related matter, at the first budget workshop last Thursday, the board voted

to accept the Williams donation for a new gym floor, bleachers, and to cover the pool so it can be used all year.

Beyond the donation and the yearly funding of the pool, several board members pointed out we need to revitalize our recreation department. The Williams donation is an opportunity to do a comprehensive makeover of the department's programming and to upgrade its infrastructure.

For years the town has fallen behind on maintenance of the facility. Each year we fall short of budget projections for recreation, mainly because of constant repair and replacement costs for the building

A proposal has been made by the parks and recreation committee to consider a one and a half cent tax increase that would be earmarked for recreation. These

• See **MAYOR ON DUTY** page 3

Mayor's communication skills are good

Dear Editor,

Kudos to Mayor Pat Taylor on his explanation of how Duke Power rate increases will affect the common people and what the town could do about it. Even a dumb cop from Miami could understand what the issues are. Thanks for talking down to my level and keep up the good work.

**Fred Wooldridge
Highlands**

Talent evident in 'Little Women'

Dear Editor,

I just wanted to commend the young

people both on stage and behind the scenes who made PAC Youth Theater's presentation of "Little Women" so enjoyable.

The play was briskly paced and emotionally engaging and certainly required the cast and crew to perform at the peak of their talents. Such showmanship is testimony to a deep commitment, all the more astonishing when you consider the age of these young men and women.

Of course, recognition must also go to Dr. Ronnie Spilton, who's shepherded this program from its inception and whose vision bore such spectacular fruit.

Everyone take a bow.

**Luke Osteen
Highlands**

Community support gets MC Academic Foundation \$9,000

Dear Editor,

It is my pleasure to announce that over \$9,000 was raised at this year's Academic Foundation Auction for teachers to use towards classroom projects and field trips.

A huge THANK YOU goes out to all the Highlands businesses that donated goods and the volunteers that helped make the auction on April 5 a huge success.

If you didn't have a chance to donate towards this year's auction but would like to help out in any way, or would like more information about the Academic Foundation, please contact me at brian.aulisio@macon.k12.nc.us anytime.

**Brian Aulisio
President, MC Academic Foundation**

Home insurance and utilities are too high

Dear Editor,

I read two very interesting articles only one page apart in a local newspaper recently.

The first was concerning our Homeowners insurance rates which could possibly rise by as much as 25.3 percent by August 1st. depending on our location in the state. That's a big rise! This proposed increase comes on the heels of a 7.0 per-

• See **LETTERS** page 3

LETTERS-TO-THE EDITOR-POLICY
We reserve the right to reject or edit submissions.
NO ANONYMOUS LETTERS WILL BE ACCEPTED.
Views expressed are not necessarily those of Highlands Newspaper.
Please EMAIL letters by Sunday at 5 p.m. There is a 500-word limit without prior approval.

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THURSDAY	THURSDAY NIGHT	FRIDAY	FRIDAY NIGHT	SATURDAY	SATURDAY NIGHT	SUNDAY
Patched Sun Fog High: 60 °F	Partly Cloudy Low: 41 °F	Partly Sunny High: 58 °F	Partly Cloudy Low: 43 °F	Sunny High: 61 °F	Mostly Clear Low: 48 °F	Sunny High: 69 °F

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• MILESTONE •



On Monday, April 28, Main Street was partially blocked to accommodate a crane which began placing iron beams on top of Xtreme Threads to support the deck which will be accessed through the side of the new Cypress International Restaurant located in the previous Oak Street Cafe location. Owner Nick Figel (in forefront) hopes to open the restaurant sometime mid-May.

Photo by Jim Lewicki

...LETTERS from pg 2

cent increase approved last August. I just moved to Highlands from Panama City Beach where my fifteen year old house was only 500 feet from the Gulf of Mexico.

My insurance cost here is almost the same as at the beach.

The article also indicates that the Rate Bureau was trying to pull one over on us policy holders, so contact your insurance company right now and express your negative feelings over any new increases.

Now the rest of the story: one page over, we are told about the ever increasing foreclosures in Macon and Jackson counties. Could it be that increasing insurance premiums along with other things like the ridiculous cost of propane gas, electricity and property taxes have driven these poor folks from their homes.

Our government, utilities and insurance companies should be seeking ways to reduce our load during these not so prosperous times.

Charles Wolf
Highlands

...MAYOR ON DUTY continued from page 2

funds would insure the operation of the pool, make needed capital improvements, expand programming and hold down user fees.

This discussion about recreation and related priorities will unfold in the coming weeks. There will be an analysis of numbers and figures. I also hope we will have a thorough discussion of the total benefits of a revitalized recreation department for everyone in the community, whether it be for our young people, or senior citizens like myself.

**Watch for Fred Wooldridge's
sometimes controversial
column 'The Fredster'
starting May 8 and only in the
free Highlands Newspaper.**

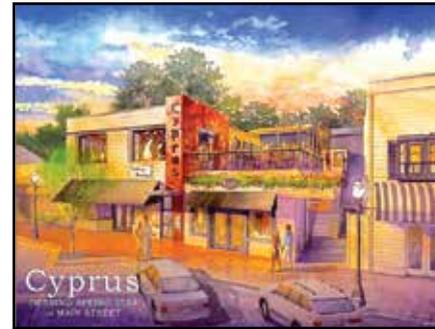
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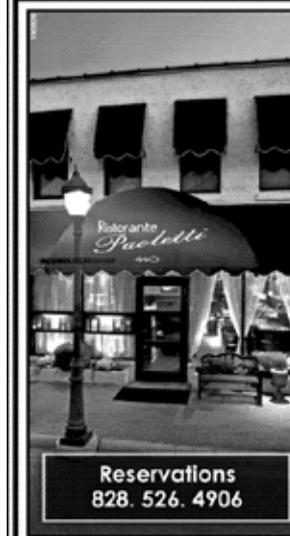
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Norma Jean on the guitar in the garden Sat. & Sun.

...LOTTERY continued from page 1

nothing will change. "I think there is still hope that there will be judicial interference so we won't have to select 25 percent of teachers, but at this time, we have to move forward," he said.

The changes to teacher tenure laws in North Carolina require local districts to develop a plan to select 25 percent of teachers in the district to be offered extended contracts in exchange for the voluntary relinquishing of their tenure status. The contracts have to be offered and accepted or rejected by June 30, so Monday night the board unanimously approved a lottery selection plan to determine what 25 percent of eligible teachers will be offered contracts.

Method to determine teachers to be selected

The school district has 272 teachers who are considered eligible for a four-year contract by state standards. The selection plan approved Monday night explains that the state mandates that only 25 percent, or 68 teachers, can be selected and offered a contract.

Eligible teachers according to the plan are defined as any teacher who, "has been employed by the Macon County School system for at least three consecutive years."

The plan allows eligible teachers an option to remove their name from the hat altogether by offering the opportunity to "opt out." Of the 272 teachers who passed the first step of eligibility, those who chose not to take part in the process were removed from consideration through this provision. Teachers who submit separation or retirement forms will also be removed from consideration.

The remaining teachers will be evaluated based on proficiency. The selection plan defines proficient as meaning that a classroom teacher was rated proficient or higher on all standards of the instrument in which the teacher was evaluated during the 2010-'11, 2011-'12 and 2012-'13 school years. For certified non-classroom teachers evaluated on instruments that do not use the rating "proficient" the superintendent will determine the rating or score of the instrument that is the most similar to the proficient rating.

The purpose of this stage is to identify teachers who have demonstrated inadequate performance and then disqualify them from further consideration. Actions that may result in

disqualification include: A suspension without pay, A disciplinary suspension without pay, A demotion, or A mandatory improvement plan.

Teachers who are still remaining for consideration will all be placed in a random lottery drawing. At this point, 25 percent of the remaining teachers will be randomly selected to receive an offer for a four-year contract with yearly, compounding \$500 bonuses.

Next, Superintendent Dr. Chris Baldwin will submit the final list of selected teachers to the Macon County Board of Education by Monday, May 24. The board has the option of approving the list or removing any selected teacher, and in his/her place, adding another eligible teacher.

After board approval in open session, the superintendent will make the four-year contract offer to the selected teachers. Teachers will have until June 30 to sign and return the contract or acknowledge acceptance of the contract. If a teacher forfeits the right to the contract, the superintendent or board may not offer the contract to another teacher.



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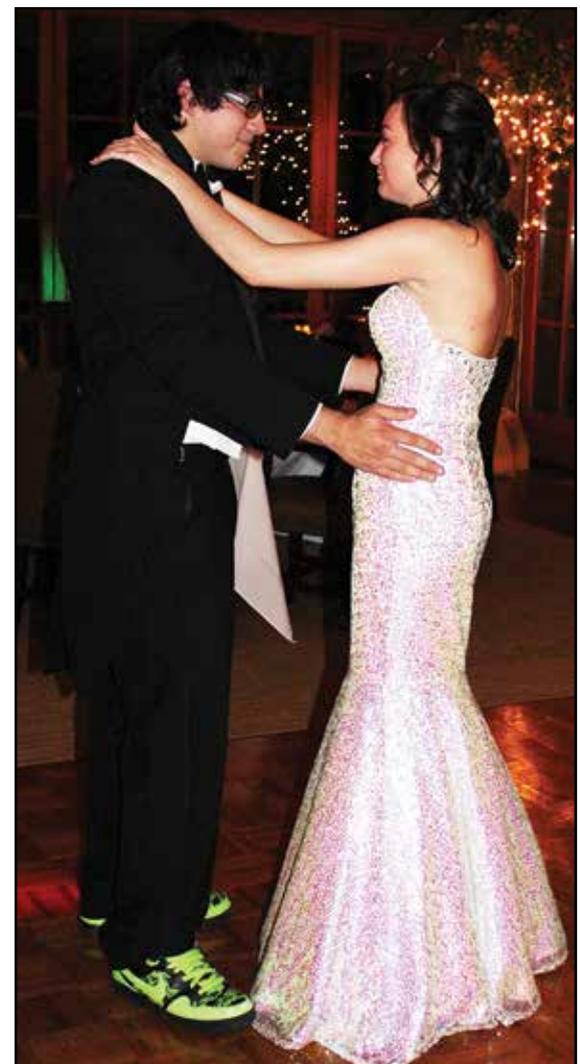
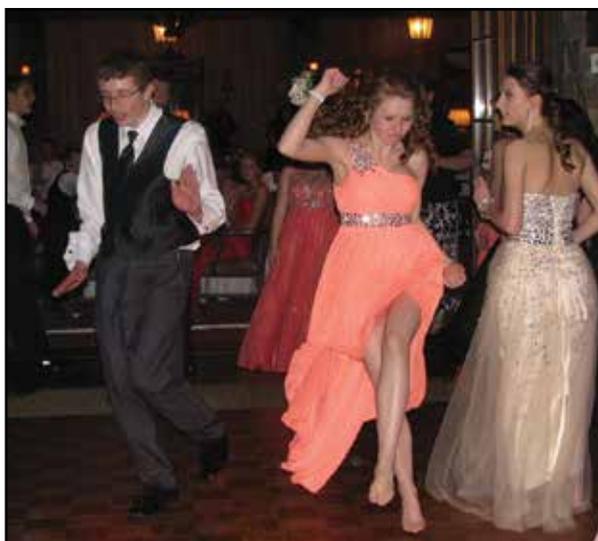


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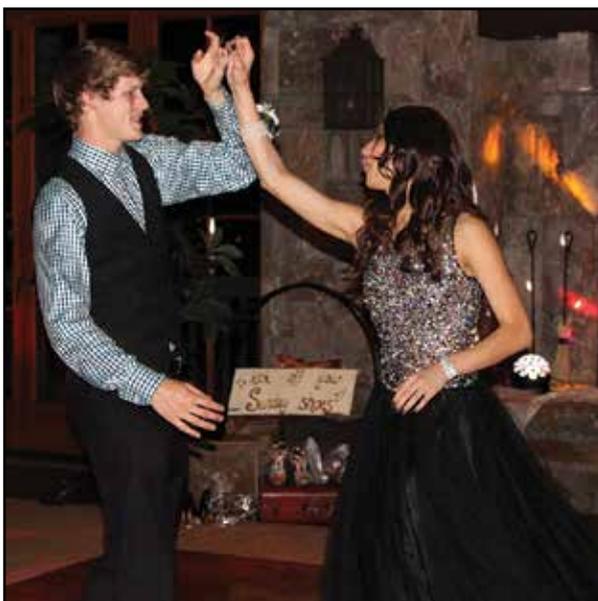


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To the Citizens of Macon County,

As a candidate for County Commissioner, I have run an honest, factual, and positive campaign highlighting my opponents voting record and my beliefs as a 'TRUE' conservative candidate. I strongly believe that we must stop excessive spending and borrowing, out of control budgets and review the enormous fund balance sometimes referred to as the county's 'piggy bank'. If you agree with me, I would greatly appreciate your support and vote. I promise that I will work extremely hard to be a good steward of your hard earned tax dollars. It is now up to you, the voters, to decide the future of Macon County.

Sincerely, John Shearl

**Early Voting Ends – May 3rd
Election Day – May 6th**

**Independent Voters – You Can Vote
in the Republican Primary... Please Do!!**

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...WILLIAMS

from page 1

Frye estimates an extra \$100,000 added to the Parks and Recreation budget due to a year-round pool – a budget that consistently runs \$80,000 to \$100,000 in the red.

In his capital projects estimation discussion prior to the “Williams gift” discussion, he said the Town should no longer let the Rec Park budget “bleed out” and suggested a 1 ½ cent tax increase to stabilize that department.

“The money from the tax increase would be earmarked for the Parks and Recreation department which would enable us to stabilize the Rec Park and enable us to make the necessary improvements; this is whether you opt to accept the gift to cover the pool or not,” he said.

With the nearby Cashiers Rec Park outshining the Highlands Rec Park, Frye said the gift of a covered year-round pool could be a springboard to revitalize the entire Rec Park “which is somewhat lack luster at the moment,” he said.

He stressed the need to increase the Rec Park budget regardless of the pool scenario and repeated the need to increase its budget through a tax increase. “This would enable the town to do projects that have been shoved to the wayside over the years,” he said.

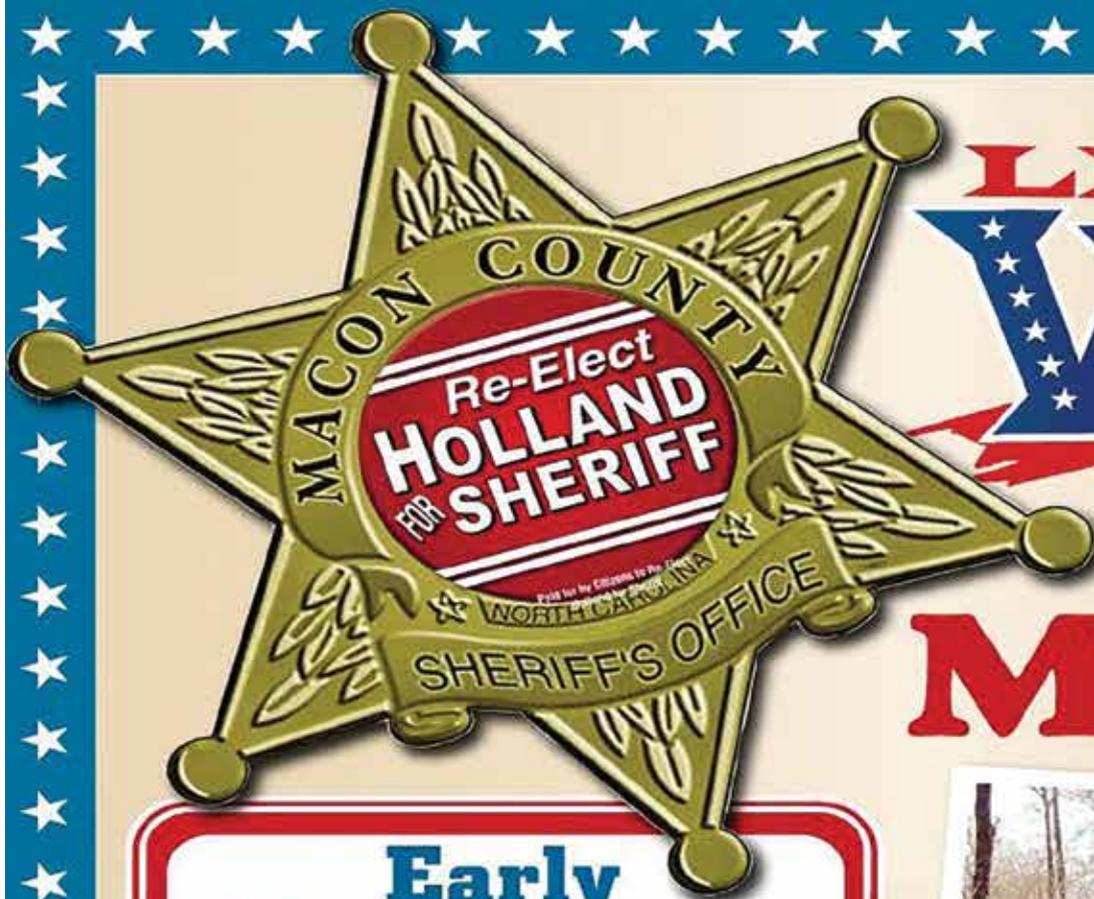
Though the commissioners voted to accept the Williams’ gift, they didn’t vote on the tax increase – saying they need time to work out the budget details.

There is hope that the county, the school system, the hospital and possibly the Cashiers Rec Park would help fund the operational costs of a year-round pool and make it part of the programs they offer citizens, students and patients.

Once again Frye played Devil’s advocate saying the year-round pool would be good for Highlands on one hand but then said there is a possibility that once the “newness” of the pool wears off people may not use it.

“We don’t know if people

• See WILLIAMS page 14



LET'S GO
VOTE!
on
MAY 6th

**Early
 Voting Lasts
 Until
 Saturday, May 3**

**Board of Elections
 Franklin, NC
 8am – 6pm Mon.- Fri.
 9am – 1pm Sat.**

**Highlands Civic Center
 in Highlands
 9am – 5pm Mon.- Fri.
 9am – 1pm Sat.**



"It has been an honor to serve as YOUR Sheriff for the past 12 years and I would appreciate your vote and support so that I may continue to lead YOUR Sheriff's Office in the right direction. My only promise is that if re-elected you will continue to get the very best of Sheriff Robert Holland and the very best of those that serve along side me."

– Sheriff Robert L. Holland

Paid for by Citizens to Re-Elect Holland for Sheriff.

Mayor designates May as 'Bear Aware' month

By Cynthia Strain

Highlands is about to get a lot smarter about bears since Mayor Pat Taylor signed a proclamation designating May as Bear Aware Month.

With over 10,000 black

bears in North Carolina, it is not surprising that human/bear encounters and their attendant problems are becoming more common. Even though a bear will naturally try to avoid humans, we keep putting temptations in their

paths. This is dangerous, as people in central Florida are finding out the hard way.

In December 2013 and again in April 2014, women were attacked by black bears while walking down the street or being on their own property. In the first case a woman was walking her dog. Even though garbage was not present, bears had been in the neighborhood going through trashcans. In the second case (Lake Mary, Fl.) five bears were going through rubbish left in an open garage when one of them mauled the homeowner.

It is bad enough that two women were seriously injured. Worse yet is that nine bears (at least) were killed as a result. Think about it - nine bears lost their lives because humans were careless with their waste!

The bears targeted by state wildlife officers were killed because they showed no fear of humans, and thus, were considered potentially dangerous.

We are fortunate that this hasn't happened yet in Highlands. Today more and more people realize their responsibility in properly managing their waste, their birdfeeders, their BBQ's, and their pets. That is the only way we will

be able to live in peace with our bear neighbors.

If you want more information, pick up one of B.E.A.R. Task Force's brochures on liv-

ing and hiking/camping safely in bear country, found at the Post Office, Town Hall, Chamber of Commerce, Mill Creek Gallery and Mountain Heritage.

Mother's Day Special



We're giving back to the women who've given us so much with special discounts on Fillers and Facials. Please call *The Center for Plastic Surgery* for details and gift ideas.

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Board Certified Plastic Surgeon

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209 Hospital Dr • Suite 202 • Highlands, NC 28741

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...DRUGS continued from page 1

Jim Breedlove noted that he viewed this year's numbers to be encouraging.

Moore conducted 1,121 drug screens throughout the district at Macon Middle School, Nantahala School, Highlands School and Franklin High School.

Franklin High School

Eight hundred ninety-six (896) drug screens were completed on student athletes at Franklin High School. The results of six student athletes were forwarded to the lab for further analysis. Two results were negative, with four results indicating positive. Of the four results that indicated positive, two student athletes chose to no longer participate in interscholastic athlet-

ics, with one student athlete that chose to be referred to complete Section 5-A under Macon County Schools Board of Education policy 470.

Section 5-A outlines the requirements of first time offenders and states: "At maximum, the student will be ineligible to participate for the remainder of that sport's season. The principal may shorten this athletic suspension based on the following mitigating factors:

1. The student agrees to professional counseling outside of school.

2. The student and his/her parents/ guardians/legal custodian have agreed that the student

undergo a drug and alcohol assessment provided at a state-approved alcohol and drug agency by a qualified alcoholism or drug counselor prior to participating in another sport; and

3. The student and his/her parents/guardians/legal custodian agree to sign a release for the purpose of sharing the student's pertinent information between agencies.

4. The student agrees to undergo future tests.

One student athlete was referred to complete section 5-BB under MCS BOE policy 470as it was the second offense.

Section 5-B outlines the re-

• **See DRUGS page 18**



B.E.A.R. Task Force members with Mayor Pat Taylor. From left: Mary Osmar, Cynthia Strain and Elaine Carlton. Photo by Skip Taylor



Photo by Tom Roddy

• HIGHLANDS AREA EVENTS •

Ongoing

• Artists wanted for Oct. 4 show featuring historic sites in Macon County. The moveable show will begin in Franklin and move to Highlands and Nantahala. There is a \$35 fee. To register, contact Barbara McRae at mcbarbara@frontier.com

First Mondays

• Shortoff Baptist Church hosts a non-denominational Men's Meeting the first Monday night of each month at 7 pm and all men are invited to attend. On Monday, May 5th at 7:00pm the guest speaker will be Steve Houston.

Tuesdays

• Community Table Dinner at the Community Building at 6 p.m. It's free.

Tues. & Thurs.

• Aerobics at the Rec Park with Tina Rogers 5:15. \$5.

Mon., Wed., Fri.

• Aerobics with Tina Rogers 8-9a.

• Zumba at the Rec Park at 9:05a. \$5.

Thursdays

• Weight Watchers support group meets every Thursday at 6pm at the Cashiers Community Center. Questions? Call Lisa 828-506-3555 Last Fri. of each month

• Community Coffee with Mayor Pat Taylor from 11a to noon in the Hudson Library.

Thurs.-Sat. May, 1-3

• Highlands Annual Three River Fly Fishing Tournament. For information call Town Hall at 526-2118.

Thurs., May 1

• Taize service at Highlands United Methodist Church at 5:30 p.m.

Fri. & Sat., May 2-3

• The Highlands Biological Foundation is celebrating the emergence of spring ephemerals in the southern Appalachians with their event "Wildflower Whimsy," guided garden tours, a lecture, live plant auction and reception (with live music), and guided wildflower walks. The event will be held Friday from 5pm until 8pm, and Saturday from 10am until 2pm.

Fri., May 2

• Local musicians, most from Macon County, will share their

special blend of classic country music, golden oldies and gospel tunes at the Hudson Library on Friday, May 2 at 1:30 p.m.

• The High Mountain Squares will host their "May Day Dance", Friday night, at the Macon County Community Building, GA Road (441 South), Franklin NC from 6:30 to 9:00 PM. Marty Northrup from Columbus NC will be the caller. We dance Western Style Square Dancing, main/stream and plus levels. Everyone is welcome. For information call 828-371-4946, 828-342-1560, 828-332-0001 or www.highmountainsquare.com

Sat., May 3

• Audubon's weekly bird spotting trip. Carpool from the parking area behind the Highlands Town Hall, unless otherwise noted. All walks will start at 7:30 AM. Bring binoculars if you have them, good walking shoes, a water bottle, and wet weather gear. Beginners' Walk in Highlands to Edwin and Kay Poole's home and lovely native garden. Russ Regnery (HPAS President) will lead. If questions, call Michelle at 828-743-9670.

• The Macon County Public Health will hold Rabies Vaccination Clinics throughout the Franklin and Highlands area on Saturday. Area veterinarians will vaccinate dogs, cats, and ferrets over 4 months of age, as required by NC state law. The cost is \$10 (cash only) per pet and all pets should be kept in vehicles, on leashes, or in carriers. Call 349-2490 for a recorded schedule of specific locations and times or visit Facebook at www.facebook.com/MaconPublicHealth.

• The Nantahala Hiking Club will take a strenuous 8-mile hike with elevation change of 2600 ft. on Beech Gap Trail to Tate City. Meet at Westgate Plaza in Franklin at 8 am, drive 110 miles round trip. Call leader Don O'Neal, 586-5723, for reservations. Visitors welcome, no dogs please.

Sun., May 4

• Shortoff Baptist Church at the 6pm worship service the Cogdill Family Singers will be with us for a night of Gospel Music and Singing.

• The Nantahala Hiking Club will take an easy 2-mile hike with small elevation change of 150 ft. to

Big Laurel Falls and Mooney Falls. Meet at Westgate Plaza in Franklin at 2 pm, drive 40 miles round trip. Call leader Mary Stone, 369-7352, for reservations. Visitors welcome, no dogs please.

• The North Carolina Bartram Trail Society is sponsoring a wildflower hike on Sunday afternoon from 2 to 6 p.m. to be led by noted botanist and former WCU professor Dan Pittillo. There will be some later trilliums and the flaming "yellow-to-orange-to-red" azaleas should be making their show. Join us for an afternoon hike between Jones Gap and Whiterock Gap on the Bartram Trail! Meet at 2 p.m. at Jones Gap parking area.

Mon., May 5

• Rotary Golf Tournament

Thurs., May 6

• The Center for Life Enrichment's Facebook for the Absolute Beginner, 6-8p. \$35 member, /\$50

nonmember. Call 828-526-8811 to register.

Thurs., May 8

• The League of Women Voters will screen the film "Inequality for All." The film features economist and former Secretary of Labor, Robert Reich, trying to raise awareness of our country's widening economic gap and the effects that gap has on our economy and on most people. The award-winning film has been called "a passionate argument on behalf of the middle class." The film is 90 minutes long and begins at noon in Tartan Hall at the Franklin First Presbyterian Church.

Sat., May 10

• The Farmers Market, 9a-1p in K-H Park. Organic vegetables, eggs, honey, cheeses. home-made food and hand-made items. For information call 482-0555 Maxine Davidoff.

• The Nantahala Hiking Club will take an easy 1.5 mile evening

walk on the Greenway through woods and open fields in the early evening light. Meet at the Macon County Library in the left rear parking lot at 7 p.m. Call leader Kay Coriell, 369-6820, for reservations. Visitors welcome, no pets please.

• Audubon's weekly bird spotting trip. Carpool from the parking area behind the Highlands Town Hall, unless otherwise noted. All walks will start at 7:30 AM. Bring binoculars if you have them, good walking shoes, a water bottle, and wet weather gear. Trip down the mountain to Horse Cove and Chattooga River area to try to find the rarely seen Swainson's Warbler. Brock Hutchins will lead. If questions, call Michelle at 828-743-9670.

• Hike the Historic Kelsey Trail from Whiteside Mountain to Highlands. Along the way, small

• See EVENTS page 12

The art of nature illustration

Each summer the Highlands Biological Station offers five-day workshops that provide opportunities for in-depth study of special topics relevant to the southern Appalachian Mountains.

May 5 to 9, Dr. Lore Ruttan is offering an introduction to science illustration for all ages and skill levels titled "The Art of Nature Illustration." Natural science illustrators are people who tell stories about nature through artwork.

They use artwork to convey information in an accurate, intuitive and visually appealing manner. During the week, you will work on developing representational skills using graphite and pen and ink in the mornings and either colored pencil or watercolor in the afternoons. To help develop skills, Lore will guide you through a series of projects designed to explore the main types of science illustration, e.g. a single species spot illustration, a field guide identification, a habitat, and a piece incorporating text and art.

Lore Ruttan is an Atlanta based scientist, artist and illustrator. Her work has been shown in the Fernbank Museum of Natural



History in Atlanta and the Telfair Museum in Savannah. She has created commissioned art for clients in the United States and Europe and is currently illustrating a children's book about a thirsty camel. Prior to starting her business as an illustrator, Lore taught in the Environmental Studies Department at Emory University for nine years. Her art training includes a certificate in Botanical Drawing from the Atlanta Botanical

Gardens as well as coursework

in the nationally acclaimed Program in Natural Science Illustration at the University of California, Santa Cruz (now at CSU Monterey).

This workshop will meet 9am-4pm daily, May 5th through 9th. Tuition is \$350 for the full workshop (or \$300 for members of the Highlands Biological Foundation at the Sagee level and above). For more information about the workshop, and to see the materials list, visit www.highlandsbiological.org/summer-2014/. The Biological Station also has workshops on "Literary Journeys through the Western North Carolina Landscape" taught by Brent Martin of the Wilderness Society, June

2-6. Dr. Larry Mellichamp will lead a workshop on "Buds Berries & Bark: Wild Shrub Identification and Natural History in the Highlands Region" (July 21-25).

Dr. David Alsop is offering two workshops titled "Butterflies & Moths of the Southern Appalachians" (July 21-25) and "Southern Appalachian Insects" (July 28-Aug. 1).

For more information, visit www.highlandsbiological.org/summer-2014/ or call (828) 526-2602.

• HIGHLANDS AREA EVENTS •

groups will be led to Leila's Rock, Garnet Rock, Highlands Falls and Soldier's Cave. You may see some very interesting characters from the past as you go. The first group will leave from Kelsey-Hutchinson Park on Pine Street at 8 AM. Another group will leave at 8:15 AM and if demand dictates a third group at 8:30 AM. You will be shuttled to Whiteside Moun-

tain to start the hike. The hike will take about 4 hours. A picnic lunch at Kelsey-Hutchinson Park will follow. The shuttle, hike and lunch are all included in the donation of \$50. Space is limited, and the choice of starting time will go to the first people to register. You may register at the Greenway website at www.highlandsgreenway.com. Follow the link for the Kelsey Trail Hike and

purchase tickets by check or credit card online. More detail about the hike is provided under the Event Calendar tab.

Thurs.-Sat., May 15-17

• At The Bascom, the annual Collective Spirits Wine & Food Festival. For information, go to www.collectivespirits.com.

Sat., May 17

• The Nantahala Hiking Club will take a moderate 7-mile hike, with elevation change of 500 ft., to Panther Creek Falls off Hwy. 441, south of the Tallulah Falls area. Meet at Westgate Plaza in Franklin at 9 am. Drive 70 miles round trip. Call leader Gail Lehman, 524-5298, for reservations. Visitors welcome; no pets please.

• Audubon's weekly bird spotting trip. Carpool from the parking area behind the Highlands Town

Hall, unless otherwise noted. All walks will start at 7:30 AM. Bring binoculars if you have them, good walking shoes, a water bottle, and wet weather gear. Guest leader Rob Bierregaard will join Russ Regnery and Avary Doubleday for a trip to Flat Mountain Road and the area near the Ranger Falls trailhead. Rob is a well-known Ornithologist and lecturer. If questions, call Michelle at 828-743-9670.

• Gorges State Park staff and volunteers will host a day of family fun with a variety of scheduled activities throughout the day on Saturday, May 17 from 10 am to 7 pm. Gratitude Day is complimentary to all guests and a way for park staff to give back to the community through an exciting family fun-filled day in the park. Gorges State Park can be reached by taking US 64 to

NC 281. Take NC 281 one mile, the park entrance will be on your left. Upon entering the park, follow the signs and parking attendants instructions to the Visitors Center Parking.

Sat. & Sun., May 24-25

• The 6th Annual Spring Cashiers Arts and Crafts Show at the Cashiers Village Green 10am to 5pm both Saturday and Sunday; rain or shine. While admission is free, a donation will be accepted to help benefit local community service efforts.

Sat., May 24

• Audubon's weekly bird spotting trip. Carpool from the parking area behind the Highlands Town Hall, unless otherwise noted. All walks will start at 7:30 AM. Bring binoculars if you have them, good walking shoes, a water bottle, and

For the love of dahlias, don't miss the Mountain Garden Club's 32nd plant sale

By Emily Compost

When the Highlands ball field gates swing open at 9:00 a.m. on Saturday, May 24 to a crowd of enthusiastic shoppers, many will head swiftly to the dahlia tent for exhibition quality tubers and plants. Whether a seasoned dahlia grower, a beginner, or just thinking about it, you can get expert advice on choosing and growing this magnificent flower when you shop at the annual Mountain Garden Club plant sale.



Dahlia growing is becoming a hobby of more and more gardeners. As a beginner, you tend to start small and the next thing you know, you are hooked. Your head can spin as you select your favorites, with so many sizes, colors, and varieties to choose from.

Dahlias are sometimes referred to as the peonies of autumn because they start putting on their best show around August. From the grand dinner plate variety, whose blossoms can get to be up to ten inches in diameter, to the tiniest pompom or ball variety, they each play an important part in your dahlia garden. Their color range is endless and they are durable, holding up beautifully in outdoor and indoor party environments. When many of your summer blossoms fade, the dahlias are just beginning their show.

The misconception is that dahlias are hard to grow. From mid summer to fall, in many respects, "dahlia culture" is similar to "tomato culture." If you can grow tomatoes in your garden, you

can successfully grow dahlias.

Dahlias require a site with good drainage and partial to full sun with at least 6 hours of sunlight. Pots are also an increasingly popular way to grow dahlias. Potted dahlias can go directly into the ground when it has warmed and there is little chance of frost—which means May 15th here on the Highlands plateau. You can start the tubers indoors in small pots, in good light, about a month before planting time. You will then have a small plant at planting time.

In addition to dahlias, you'll find hundreds of native plants and other perennials of many varieties at the sale. All plants have been carefully dug, potted, and tended with TLC from the club members.

The 32nd annual Mountain Garden Club plant sale is Saturday, May 24 from 9 a.m. until noon at the baseball park on Hwy. 64 E, corner of North 4th and Hickory Streets. If rained out on Saturday, the sale will be May 25, 1:00 until 4:00 p.m.

Proceeds go to benefit horticulture scholarships and other community projects.

The Lady and the Old Timers Band at the Hudson Library – Fri., May 2 at 1:30p



Front from left: Jim Brown, Roy Ramsey, Dobro (deceased). Delia Sears, Robert Bradley, Fred Kirkland. Back row from left: Martha Wood, "Wild Bill" Jackson, Roy Wood, and Carl Sears

Local musicians, most from Macon County, will share their special blend of classic country music, golden oldies and gospel tunes at the Hudson Library on Friday, May 2 at 1:30 p.m.

"The Lady and the Old Timers" a band of eight old

timers, four over 80, will provide vocals and music by stringed instruments and one harmonica. Members include vocalist Delia Sears along with Fred Kirkland and Jim Brown on guitar; Martha Wood on fiddle; Robert Bradley on mandolin; Carl Sears on bass;

"Wild Bill" Jackson on harmonica and Roy Wood on dulcimer. We are saddened by the passing of Roy Ramsey, dobro player extraordinaire.

The public is enthusiastically invited to attend this special presentation which is free.

• HIGHLANDS AREA EVENTS •

wet weather gear. Joint trip with the Franklin Bird Club to the neighborhood of Ellen and Jim Shelton, where last year the group saw a Red-headed Woodpecker, not a common bird in Western NC, along with numerous Scarlet Tanagers, many warblers and other species. Ellen and Jim will lead. If questions, call Michelle at 828-743-9670.

• The Mountain Garden Club in Highlands is gearing up for their 32nd annual Plant Sale, featuring many varieties of native plants, dahlias, and more. Gates open at 9 A.M. Saturday at the Town ball field at the corner of Cashiers Highway (Hwy.64) and Hickory. If rained out on Saturday, the sale will be Sunday May 25, 1-4PM. Proceeds benefit horticulture scholarships and other community projects.

• The Scaly Mountain Women's Club will host a Pancake Breakfast at the Scaly Mountain Community Center at the Corner of NC 106 and Buck Knob Road from 7:30 A.M. to 10:30 A.M. on Saturday. Adults \$5.50, and Children \$ 3.50. Proceeds benefit scholarships for area students and human service's agencies.

• The Nantahala Hiking Club will take an easy-to-moderate 5.7 mile hike, with elevation change of 900 ft., from Rock Gap to Long Branch Trail on the Appalachian Trail with car shuttle. Meet at Westgate Plaza in Franklin at 9 am, drive 30 miles round trip. Call leader Mary Stone, 369-7352, for reservations. Visitors, children, and friendly dogs (on leash) are welcome.

Wed., May 28

• The Highlands-Cashiers Annual screening will take place in Highlands on the first floor of the Jane Woodruff Clinic Wednesday. Those wishing to take advantage of either screening MUST register by calling (828) 526-1435 or visiting the Hospital's website at www.highlandscashiershospital.org

Fri. May 30

• At the Highlands Nature Center, "Know Your Frogs" workshop at the Highlands Nature Center. 8:30 – 9:30 pm, ages 6 – adult. Learn about frog biology

and how to identify regional species visually and by their calls. Bring a flashlight to search for frogs in the wild. Advanced registration required due to limited space. Call 526-2623 or visit www.highlandsbiological.org for more information.

Sat., May 31

• The Nantahala Hiking Club will take a moderate-to-strenuous 4-mile hike with elevation change of 767 ft. to the historic Wesser Fire Tower, which was restored with the club's help, for a 360 degree view of Cheoah Bald and other northern mts. Meet at BiLo parking lot in Franklin at 9 am, drive 40 miles round trip. Call leader Nancy Falkenstein, 369-9052, for reservations. Visitors welcome, but no pets please.

• The Nantahala Hiking Club

will take a moderate-to-strenuous 6-mile hike along a cascading stream with many wildflowers to Big East Fork in Shining Rock Wilderness with an elevation change of 1200 ft. Meet at Ingles in Waynesville at 9 am, drive 40 miles round trip. Call leader Keith Patton, 456-8895, for reservations. Visitors welcome, but no dogs please.

• Audubon's weekly bird spotting trip. Carpool from the parking area behind the Highlands Town Hall, unless otherwise noted. All walks will start at 7:30 AM. Bring binoculars if you have them, good walking shoes, a water bottle, and wet weather gear. HPAS will join the Highlands-Cashiers Land Trust Eco Tour to High Hampton Resort in Cashiers. Highlands's participants will carpool as usual while Cashiers

residents and others may gather in the parking area of the New Cashiers Rec Center where the Highlands group will rendezvous with them. NOTE: HCLT members are free of charge; others may either join HCLT or pay a minimal fee for this one walk. Watch the web site or call Julie, at 526-1111 for specifics. All participants must register in advance with HCLT so that lunches can be properly planned.

Sun., June 1

• The Nantahala Hiking Club will take an easy-to-moderate 3-mile loop trail, elevation change 400 ft., on the Tennessee Rock Trail in Black Rock Mt. State Park, GA, with lots of spring wildflowers and super view at the top. Meet at the Smoky Mtn. Visitor Center in Otto at 2 pm, drive 36 miles round trip. Call leader Joyce Jacques, (410) 852-7510, for reservations. Share \$3 car parking fee. Visitors welcome, not pets please.

Facebook: The world's largest social media

900 million people from all over the world use Facebook every day. This staggering amount of users make Facebook the world's largest social media. A big factor to Facebook's success is its ability to appeal to both people and businesses and this month the Center for Life Enrichment is offering classes to help you become a part of this hugely popular networking system. The classes are being taught by Mary Ann Baker, who uses Facebook and social media for her business INNSights, where she builds internet marketing plans for other small businesses.

Don't even know where to begin to set up your Facebook page? Then Facebook for the Absolute Beginner is for you. This class will teach you the basics of Facebook and will have you connecting with family and friends in no time. Cost \$35 members/\$50 nonmembers. Tuesday, May 6; 6-8pm.

Facebook Tips and Tricks is the class for those of you who already are Facebook users but want to learn more about its features. You will learn how to share photos, post updates, tag yourself and others, edit your profile and security settings. Cost \$35 members/\$50 nonmembers. Tuesday, May 13; 6:00-8:00pm.

Facebook is a great tool to market your business! The class Setting Up a Facebook Business Page will teach you how to promote your business on Facebook. Our instructor Mary Ann Baker specializes in internet marketing plans for small businesses so sign up today and grow your business via Facebook. Cost \$35/\$50 nonmembers. Tuesday, May 20; 6:00-8:00pm. *A follow-up class Marketing Your Business with Facebook is offered Tuesday, May 27; 6-8pm. Cost \$35/\$50 nonmembers.

To get more information or register for classes visit clehighlands.com, call 828-526-8811 or stop by the CLE office located on upper level of the Peggy Crosby Center.

All classes are held in the Center for Life Enrichment Lecture Hall located in the lower level of the Peggy Crosby Center 348 S. 5th Street.

Rehearsals begin for cast and crew of HC Players' 'Mama won't fly'



cast and crew of "Mama Won't Fly" From left to right...Bonnie Cushman Earman director (seated), Vangie Rich, Lance Trudel, Michelle Hott, Megan McLean, Ellen Agee, Faye Siegel (seated) and Kevin Murphy Assistant Director

Photo by Cynthia Strain

In the Highlands Cashiers Players' new show, "Mama Won't Fly", an outrageously hilarious race against the clock begins when Savannah Sprunt Fairchild Honeycutt agrees to get her feisty mother all the way from Alabama to California in time for her brother's wedding. Savannah's problem: Mama won't fly. With only four days to make it to the ceremony, this determined daughter has no choice but to drive cross-country with her equally willful mother, Norleen Sprunt, in Mama's vintage sedan.

The playwriting team of Jones, Hope and Wooten ("Dearly Departed" and "The Dixie Swim Club") once again

offers up scene after scene of crazy characters and eye-rolling punch lines ("just call me butter, 'cause I'm on a roll") that will keep you smiling for days. It's theatrical comfort food that delivers just what it promises.

Directed by Bonnie Cushman Earman, "Mama Won't Fly" will have you laughing in your seats and all the way down the aisles. Make plans to see this ferociously funny show. It opens May 22nd at the Highlands Performing Arts Center on Chestnut Street. The box office opens for season subscribers May 15 and for non-subscribers May 17 and may be reached at 828-526-8084.



Starts Monday, May 5th!

MOUNTAIN FRESH GROCERY

DINNERS-TO-GO

SUMMER MENU 2014

MON	JAMES BEARD AWARD-WINNING CHEF, LOUIS OSTEEN'S LOW COUNTRY LOBSTER/SHRIMP BOIL FOR TWO LOBSTER TAILS, WILD CAUGHT LARGE SHRIMP, RED BLISS POTATOES, SUMMER CORN, HOUSE MADE SAUSAGE, ALL STEEPED IN LOUIS'S PROPRIETARY SEASONING. SERVED WITH DRAWN BUTTER AND COCKTAIL SAUCE.	\$33.95 SERVES TWO
TUES	OVEN OFF NIGHT 2 FRESH CHICKEN BREASTS, GRILLED WITH ROSEMARY INFUSED OLIVE OIL. SERVED ON A BED OF MIXED GREENS, WITH STUFFED BRIE, SPICY/SWEET PECANS, MOUNTAIN FRESH OIL AND VINEGAR ON THE SIDE AND TWO CUPS OF HOUSE MADE GAZPACHO, WITH A MOUNTAIN FRESH BAKERY FRENCH BAGUETTE	\$23.95 SERVES TWO
WED	PRIME RIB WITH BAKED POTATOES & SALAD PREMIUM ANGUS STANDING RIB ROAST, COOKED MEDIUM RARE WITH RED WINE AU JUS, TWO BAKED POTATOES AND A LARGE CAESAR SALAD.	\$32.95 SERVES TWO
THURS	BABY BACK RIBS COOKED FALL-OFF-THE-BONE-TENDER. SERVED WITH HOUSE MADE BACON/APPLE BAKED BEANS, AND POTATO SALAD.	\$24.95 SERVES TWO
FRI	SHRIMP; FRIED OR STEAMED WILD CAUGHT LARGE SHRIMP EITHER LIGHTLY BREADED IN OUR SEASONED CORN FLOUR MIXTURE, AND THEN PROPERLY FRIED IN PEANUT OIL AND SERVED WITH HUSH PUPPIES; OR STEAMED TO ORDER IN OUR LOW COUNTRY SEASONING. BOTH COME WITH COLESLAW AND ROSEMARY SEA SALT BROILED RED POTATOES, TARTER AND COCKTAIL SAUCE.	\$25.95 SERVES TWO
SAT	IN-HOUSE SMOKED BBQ SERVED WITH COLESLAW BACON/APPLE BAKED BEANS AND YEAST ROLLS.	\$22.95 SERVES TWO

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...WILLIAMS continued from page 8

will use it in the winter. We don't know if anyone else will help fund it. All of these are unknowns which we can't begin to address until we have an idea of what the operational expenses will be. Which brings us back to 'Can we afford it?'

He answered his own question saying "Yes, we could afford the thing, but we would add another \$100,000 to the Rec Park budget -- a program that is already struggling to operate as it is," he said.

Throughout the meeting he returned to the tax increase scenario.

"The best way to address this -- which goes beyond just the pool -- is to provide a secure funding resource for the Parks and Recreation program. This would establish a long-term stable capital source to do the necessary improvements and also enable us to operate the facility," he said. "The tax increase earmarked for the Rec Park would do all that. Are you willing to support that?"

Mayor Pat Taylor said given the town's good working relationship with the county it may consider helping the town since many of the Highlands Rec Park clients are from the county.

But Commissioner Patterson said if she was a county commissioner she would be reluctant to take money out of Nantahala's pocket to fund an extravagance in Highlands.

"I would rather our working relationship help with our long-term debt opposed to the yearly operating expenses at the Rec Park. I would rather get money to help fix our water main that allows us to do other things. Frankly, I don't see the county saying 'Yes, we are going to give you an extra 100,000 dollars because y'all want to enclose the pool for what 5,000 inhabitants? That would be my perspective. If I was a county commissioner," she said.

The mayor asked why then do they fund anything?

"They fund recreation but not luxury recreation like an enclosed year-round pool. Everyone around the country has four-month pools. Enclosed pools have a median population of 61,000 supporting them. I can't see that this is much more than a luxury. I don't think the county will support a luxury recreational item when there are other areas like Nantahala that don't have much at all," said Commissioner Patterson.

Which brought the discussion back to the tax increase.

"Due to the uncertainties and the fact that we can't depend on anyone for help, if you want this structure, the best way to fund it and the best way to stabilize the Parks and Recreation Dept. is to earmark a certain percentage of the property tax -- I

believe 1 1/2 cent -- to the Parks and Recreation Dept.

Commissioners Brian Stiehler and Donnie Calloway said they believed operational costs for the enclosed pool would be much less than \$100,000.

Stiehler said it didn't have to be open 12 months of the year nor was a full-time aquatics director necessary -- which was part of the staffing scenario and hence the budget for the covered pool.

"Plus, you aren't factoring in any revenue. I think it's safe to say we could raise potentially \$30,000 a year in dues. Now you are down to needing \$70,000. If you cut the aquatics director position in half, that's \$25,000, then factor in a possible \$5,000 which it apparently promised from the county, you're down to needing \$40,000 to operate an indoor pool," he said. "It will add to the community. If we were to deny this, I think we would be sorry down the road."

He also said Highlands shouldn't be compared to other communities simply because Highlands isn't like other communities.

"You can look at other communities but Highlands is different. There isn't a ton of stuff for young people to do around here or for the aging population for that matter. The year-round pool would give them something to do. For \$40,000, I am having a very hard time saying let's not do this. When the worst case scenario -- if this thing flops and it fails, we would have tried. If we have to, we just won't open in the dead of winter but we would still have a covered 'indoor pool,'" he said.

Commissioner Calloway said the covered pool would be an asset for the town at a Rec Park that has faltered over the years.

"For whatever reason, not enough thought has gone into keeping up the building and consequently we have incurred a lot of expenses we shouldn't have to be dealing with now. I don't understand why it wasn't kept up. This Rec Park has kind of become a joke. Now we have an opportunity to bring it up to way above par," he said.

Commissioner Patterson said as the pool stands now, usage goes down after August so why should the town assume it will be used in October?

"I can't count on the best case scenario, I have to work on worst case scenario and that is that it could cost us \$100,000," she said.

Both Commissioners Stiehler and Calloway said if the town had to pay for

• SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING •



God is with us every day and in every way ... we just have to open our eyes

As I write this week for Spiritually Speaking, I thought I would stick with the theme of writing something spiritual. You know sometimes things happen in life and looking back you can see where the very presence of God was all around you. Like the times in life where you are convinced that if you get this job or that job your life will be complete, or if you can just make this much money, everything will work out.

But then the job doesn't come through and the money never comes and you think life is over. You even ask where is God in my life when it doesn't happen and you don't get your dream.

As the years go by and the days drag on, looking back on those times when you just had to have something you see how blessed you were by not having that job or that opportunity you thought you deserved. As you look back you see where things worked out and your life was better because that job did not happen and that money never came through. All this is to say, very often when we look back we see the very presence of God working in our lives all along.

Now why do we begin there this week? Because I have a story to tell you about how the very presence of God is really all around us at every place and every space. Several weeks ago, my wife Jamye and I were in Asheville at Mission Hospital staying with a person who was very sick. Jamye would stay during the day and I would stay at night with this person and on Good Friday, I drove to Asheville after our worship service and met Jamye for supper. She was tired and worn out, but we met at Chilies and when we sat down Jamye said, "Paul I need to tell you about something that happened in the cafeteria at Mission today."

Now I was thinking there must have been a food fight or something great like that but she said; "I went to have lunch today and I was so tired and worn out that when I sat down to have lunch I didn't think I could even pray. But then I looked at the table beside me and I saw two ladies holding hands and praying." I said, "OK" but Jamye continued; "I don't know how to explain it but I drew strength from that prayer." She said, "You know I was so tired and so worn out that I was wondering where God was in this hospital and there God was with me all the time. I drew strength from a stranger's prayer."

You see at those times when we feel we are all alone and no one cares, guess what, I am convinced with every ounce of my being that God is there -- in times of joy as well as times of sadness, God is there in our failures and our victories, and God is there when we see and feel God and when we do not.

• See SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING page 16

Proverbs 3:5

• PLACES TO WORSHIP • John 3:16

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
828-269-3546
Rev. Jamie Passmore, Pastor
Sundays: School: 10 a.m.; Worship: 11
GRACE COMMUNITY CHURCH OF CASHIERS
Non-Denominational-Contemporary Worship
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www.gracecashiers.com • Pastor Steve Doerter: 828-743-9814
Services: Sundays 10am - Wed. - 7pm
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
464 US Hwy 64 east, Cashiers
Sun.: Christian Education, 9 a.m. (Bucks in Cashiers)
Family Worship with music and Communion, 10:30 a.m.
Mon.: Bible Study & Supper at homes - 6 p.m.
Wed.: Men's Bible Study - 8:30 a.m., First Baptist Church

CHRIST CHURCH OF THE VALLEY, CASHIERS
Pastor Steve Kerhoulas
Sun. 10:45am, S.S 9:30am. Wed. 6pm supper and teaching.
Tue. Guys study 8am, Gals 10am.

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
Wed.: 5pm Dinner (\$7 adult, \$2 child), 6pm CBC University

EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF THE INCARNATION
Rev. Bruce Walker • 526-2968
Sundays: Education and choir rehearsal, 9 am, Holy Eucharist Rite II, (sanctuary), 10:30
Wednesday: 10 a.m., Morning Prayer
Thursdays: Holy Eucharist, (chapel), 10 am

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH HIGHLANDS
www.fbchighlands.org
Dr. Mark Ford, Pastor
220 Main Street, Highlands NC 28741
828-526-4153
Sun.: Worship 10:45 am; Sun.: Bible Study 9:30 am
Wed.: Men's Bible Study 8:30 am; Prayer Meeting 6:15 pm; Choir 5 pm

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Dr. Lee Bowman, Pastor • 526-3175
Sun.: Worship: 11 a.m.; School: 9:30
Mondays: 8 a.m.: Men's Prayer Group & Breakfast
Wednesdays: Choir: 7

HAMBURG BAPTIST CHURCH
Hwy 107N. • Glensville, Nc • 743-2729
Pastor Nathan Johnson
Sunday: School 9:45a, Worship 11a & 7p
Bible Study 6p
Wed. Kidsquest 6p.; Worship 7p.

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)
Sun.: 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 9:09 & 10:50.; Youth 5:30 p.
Wed: Supper; 6; 7:15: children, youth, & adults studies; 6:15: Adult choir (nursery provided)
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 Troy Nicholson, (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
743-2583
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
Parish office: 526-2418
Mass: Sun: 10:30 a.m.; Thurs & Fri.: 9 a.; Sat., 4p

SCALY MOUNTAIN BAPTIST CHURCH
Rev. Dwight Loggins
Sundays: School - 10 a.m.; Worship - 11 a.m. & 7
Wednesdays: Prayer Mtg.: 7 p.m.

SCALY MOUNTAIN CHURCH OF GOD
290 Buck Knob Road; Pastor Alfred Sizemore • 526-3212
Sun.: School: 10 a.m.; Worship: 10:45 a.m.; Worship: 6 p.m.
Wed: Adult Bible Study & Youth: 7 p.m.

SHORTOFF BAPTIST CHURCH
Pastor Rev. Andy Cloer
Sundays: School: 10 a.m.; Worship: 11
Wednesdays: Prayer & Bible Study: 7

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP
85 Sierra Drive • 828-524-6777
Sunday Worship - 11 a.m.
Child Care - 10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
Religious Education - 11 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.
Youth 8th - 12th grade meets 2nd Sundays 5 - 7:30 p.m.

WHITESIDE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Rev. Sam Forrester/Cashiers
Sunday School: 10 am, Worship Service: 11 am

Teachers recognized at BOE meeting

Highlands School Great Beginnings teacher Andrea Chalker was recognized for her accomplishments implanting the Lindamood Bell reading and comprehension program at the Highlands School. She is pictured with the Lindamood Bell representative.

– Photo by
Brittany Burns

Rotary Read2Me winners honored at BOE mtg.



The Read2Me writing contest was open to all children 3-8 grade in Macon County. This year's topic was Leadership. Essays were judged by volunteers with the Rotary Club of Franklin and were judged based on content, style, grammar, creativity and format. The 1st and 2nd place winners received a cash prize. The classroom teacher of the student winners also received a cash prize to be used for classroom supplies. **Winners in grades 3-4: Genevieve Maddox (1st place), Eliza Tate (second place), Mercedes Ore (Honorable Mention). Winners in grades 5-6: Keirston Cochran (1st place), Laney Grace Justice (second place), Catherine Shannon (Honorable Mention). Winners in grades 7-8: Leah Hoblit and Kierra Love (1st place), Jacob Koch (Honorable Mention).**

Photo by Brittany Burns

...BUDGET continued from 1

Park, were also at the meeting to request the town to build the public bathrooms planned for the space.

Nick Bazan said the coalition had accepted Art and Angela Williams' offer to pay for the cost of building the park but they felt the town should foot the cost of a public bathroom at taxpayers' expense – estimated to be \$165,000.

Bazan said the Kelsey-Hutchinson Park has been eight years in the making and he urged the town to include the cost of the bathrooms in the 2014-'15 budget so that they could be built as the park is being constructed so the sidewalk and the park itself wouldn't have to be torn up twice should the restrooms come at a later date.

Again, the board listened but no decision was made. The \$165,000 is just an estimate and Town Manager Bob Frye said more information was needed as to cost and design.

Frye laid out several assumptions concerning the budget – that tax money, both property and sales – was increasing slightly but was still considered flat; that a COLA increase of 1.5% was due employees; that the town/employee insurance split of 80%/20% would remain but all indications are that Blue Cross Blue Shield premiums

will increase by 17% this coming year -- a \$111,780 increase to the town; the town would allocate \$15,000 for nonprofits; that a 1 ½ cent tax rate increase would be needed to dig the Rec Park out of its \$80,000 to \$100,000 hole which would enable the town to fix the Rec Park building, maintain it and operate a year-round covered pool; that electric rates would increase by 3% come July 1, 2014 – the current revenue is \$4,387,302 and a 3% increase would make it \$4,518,921, a projected increase of \$131,619.

The list of Capital Projects includes: \$555,000 in the Street Dept. for Oak Street paving from 1st Street to US 64 and from US 64 to 3rd Street; road repairs for the wall on 3rd Street at Main Street Inn, various sidewalks, and Chowan Drive; a replacement dump truck and mowing/snow pushing tractor.

In the Sanitation Dept. a total of \$125,000 is requested for the replacement of cardboard stations and side loading trash truck.

In the Water Dept. \$787,000 for water line replacement projects on NC 28 and a Ton Dump Truck and an excavator and trailer.

• See BUDGET page 17

...SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING continued from 15

As the Christian church we have just celebrated Easter when we proclaimed Christ has risen, but what we may not realize is that Christ has been let loose on the world.

You never know where you will meet Christ, you only know that you will – in that smile of a stranger, in that prayer you see someone in public praying – Christ is there every day and in every way. I need to pay attention – do you?

MOUNTAIN FINDINGS

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• INVESTING AT 4,118 Ft. •

Country club properties represent well-established markets

The following is the summary of 2013 sales at the various country clubs on the plateau. What we have learned is that Buyers are still looking for value in well-established markets and in good neighborhoods.

Though there are a significant number of real estate markets around the country that are firming up and even showing increased prices, unfortunately the Highlands plateau does not fall into this category. During the past six years the number of sold homes have not kept pace with the number of homes going on the market, so the residential inventory of unsold homes continues to climb. The result of a bloated inventory is that prices remain depressed. As a matter of fact, the number of homes sold the first quarter



Jody Lovell
828-526-4104
highlandssir.com

of 2014 was down 30% from the first quarter of 2013.

Although Highlands Sotheby's sold several homes already in 2014 totaling eleven million dollars in sales, we are cautiously optimistic about our second home

market. A couple of interesting numbers published recently indicate the challenge and tensions in our national economy. Firstly, an end of March NBC/Wall Street Journal poll recorded 57% of Americans believe the US is still in recession. An eye opener was a Wall Street Journal article that pointed out Home Depot opened 200 stores in 2008 but plans to open only 1 in 2014. This just validates that perceptions of recovery are more nuanced than the headlines portray.

At our annual Sotheby's International Realty Owners Conference this month in Palm Beach, there were plenty of testimonials on the rebound of the luxury markets around the world. What we care about is our little piece of the world and, hopefully, the Highlands/Cashiers plateau real estate market will strengthen

in 2014. The message for Sellers is that you must be competitively priced to attract Buyers in this market.

• Jody and Wood Lovell own Highlands Sotheby's International Realty with ten brokers

and two offices: one in The Old Edwards Inn complex and one at the gate of Cullasaja Club. Jody was again the top selling agent on the entire MLS in 2013. You may reach them at 828 526 4104.

2013 SALES		
<u>DEVELOPMENT</u>	<u># HOMES SOLD</u>	<u>AVG. PRICE</u>
Cullasaja Club	13	\$915,577.00
Highlands Country Club	5	\$1,015,400.00
Highlands Cove	2	\$1,482,500.00
Highlands Falls	11	\$561,909.00
Mountaintop	6	\$1,498,333.00
Wade Hampton	9	\$1,161,111.00
Wildcat Cliffs	9	\$649,667.00

...BUDGET continued from 16

In the Water/Sewer Dept. \$97,000 is needed for water treatment tank rehab and replacement pick-up truck.

In the Police Dept., \$83,000 is requested for two Ford Taurus replacement.

In the MIS/GIS Dept. \$73,000 is requested for the water system communication upgrade.

In the Parks and Recreation Dept., \$264,600 is needed for the stage renovations and upper level bathroom renovations. Money that was planned for the gym floor and bleachers could be diverted to those projects since the Williams' offer to fund the gym floor project was accepted.

In the Electric Dept. \$10,000 is needed for wire pulling and miscellaneous items like new Christmas decorations; a storage building for the Christmas decorations and a salary/position classification study would cost \$58,000.

There are four depart-

ments/funds that have money in them which is earmarked for expenses – about \$1 million in the General Fund/Fund Balance; \$884,000 in the Water/Sewer Fund; \$155,000 in the Sanitation Fund and \$90,000 in the Electric Fund for a total of \$2,162,600. That means to fund the entire Capital Projects wish list would cost \$496,000.

Mayor Taylor met with the MC Planning Board this month and said he hoped Highlands would be considered in that board's review concerning economic development in the county – of which infrastructure is a major component.

He told the board that Highlands contributes mightily to the county in the form of property tax, sales tax and room tax.

"I told them I hoped that we would be included in funding like Franklin has been for infrastructure projects specifically our water and water/sewer needs," he said. "We have similar needs and the county could really help our

citizens and citizens in the county if we had some county support."

At the budget meeting Thursday, commissioners discussed asking the county for help on the water trunk line project on NC 28 which is estimated to cost \$690,000. A new trunk line would enable the town to replace 2" copper lines with 4" lines to better serve Queen Mountain and other outlying areas on the town's system.

MC Commissioner Jim Tate said Highlands does need to be included in all of the Planning Boards' discussions about economic development.

"Highlands and Franklin are the only two municipalities in the county. And, Highlands has been a tremendous revenue generator for the county when it comes to property tax proceeds. The Highlands residents just like all residents of the county deserve fair consideration when it comes to discussions of infrastructure, recreation, public safety and other needs."

– Kim Lewicki



Falling Waters is a newer, well-maintained, 52-acre community just 2.8 miles to Main Street; secluded but not remote.

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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.highlandsnchomesites.com

Contact (onsite owner) or your broker for plats, prices & a guided tour.

828-508-9952.

New librarian named at Hudson Library



Jennifer Crowley has been named the new Hudson Librarian, succeeding Mary Lou Worley, who retired from the position at the end of March.

Jennifer comes to Highlands from western New York, where she worked at the Fayetteville Public Library.

She grew up in the small community of Ellicottville, near Buffalo. She received her BA in history and political science from the University of Pittsburgh and a Master of Library Science from Syracuse University. While there, she worked as the assistant to the President of the American Library Association, Barbara Stripling.

As an ALA member, Jennifer is committed to staying up-to-date with state and

national library organizations, technology, reference services, and emerging trends in public libraries.

After visiting western North Carolina earlier in her life, Jennifer developed a love for these mountains. She made the more than 800-mile move here along with her two cats, Ponyo and Gracie.

A confirmed animal lover, she also adopts house rabbits and is looking forward to getting a dog. In her spare time,

she says, she is looking forward to planting a new garden: "I have been gardening vegetables all of my life (I grew up on a farm), but I love working with annuals and perennials."

Jennifer Cowley begins her new position at the Hudson Library on May 1st.

For more information, or to welcome Jennifer, please stop by the Hudson Library or call 526-3031.

Highlander honored at Biz Week ceremonies

Highlands businessman Dennis Wilson (Doc), owner of Wilson Gas, was named a small business honoree at the annual Macon County Biz Week 2014 banquet last week. Thank you to Doc's employees and customers for helping make this award possible. MC Commissioner District I Jim Tate presented the award.



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...DRUGS continued from page 10

quirements of second time offenders and states: "At maximum, the student will be ineligible to participate in interscholastic athletics for a period of 365 days or some shorter time as determined by the principal. In making his or her determination, the principal may consider the following:

1. The fact that the student has agreed to professional counseling outside of school; and
2. The fact that the student and his parents /guardians/legal custodian have agreed that the student have a drug and alcohol assessment provided at a state-approved alcohol and drug agency in the community by a qualified alcoholism or drug counselor prior to participating in another sport.

3. The student agrees to undergo future tests.

Highlands School

One hundred ninety (190) drug screens were completed on the student athletes at Highlands School. The result of three student-athletes were forwarded to the lab for further analysis, with the results being negative.

Nantahala School

Thirty-nine (39) drug screens were completed on the student athletes at Nantahala School. The result of one student-athlete was forwarded to the lab for further analysis, with the result being negative.

Macon Middle School

Three hundred twenty-six (326) drug screens were completed on the student athletes at Macon Middle School. The result of one student athlete was forwarded to the lab for further analysis, with the result being negative.

• POLICE & FIRE REPORTS •

Highlands PD log entries from April 1. Only the names of persons arrested, issued a Class-3 misdemeanor, or public officials have been used.

April 1

• At 2 p.m., several items were reported stolen from The Bascom: telephone equipment, toaster oven and microwave.

April 11

• At 12:42 p.m., a shoplifting incident at Bryson's Food Store was reported when a Bic Lighter was stolen.

April 15

• At 3:43 p.m., officers responded to a two-vehicle accident in the Bank of America parking lot.

April 18

• At 10:34 a.m., officers responded to a one-vehicle accident on Main Street.

April 21

• At 2 a.m., officers received a call from a resident on Sherwood

Forest Road about a bear in a car.

The Highlands Fire & Rescue Dept. log entries from April 23.

April 23

• At 10:19 a.m., the dept. responded to a call for assistance at a residence on Oak Street

April 25

• At 9:20 a.m., the dept. responded to a medical alarm at a residence on Laurel Street.

• At 12:50 p.m., the dept. responded to a first-responder call in Highlands Meadows.

April 26

• At 4:36 a.m., the dept. responded to a first responders call at H-C Hospital.

April 27

• At 2:38 p.m., the dept. responded to a first responder call at a residence on Mount Lori Drive.

• At 8:43 p.m., the dept. re-

Parker Meadows Rec Park begins w/ groundbreaking



Last week, elected officials were joined by members of the community for the official ground breaking ceremony for the new recreation park at Parker Meadows. Macon County's Recreation Director Seth Adams hopes to send portions of the project out to bid by the end of the month in order to be able to play ball on the new fields by next summer. The park is a huge component of the county's economic development plan as it will be a place where regional tournaments can take place. This will translate into tourism dollars for the county.

— Photo by Brittany Burns

sponded to a first-responders call at a residence on Chestnut Hill Drive.

...WILLIAMS continued from page 14

the capital expense of building the covered pool, they wouldn't be for the idea.

"It would be a no-brainer and the answer would be no. But we are getting a gift and if we can come up with \$40,000 to \$50,000 a year I think it would be an asset to the town. Are there uncertainties? Sure," said Calloway.

Mayor Taylor said the idea is to have it open year-round but if the town finds it has to modify the schedule to afford it that's OK. "Our view is that it would be all year round, but if we find out and have to close it, we are protecting the pool and can look at other ways to open it. Ways to modify the schedule."

Always the "money man" Frye reminded the commissioners that annually the town has to crawl out of a hole concerning the Rec Park, so this will likely be a bigger hole.

"I hope five years from now it's the best thing we ever did and people will be clamoring to use it and it will generate revenue. But if you accept this offer, you need to accept the risks associated with it and accept not only that but what it will cost to run the facility as a whole," he said.

Calloway asked if the town risks losing the \$280,000 for the gym floor and bleachers if it doesn't accept the pool offer. The Mayor said he didn't know the answer to that question.

Stiehler also told the board that he knows of people in Highlands who have bought a lot in Sapphire just so they can use the indoor pool there.

"There is something to having it here. You aren't just going to pull Highlands folks, you are going to pull people from Cashiers and other areas," he said.

The Mayor urged the board

to remember that it will be an added-value to the quality of life in Highlands.

"And it could be a magnet, too. We are trying to move from the old seasonal model to living here all year-round and this would be one more component to that," he said.

Commissioner Eric Pierson said there was no way of knowing the answers to all the questions at this point. "But we should try. It may be a huge success or it may be a huge failure. Either way it's a way to improve this whole facility and create programs that will attract more people."

Whether the town will raise taxes 1 1/2 cent per \$100 value — which would net the town \$276,000 earmarked for the Rec Park Dept. — will likely be discussed at the next budget meeting on May 8.

— Kim Lewicki

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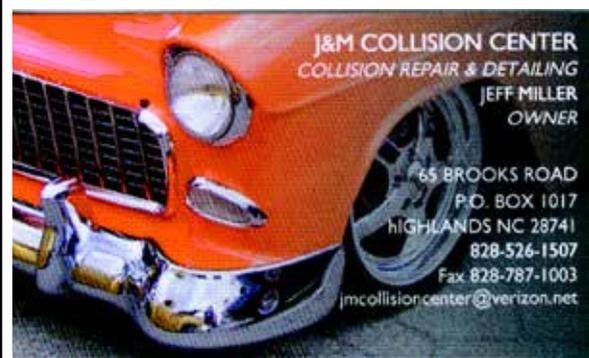


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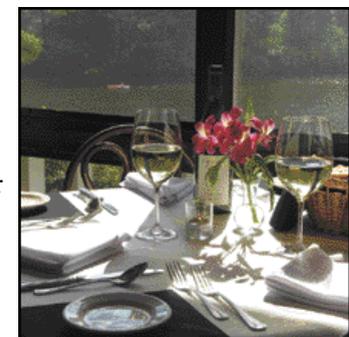
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