Town property tax to increase from 15.5 cents to 16.9 cents

There are two unknowns the Town Board and staff have to deal with while working on the 2015-'16 budget – the property revaluation in Macon County and the possibility of losing sales tax revaluation in Macon County and the 2015-'16 budget – the property appeals, that number has fallen to 7.5%.

However, according to MC Tax Department Director Richard Lightner that’s not the complete story. “Appeals are always a factor in valuations since counties do not have one-on-one contact with the taxpayers, but that’s not the reason the percentage has changed,” he said. “The push by all stakeholders for early values resulted in the...”

DirecTV’s decision to sue Bond in civil court is pending

Though zero to six months jail time was in the cards, Nin Bond, majority owner of Highlands Cable Group, dodged a bullet last week when his sentence in federal court on Thursday, April 16 hit him in the pocketbook instead.

Judge Martin Reidinger sentenced Bond to probation for two, consecutive, 3-year terms for each count – one for mail fraud and one for wire fraud – a $200 assessment, a $10,000 fine and a forfeiture money judgement of $149,697.89.

Almost two years ago, on Thursday, Aug. 1, 2013, Bond pleaded guilty before U.S. Magistrate Judge Dennis L. Howell, in Bryson City, NC federal court, to wire fraud and mail fraud charges for fraudulently acquiring and unlawfully rebroadcasting DirecTV satellite television programming to the customers of Highlands Cable Group.

Bond has been released on bond since May 2013 and it took 1 ½ years for him to be sentenced.

“Just because I have given a probationary sentence should not be misconstrued as a belief that this was not a serious offense,” said Judge Reidinger in the court transcript. “But this offense involves what is at the bottom a breach of contract – a purposeful breach of contract for gain. The evidence here was very clear that the defendant entered into the contract with the clear intent to breach and that is serious. It’s also serious and it is clear that the defendant gained by having committed this fraud. My calculation which apparently is close to the calculation of the parties on both sides is just short of $150,000 that Highlands Cable Group managed to obtain by this fraud.”

But Judge Reidinger’s sentence may not be the end of the story.

On Thursday, April 23, a spokesperson from DirecTV whose headquarters are in El Segundo, CA, said no decisions have been made on whether they will pursue a civil case against Bond.

Beale leads NCACC historic meet in county

Highlands’ mayor weighs in

Macon County Commissioner Ronnie Beale made state political history last week as the President of the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners. For the first time in the organization’s 100-year history, Beale arranged for the association’s board of directors to hold its strategic planning meeting in Western North Carolina.

More than 50 county commissioners from across North Carolina traveled to Macon County for the meeting.

In addition to making history by holding the first meeting of its kind this side of Asheville, the association made history because for the first time in more than 100 years, the group established and defined a mission statement.

From Nepal to Bali … the journey continues

“Every generation has the obligation to free men’s minds for a look at the new world… to look out from a higher plateau than the last generation.”

— Ellison S. Onizaka

By Emily Gabbard
UNC - Gap Student

About a month ago I left everything I knew in Nepal for my new adventure in Bali. Leaving is never easy, no matter how much I prepare. Once I arrived in the Kathmandu airport getting ready for my flight to Bali, I was already alone; I was leaving all the friendships I had made over the years, the group established and defined a mission statement.

Fun for the whole family!

highlandsncacc.org
Parking restrictions will be enforced

T
they are back, from May 1 to January 1. That is right, downtown parking ordinances.

Before last season there was much community discussion about problems with parking enforcement in the downtown areas. Commissioner Calloway stated he had been hearing ongoing criticism of parking problems as far back as 17 years ago, when he first served on the board. He boldly stated that maybe it was an unsolvable problem, and maybe the town should have no parking ordinances at all, just let merchants and visitors fend for themselves. Commissioner Calloway’s remarks generated overwhelming community feedback that the town should indeed have strictly and consistently enforced parking ordinances.

I was asked by the board to convene a committee of business people and citizens to review the existing policy and suggest improvements. The committee came up with several changes. The town board made changes to the ordinances that they thought would improve compliance and enforcement. Parking ordinances went into effect from May 1 to January 1.

From what I gather our parking situation improved this past season. Merchants and employees, for the most part, parked on off site areas so visitors and shoppers could park on Main Street.

Also, last season large trucks started using designated loading docks instead of unloading on Main Street all times of the day. Under the current ordinance trucks can unload on Main Street before 10 am and after 5pm. During the business day they have to make deliveries in back street loading areas.

When our policemen observe a parking violation, usually it is complaint driven. The officer handling the complaint makes a thorough investigation before issuing a parking citation. When a citation is issued, the person receiving the violation can pay the fine at town hall within 15 days. For example, Parking in a Prohibited Zone is a $10.00 fine.

If a person feels the citation was a mistake, they can contact the Police Chief and he will be happy to answer any questions. The mayor or town manager will not supersede law enforcement and void a ticket. That kind of practice makes for inconsistency, and suggests some folks are entitled to special consideration that compromises the process.

If a citation is not paid within the 15 day period, further action will be taken by law enforcement. On the back of the citation envelope is the statement, “If not paid within 15 days a criminal summons will be issued and could affect your driver’s license.” A criminal summons means that the failure to pay the citation has been sent to the state district court as a violation of a municipal ordinance. A conviction in district court results in court costs of $188. Failure to appear in court will trigger an

The General Assembly’s moves affecting day-to-day lives of working people

Dear Editor

The people have been told for years, particularly by Republican candidates running for the General Assembly: “We will cut your taxes.”

They have cut your taxes if you made over $88,000 per year. If you have made less than that you have seen no cut and in most cases, have seen your taxes raised. You may not have a raise in income tax but you will probably pay much more every day for sales tax.

They have imposed sales taxes on electricity, natural gas, entertainment and movies. They have increased tax rates from 2% to 4.75% on modular homes and manufactured homes (Mobile homes) and taken off the cap on the maximum tax.

You will also be paying sales tax for your dentist, doctor, mechanic, electrician, plumber and for work done on service contracts. You will now pay sales tax on farm equipment and if you gross less than $10,000 per year, you will lose your farm deduction.

They have eliminated all personal exemptions and repealed the $50,000 business income deduction. They have eliminated the $4,000 deduction for most government retirement income and the $2,000 deduction for private retirement.

They have also eliminated deductions for premiums paid on long-term care insurance, medical expenses, earned income Tax Credit and cost of meal plans at colleges.

Who wins from these tax bills? Corporations have been paying 6.9%. This drops the tax rate to 6% for 2014 and to 5% for 2015. Individuals have been paying 7.5%, 7% and 6% and will now pay 5.8%. Figure this tax advantage for those making millions.

Calculate how much more you will pay and remember it when you vote for members of the General Assembly in 2016.

Clayton Ramsey
Franklin

Highlands’ newest Eagle Scout

At a ceremony on Saturday, April 25th, Highlands Boy Scout Troop 207 awarded Philip Murphy his Eagle Scout Award. Philip lives in Highlands and is a Senior at Highlands School.

Who took the AWESOME prom photographs? The Sunset Yearbook Staff! Great Job!
Obituaries

Martha Ingaborg Nordin Barber Wiltcher

Martha Ingaborg Nordin Barber Wiltcher, age 100 years, of Highlands, NC, passed away peacefully surrounded by her loving children and their spouses on Saturday, April 11, 2015. A resident of the Eckerd Living Center, born December 28, 1914 in Bethlehem, PA to the late Ingaborg Nordin and Fritz Nordin of Sweden.

Martha grew up in Asbury Park, New Jersey, married Gordon Norman Barber. They served together as Gordon was the Pastor of the Salvation Army Church. In 1945 they moved to Miami, FL for health reasons and raised their four children there. In 1957 they divorced.

In 1965 Martha married Pleasy L. Wiltcher, who unfortunately passed away that same year. She remained a widow for the remainder of her life, living near her beloved children.

Martha successfully managed her own rental properties until her retirement. Martha had a deep and abiding faith in her Saviour, her Lord Jesus Christ, now she is finally home in heaven.

She is survived by her children, Elaine E. Watts of Ft. Lauderdale, FL, E. June Thomas and husband Carl of Maysville, Georgia, Bill G. Barber and wife Melinda of Highlands, NC, as well as her cherished grandchildren, Timothy Thomas, Stephen Thomas and wife Denese, Michael Sahlgren and wife Lisa, Cindee Carmichael and husband Michael, Cheree Murray and husband Joe, Leif Sahlgren and wife Erica, Julie Nichols and husband Robert, Jenene Rouse and husband Jim, Larry Barber, Jeramie Barber and wife Kelly, Kimberly Kravits and husband Alex, Jonathan Barber, Joshua Barber and wife Rayne; also 19 great-grandchildren and three great-great-grandchildren.

A memorial service will be held Saturday, May 2, 2015 at 2:00 pm at Community Bible Church, 3645 Cashiers Road, Highlands, NC 28741, Phone Number: 828-526-4685. There will be a short reception after the service.

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

Frank Harris Holloway, Jr.

Frank Harris Holloway, Jr., 91, of Highlands, NC passed away Thursday, April 23, 2015. Born in Ocala, FL, he was the son of the late Frank Harris and Gladys Brooks Holloway. He was married for 59 years to Hattie Tyler Holloway, who preceded him in death.

Mr. Holloway worked in the plumbing business with his father and brother; was a deputy sheriff in Marion County, FL, and traveled the county for Bechtel Corporation in large construction. He was a member of Highlands First Baptist Church where he sang in the choir. He loved woodworking, baking cakes and music.

He is survived by two daughters, Lisa Maselli and husband John of Evans, GA and Carol Scott and husband Jay of Florida; four sons, Rick Holloway and wife Carolyn of Tomball, TX, Frank H. Holloway III, and Mike Holloway and his wife Mary all of Florida, and Lamar Brown and wife Malinda of Hampton, SC; one sister, Mamie Davis of Ocala, FL and grandchildren, Tyler Holloway, Anthony Maselli, Angela Ballantyne, Leigh Anna Brown, Frank Holloway IV, Robert Holloway, Mike Holloway, Sara Holloway and Anna Scott. Five great-grandchildren also survive.

Funeral service will be held Saturday, May 2, 2015 at 10:00 am at Highlands First Baptist Church with Dr. Mark Ford officiating. Burial will be in Highlands Memorial Park. Pallbearers will be Rick Holloway, Tyler Holloway, Anthony Maselli, John Maselli, Mitchell Ballantyne and Lamar Brown. The family will receive friends Friday evening, May 1st, from 5:00 - 7:00 pm at Highlands First Baptist Church.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to Highlands First Baptist Church, PO Box 625, Highlands, NC 28741.

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

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Saturday 1-3pm

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11-2:30, M-TH $7.25
Friday: Seafood Buffet $8.25

Open 7 days a week
11a to 9:30p
Menu available, too
Wine & Beer • No MSG

In-town delivery w/$15 order
Highlands Plaza • 526-5525

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Lunch and Dinner:
7 nights a week 5-9p
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...JOURNEY continued from page 1

the past 9 weeks. I love meeting these amazing people that come and go through my life, like water slipping through hands.

I recently received an email from the founder of Nepal Orphans Home. He sent me a letter that one of my favorite students had written for me. This letter brought feelings from immense joy to that awful feeling of “I miss this.” This is what my gap year is made up of: inspirational and heartfelt moments.

Although I have met some great people along the way, it’s always nice to have my friends and family with me every step of my journey. I am blessed with the continual support and encouragement from my hometown. It also makes coming home a little more exciting.

I am currently living on a remote island that is a 45-minute boat ride from Bali, Indonesia called Nusa Penida. My days are filled with feeding turtles, cleaning turtle tanks, catching crabs and collecting seaweed for the turtles.
Living on a remote island with basically nothing else besides the beach is pretty amazing.

A typical day for me begins at 9am when I go to the turtle center and feed the turtles. I reach into my little tin of fish guts and give the turtles their breakfast. After all the turtles have been fed we begin to clean the tanks. Algae, fish guts, and turtle poop cover my body as I get on all fours and scrub the tanks. Once I’ve finished cleaning the tanks, I feel accomplished putting the turtles back into their clean home. After all the turtles are back into their tanks I go down to the beach and collect seaweed for the turtles to eat.

There are three different types of seaweed: green, brown, and white. The green is the healthiest, the brown is the next best, and then the white seaweed is their junk food. I make sure to get plenty of white seaweed for my little turtle friends.

Then I have free time before and after lunch to go to the beach and relax.

In the afternoon it’s time to get back to work. Each afternoon is different. It varies from catching crabs for the turtles, picking up trash on the beach, and teaching the native children English. My favorite part would be the releasing process that happens every two weeks. This is what the program is all about: raising the turtles until they are healthy and big enough to survive on their own.

I have really enjoyed my time on Nusa Penida.

Here are some highlights of the island life:

• I live with a variety of wildlife: rats, geckos, spiders, coach roaches, roosters, and stray dogs. These animals also like to wake up very early.

• I always feel dirty. My clothes are covered in a fish smell that is hard to escape.

• It is a rare moment when I am absolutely dry. I am sweating because it’s so hot. Drenched because I’m cleaning turtle tanks. Or I am swimming in the ocean. My skin is always wet.

• I have been parasailing.

…I am swimming in the ocean. My skin is always wet.

• See JOURNEY page 8

• See JOURNEY page 8
BREAKFAST
FULL BREAKFAST MADE TO ORDER EVERY MORNING UNTIL 11:00AM
CAGE FREE EGGS, WAFFLES, FRENCH TOAST, BACON, SAUSAGE, HAM, BISCUITS, MUFFINS, CROISSANTS
ESPRESSO BAR AND COFFEE ROASTED IN-HOUSE

LUNCH
GRILL - EVERY DAY OF THE WEEK STARTING AT 11:00 UNTIL CLOSE
FRESH ANGUS BURGERS, FRESH NATURAL CHICKEN BREASTS, GRILLED FISH, CHICKEN TENDERS, COOKED TO ORDER HAND CUT FRIES, SALADS, HOMEMADE SOUPS, DAILY SPECIALS, SALAD BAR

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

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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

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

DINNERS TO GO
A DIFFERENT FULL DINNER FOR TWO EVERY NIGHT, MONDAY THROUGH SATURDAY FROM 4:30 UNTIL WE SELL OUT. CALL AHEAD TO RESERVE...

MONDAY - LOW COUNTRY LOBSTER / SHRIMP BOIL MAIN LOBSTER TAILS, WILD CAUGHT LARGE SHRIMP, RED BLISS POTATOES, SUMMER CORN, HOUSE MADE SAUSAGE, ALL STEEPED IN OUR SEASONING. SERVED WITH DRAWN BUTTER AND COCKTAIL SAUCE. $33.95 SERVES TWO

TUESDAY - OVEN OFF NIGHT TWO NATURAL CHICKEN BREASTS GRILLED WITH OUR TUSCAN HERB INFUSED OLIVE OIL, SERVED ON A BED OF GREENS WITH STUFFED BRIE, SPICEDPECANS, OUR EXTRA VIRGIN OLIVE OIL AND BALSAMIC VINEGAR ON THE SIDE WITH TWO CUPS OF HOMEMADE GAZPACHO AND A BAGUETTE FROM OUR BAKERY. $23.95 SERVES TWO

WEDNESDAY - PRIME RIB WITH BAKED POTATOES AND SALAD. PREMIUM ANGUS STANDING RIB ROAST, COOKED MEDIUM RARE WITH RED WINE AU JUS. TWO BAKED POTATOES AND A LARGE CAESAR SALAD. $33.95 SERVES TWO

THURSDAY - TWO RACKS OF BABY BACK RIBS - COOKED UNTIL FALL-OFF-THE-BONE-TENDER. SERVED WITH HOUSE MADE BACON/APPLE BAKED BEANS AND POTATO SALAD. $25.95 SERVES TWO

FRIDAY - WILD CAUGHT SHRIMP: FRIED OR STEAMED, WILD CAUGHT NORTH CAROLINA 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. $26.95 SERVES TWO

SATURDAY - IN-HOUSE SMOKED BBQ. HAND RUBBED PORK BUTT, PIT-SMOKED OVER NIGHT AND HAND PULLED TO ORDER. COMES WITH COLESLAW, APPLE BACON BAKED BEANS, AND YEAST ROLLS $22.95 SERVES TWO

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

BAKERY
FULL SERVICE SCRATCH BAKERY MAKING ROLLS, BAGUETTES, SANDWICH BREADS, PASTRIES, BIRTHDAY AND WEDDING CAKES, COOKIES AND SEASONAL SPECIALTIES.

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.

SPECIALTY CHEESES
DOZENS OF CHEESES, TAPENADES, OLIVES AND SPECIALTY ITEMS INCLUDING OUR MADE IN HOUSE CRACKERS

ARTISAN OIL AND VINEGAR
OVER 40 EXTRA VIRGIN OLIVE OILS AND VINEGARS TO CHOOSE FROM. ALL AVAILABLE TO SAMPLE.
...JOURNEY continued from page 6

surfing, snorkeling, and diving all for the first time here!

- Living a simple life on the island away from civilization with no other tourists is quite invigorating. It’s an easy escape from my addiction to connect with other people—Facebook, Instagram, emails.

I have only one month left in my gap year.

One more month to make deep, meaningful friendships. The kind of friendships that make a person want to cry at the airport because they know they probably will never see those people again.

One more month to explore my interests and connect my experiences back to UNC-Chapel Hill.

One more month to live completely on my own, growing my values and beliefs while becoming the person I desire to be.

These past six months have been an amazing journey. I can see a subtle change in myself, a change that will continue to grow throughout my life. This journey has given me the ability to realize I am capable of more than I thought.

I have felt emotions that I have never felt before; from feeling extremely alone when arriving at a new place, to having my heart filled completely with love and joy, and finally the feeling when it’s time to leave a place and the heart-aching pain of saying goodbye.

I will be coming home in a few weeks. I’m both excited and sad that my gap year will be coming to an end. I’m excited to see my family and friends and get back to my life in Highlands, but at the same time I will miss everything about my gap year.

This is Emily’s last leg of her journey as a UNC-Chapel Hill GAP student.

She has lived in three countries over the 2014-2015 school year.

During the first leg she was in Trujillo, Peru then Nepal and finally Nusa Penida, near Bali in Indonesia.

A gap year through UNC-Chapel Hill is when students take a break from formal classroom-based education to travel, volunteer, intern, or work.

Buckle Up, Baby event secures lives

Highlands Police Officer Ronnie Castle checks an infant car seat at Sunday’s second annual Buckle Up, Baby event. In a joint effort between Highlands Police Department, Franklin Police Department, Macon County Sheriff’s Office, and Safe Kids of Jackson County, local law enforcement checked about 60 car seats at Sunday’s Buckle Up, Baby safety clinic. Out of the seats checked, about 60% were found to be improperly installed. 80% of the families who attended the event, which was held at the Fun Factory on Franklin, said they had never had their seat checked before. This is the second time this event has been held in Macon County, and according to registration, families from three counties utilized the safety check. To have your car seat checked, call the Highlands Police Department at 828-526-9431.
FIRST OFF, join six winemakers/owners and Master Sommelier Andrea Robinson for the WOMEN of WINE Fashion Show & Luncheon at Highlands Country Club.

11:30 AM
$100 per person
Featuring a Champagne Laurent-Perrier reception followed by an informal viewing of spring’s finest fashions from Acorns Boutique while tasting wines and lunching with the owners/winemakers of six extraordinary properties.

AND...later that evening, join us on the Terrace at the Bascom for the "Stock Your Cellar" Wine Tasting & Market with more than 15 winery principals or winemakers and their finest vintages.

6:00 PM
$150 per person
Purchase wines to get your cellar in shape for the Season with proceeds going to the Bascom.

Then after tasting, indulge in a little barbecue and bluegrass.

Special guest of honor Master Sommelier Andrea Robinson of the Delta Air Lines Culinary Team will be on hand to guide guests through winery selections to pair with Chef Bryant Withers’ delectable lunch menu.


We hope you'll join us!

To be added to the invitation list, or for additional information about becoming a sponsor for Collective Spirits, please email events@TheBascom.org.

Thanks to these Corporate Sponsors
release of inflated numbers. The true numbers won't be in until all the computations are finalized. So, the final values will not be complete until all appeals are finalized which would be early June.”

Lightner said the original numbers the county was looking at in January were raw numbers that did not include tax exemptions, elderly exemptions, and did not have any appeals figured in.

“When we figure the amount to reserve for appeals, we do it for the entire county not by townships,” said Lightner. “During the appeals, some districts have more appeals then others. Historically, Highlands has always filed the majority of the appeals (35-50%). Each appeal in Highlands is worth 2-3 appeals elsewhere, so adjustments add up quickly.”

In any case, there will be repercussions due to the recent property revaluation.

“To keep our budget revenue neutral and still offer the same services, we will need to raise taxes,” said Frye. “Can we survive if we don’t do a revenue neutral budget and don’t raise taxes? Yes, but it will be stressful.”

Mayor Pat Taylor said this year the town is faced with the cumulative effect of getting the sales tax hit and the decreased property values.

The only decision the commissioners made during the worksession, which is primarily a discussion about budget priorities, was to adjust the tax rate so the town will pull in money equal to what was collected last year. Last year the tax rate was 15.5 cents per $100 valuation but it will be increased to 16.9 cents per $100 valuation.

Commissioner Amy Patterson reminded the board that though the tax rate is revenue neutral to the municipality, to the individual taxpayer it isn’t revenue neutral, it’s a tax increase.

By now everyone knows that NC state legislators are considering disbursing sales tax based on the per capita year-round population basis rather than returning a percentage of it back to the municipalities based on who raised it.

“The biggest question mark is SB 369 – The Fair Tax Sales Tax Fairness Act – which is basically changing the sales tax disbursement from an ad valorem distribution to a per capita distribution,” said Frye.

He said the town is probably OK for this coming budget year, but if the bill passes and the program is phased in over three years as suggested, Highlands would lose more than $200,000 a year beginning with the 2016-’17 budget year.

“The only good thing is that if it is phased in, we can absorb the $200,000 loss per year easier than the whole amount at one time which is $628,104,” he said.

“From what I understand, Macon County...TAX continued from page 1
stands to lose $1.1 million.”

Commissioner Brian Stiehler said he spoke to the Governor and Lt. Governor while in Raleigh at a work-related conference and he said they both told him they were against redistributing the sales tax.

However, Frye said the Speaker of the House Thom Tillis is for it and he has said that “some form of this will pass.”

Other items under consideration while formulating the budget for 2015-'16 were capital projects, the fire department budget and the fee for services and utilities. The fire department budget was based on an increase in the fire tax from .009 to .010 due to the decrease in property values.

The cost of residential services — water, electricity, sewer and garbage -- are slated to remain the same.

Commissioners are still considering which capital projects to include in the budget. The cost of projects on the “wish list” is $930,000 in the Street Dept.; $208,000 in the Sanitation Dept.; $810,000 in the Water Dep.; $580,000 in the Water Treatment Dept.; $80,000 in the Wastewater Treatment Dept.; $86,200 in the Police Dept.; $362,500 in the MIS/GIS Dept.; and $625,500 in the Parks and Recreation Dept.

— Kim Lewicki

order for arrest by the district court judge.

Now some may say this process is harsh and over the top, not what we do in Highlands. But, in the past many people receiving parking citations simply ignored them, and violation of the parking ordinance — receiving parking citations simply ignored — is the way’s point, are we going to have consistent parking enforcement or not? Conversely, if the majority of citizens do not want parking ordinances, well so be it. In the meantime, downtown parking ordinances will go back into effect in May. The police have been contacting merchants in April to review parking restrictions.

...MAYOR continued from page 2

...TAX continued from page 10

Taylor Barnes Spa & Salon

Because Maturity is a State of Mind Not a Skin Condition We Offer 3 Procedures:

MicroPhototherapy • MicroCurrent • Celluma

MicroPhototherapy

With the healing power of light and heat energy this treatment works deep beneath the surface of the skin to give a younger healthier looking appearance. Soothing pulses of heat work with light to lessen sun spots, even out skin tone and smooth the texture of your skin with virtually no down time or discomfort.

MicroCurrent

Microcurrent aids in reducing the signs of aging by utilizing a low level of electricity that mimics our own body’s biological current.

These tiny microcurrent impulses trigger chemical reactions at a cellular level to enhance the production of natural collagen and elastin, provide circulatory benefits, and work directly on the nerves and muscle fibers. The result is visible firming and smoothing of the skin. It also helps tone facial muscles.

Although you will notice the treatment’s tightening effects immediately, the more significant improvement will occur gradually over a period of several weeks as the new collagen forms.

Celluma’s phototherapy device, uses wavelengths of light produced by light emitting diodes (LEDs) to treat multiple conditions – acne & anti-aging.

Celluma’s deeply penetrating wavelengths kill the bacteria that causes breakouts, while reducing the inflammation, pimples and redness associated with acne. A reduction in lesions and overall improvement in skin appearance is often seen in a matter of weeks.

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Located behind Highlands Decorating Center on NC 106 (the Dillard Road)
**Highlands Area Events**

- **NOTE:** The Recreation Department is now accepting application for Lifeguards for the Summer. We will be offering a Lifeguard course in late April and early May.
- **NOTE:** Anyone interested in putting together a softball team in the Highlands Spring League needs to contact Lester Norris at 828-526-3556 by Thursday, April 23rd before 4:30pm.

**Ongoing**
- Church of the Incarnation and the First Presbyterian Church are collecting food items for the Highlands Emergency Council and the Food Pantry. Drop off boxes are in the Ravenel Room at First Presbyterian and in the downstairs lobby at the Church of the Incarnation. Monetary donations also accepted. Make checks out to Highlands Mountain Top Rotary.
- The Cub and Boy Scouts of America have three drop offs for worn and tattered flags. They properly retire them. Drop offs at Highlands Doors and Windows 2242 Dillard Road, the Highlands Fire Station or Highlands United Methodist Church office. Contact Phil Potts for more information 828-526-3719.

**Thurs.-Sun.**
- Movies at the Playhouse: Thurs-Sunday, 2, 5 & 8 p.m. Call 526-2685 for weekly movie.
- 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.

**First Tuesdays**
- FAMILY and Caregiver Support Group Meets: for individuals that have a friend, family member or loved one living with mental illness. Learn how peers deal with stress and emotional overload. First Tuesday of Every Month 7-8 pm. Call Donita for more info (828) 526-9510.

**2nd Thursdays**
- Sapphire Valley Needlepoint Guild meets at the Highlands Rec Park at 10 a.m. Newcomers welcomed.

**3rd Thursdays**
- Kidney Smart Classes in Franklin: Every 3rd Thursday of month, 4:30pm-6pm, Angel Medical Center, Video Conference Room, 3rd Floor, 120 Riverview Street, Contact Majestic 828-369-9474.
- Kidney Smart Classes in Sylva: Every 3rd Thursday of month, 7:30am-9am, DaVita Sylva Dialysis Center, 655 Asheville Highway, Contact Sue 828-631-0430.

**Last Fri. of each month**
- Community Coffee with Mayor Pat Taylor from 11a to noon at The Hudson Library.

**Saturdays**
- Highlands Marketplace in the vacant lot next to K-H

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### ‘Wildflower Whimsey’ set for May 8 & 9

The 3rd Annual Wildflower Whimsey, an event to benefit the Highlands Biological Foundation, will take place this May 8 and 9 at the Highlands Biological Station. Proceeds from the event will go towards the care and expansion of the Botanical Garden’s plant collection, improvements to the exhibits and programs of the Nature Center, and support for research and education conducted through the Biological Station.

Wildflower Whimsey will begin at 5:30pm on Friday, May 8 with a lecture by Nancy Adamson of the Xerces Society on protecting pollinators. Native plant auctions, a wine reception with heavy hors d’oeuvres and live music will follow. On Saturday, May 9, we will go on a wildflower walk from 10am-2pm. Participants can choose their favorite walk from five carefully selected walks when they purchase their tickets.

The Highlands Biological Station was founded by a group of amateur biologists and concerned citizens in 1927 to foster research and education focused on the rich and diverse southern Appalachian environment. The Station is part of a network of biological stations across the country that are dedicated to understanding and protecting the environment.

They are the places that scientists go to conduct their research, offering immediate access to the environment, and the facilities that they need to process their data. The Highlands Biological Station is unique in that the community has always played a critical role in its development, resulting in a natural history museum (the nature center) and a 12-acre botanical garden. Proceeds from Wildflower Whimsey will help guarantee that we can continue to maintain and improve these invaluable community assets.

**Wed. through June 3**
- **At The Bascom:** After School Art Adventure, 3:15-4:30p. To register, call Anna Alig at 787-3695.
- **Heart Healthy Exercise Class** Monday, Wednesday and Friday 8:30am-9:30am.
- **Aerobics with Tina Rogers** 8:30a-9:00a.
- **Zumba at the Rec Park at 10a. $5.**
- **Dinner at the Community Bldg.** 6:30-8:30pm.

**3rd Wednesdays**
- Family Movies at the Hudson Library at 3:15pm. Call 828-526-3031 for titles.
- **General Audience Movies** at Hudson Library at 2pm. Call 828-526-3031 for titles.
- **Thursdays**
  - **Yoga at the Rec Park** 8:15 a.m. $6 per class.
  - **Storytimes with Miss Deanna** at Hudson Library 10:40am. Open to the public.
  - **Weight Watchers support group meets every Thursday at 6pm at the Cashiers Community Center. Questions? Call Lisa 828-506-3555.**
  - **NAMI Support Group for individuals dealing with mental illness: depression, bipolar, schizophrenia, etc. and the family members of individuals dealing with these challenges from 7 – 8:15 pm. Call Donita for more info (828) 526-9510.**
  - **Sapphire Valley Needlepoint Guild meets at the Highlands Rec Park at 10 a.m. Newcomers welcomed.**
  - **3rd Thursdays**
    - **Kidney Smart Classes in Franklin: Every 3rd Thursday of month, 4:30pm-6pm, Angel Medical Center, Video Conference Room, 3rd Floor, 120 Riverview Street, Contact Majestic 828-369-9474.**
    - **Kidney Smart Classes in Sylva: Every 3rd Thursday of month, 7:30am-9am, DaVita Sylva Dialysis Center, 655 Asheville Highway, Contact Sue 828-631-0430.**

**Corbitt Brothers at Lost Hiker Fri., May 1 at 9p**

Raw, fierce, God given talent to create and perform music is what best describes The Corbitt Brothers. “Simply put, The Corbitt Brothers jam! They have a killer, hard-driving, southern rock sound with a well-rounded sound of bluesy rock, gritty southern country, and a classic flavored edge to great timeless tunes.” Their original music comes from the heart and is relevant to the times we live in. The Corbitt Brothers’ passion for playing music and entertaining is second to none. They engage a crowd with explosive energy, amazing talent and magnetism from the first song to the always requested encore.

Another major bullet in their arsenal is Isaac Corbitt on the harmonica. He has been recognized as one of the best harmonica artists in the country sharing the stage with legends like John Popper of Blues Traveler. When he lets it rip on the harmonica, crowds are electrified with the sound.

These young, self-taught musicians will be playing live at The Lost Hiker this Friday May 1st. The Show starts at 9pm and there is no cover charge. Experience their electrifying sound this weekend, and you're sure to be a fan.
• Highlands Area Events •

Founders Park on Pine Street from 8a to noon.
Sat. through May 30
• At the Bascomb: Kids’ Creation Station. 10a to noon. $5. To register, call Anna Alig at 787-2865.

Sundays
• At the Mountain Laurel Tennis Club at 4:30 pm. Multi-denominational, Interactive Bible Study and Fellowship.

Thurs., April 30
• Jo Clare Wilson, Community Educator for Four Seasons Hospice, will present “Having Your Own Say about Living and Dying: Getting the Care you Want” Thursday at 4:30 pm in the Highlands area on Saturday. Veterans 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. In Highlands: Highlands Conference Center 9am – 10:30 am Highlands Cashiers Animal Clinic. In Scaly Mountain: At the Post Office 11 am – noon Highlands Cashiers Animal Clinic.

Monday, May 4
• The Rotary Club of Highlands will sponsor their 26th Annual Rotary Golf Tournament at historic Highlands County Club.

Entrance fee is $150, with lunch and refreshments, as well as numerous prizes. All golfers are welcome for a day of golf and fun. Contact Joyce Baillargeon at (828) 526-0501 or Slocum Howland at (828) 526-9097 for an application. All proceeds support community Rotary programs.

Wed., May 6
• At the Center for Plastic Surgery with Dr. Robert Buchanan, SkinMedica from 10a to 4p. Featuring Vitalize Peel that can take years off aging. Call 828-526-3873 for information. Special Pricing for Attendees.
• Kilwins Highlands will be hosting a fundraiser for the sophomore class to benefit prom and graduation. Kilwins will donate a generous percentage of all sales made on Wednesday, between 5 and 9 P.M., to the sophomore class of Highlands School.

Fri. & Sat., May 8-9
• Wildflower Whimsy at the Highlands Biological Station.

5:30-8:30p on Friday and 10a to 2p on Saturday. This is an annual fundraiser for the Highlands Biological Station, the umbrella organization for WNCAP, the AIDS Service organization for WNC.

• See EVENTS page 14

‘Front Porch’ interviews to be shown at MC Public Library May 6 & 21, June 4 & 17

The Folk Heritage Association of Macon County is pleased to announce that in May and June 2015, a few of the interviews conducted on the ‘Front Porch’ at previous Franklin Folk Festivals will be shown at the Macon County Public Library in the meeting room. These interviews, collected since 2007, have included many members of our Community and are treasures to be shared that reflect the heritage of our area. We hope to continue to show more of these collections in the future.

The schedule for showing on each of the four days listed below includes a 2pm and repeated 6pm session so plan to attend either. The combined time to view the interviews on each of these days is just over an hour.

Wednesday, May 6 three interviews will be shared:
• Bruce Bryant was a merchant in the hardware business (Macon County Supply) and was known for knowledge and recollection about the people and history of Macon County.
• Dorothy Corbin Seagle was born and raised in the Holly Springs Community and was active in the Community Development Club there. For 20 years she worked as a teacher assistant with the Macon County Schools.
• Arnold ‘Smoky’ Burnett says he was born near the Smoky Mountains so friends called him ‘Smoky’. You will be entertained in his interview with guitar playing while hearing a couple of familiar tunes.

Thursday, May 21 two interviews will be shown
• Sue Waldroop has a great interest in genealogy and preservation of family heritage. She is a fifth generation Macon County native as her great-great grandfather brought his wife and children to Macon County and built a home on Matlock Creek in the Cowee area in 1832.
• Fred Stiles moved from Rabun County to Macon in 1948. In his interview, he refers to the memory of such events as his daughter getting the polio vaccine on a sugar cube and chores like stacking hay and churning milk.

Thursday, June 4 these interviews will be featured:
• Lloyd Allen lived most of his life in the Cowee Community. In his interview, he shares some of his experiences working in the ruby mines and the timber industry.
• Lara Sanders Chew is a great storyteller. Come listen to her stories that include how things were the same for almost a hundred years, and then two significant changes occurred - dying of chestnut trees and the railroad almost coming to Clayton.

Wednesday, June 17 will offer these interviews:
• Merritt Fouts was Principal at Cartoogechaye School for many years. He is well known for his historical newspaper – The Burningtown News, and his family has been in the cane syrup business for over 100 years.
• Margaret Ramsey has been the inspiration for the Folk Heritage Association of Macon County and the Franklin Folk Festival. Margaret was married to the late Albert L. Ramsey for 62 years. She has been an active partner in the operation of the family farm in Totla valley for most of her life.

Mountain Garden Club Plant Sale is Saturday, May 23

One of the many native plants to be found at the Mountain Garden Club plant sale this year is Phlox divaricata, also called woodland phlox. Often found in open woods and along streams, Phlox divaricata blooms in early spring with delicate 1.5 inch lavender flowers. This native plant requires little or no maintenance and is perfect for a shade garden border or the base of a large tree. Given moist, humus-rich, well-drained soil and high open shade, Phlox divaricata will naturalize, spreading as a ground cover. The attractive, fragrant flowers attract butterflies and hummingbirds.

Come early to buy this highly desirable native plant and its cousin, Phlox stolonifera, at the annual Mountain Garden Club plant sale on Saturday, May 23, Highlands Ball Park on Highway 64 from 9 a.m. until noon.
The kindergarten students of the class of 2028 and their parents visited Highlands School on Thursday, April 23, for the kindergarten registration. During the meeting, parents learned about the requirements to attend public school in North Carolina. Students enjoyed riding a school bus for the first time and also ate lunch with their parents in the school cafeteria. The photograph shows students visiting one of the K-1 classrooms.

― Photo by Ann Porter
Investing at 4,118 Ft.

The Healing Power of Real Estate

“We are now in the mountains and they are in us, kindling enthusiasm, making every nerve quiver, filling every pore and cell of us.”
— John Muir

In 1968, my grandparents built a home on top of Whiteside Mountain, using native Highlands fieldstone and California redwood. The design brings to mind the work of Frank Lloyd Wright, and even though the interior is very retro chic, the home remains supremely comfortable. The wormy chestnut interior, reclaimed from a nearby 100-year-old log cabin, gives the house sublime warmth and is a continual reminder of the early settlers on that mountaintop.

One may sit on the stone patio and gaze out across the mountains to Georgia and South Carolina. Lakes sparkle in the distance like mica on a mountain trail. The view of the purple and blue mountain layers recalls the peaceful, expansive view of the open sea meeting the horizon, stretching as far as the eye can see. Peregrine falcons catch thermals rising from the valley floor and soar overhead. Looking up to the summit, you can see an old-growth red oak forest; trunks twisted by strong winds and years of ice storms. Incredible flora abounds: wild sarsaparilla, white wood aster, serviceberry, Carolina rhododendron, and spikemoss.

Regardless of the time of year, the air has a crisp note — clean and sweet. Like the fresh water coming from the kitchen faucet, you cannot get your fill. Other than the chorus of birds and the occasional rustling of leaves from breezes or small animals, there is an absolute silence. The majestic setting wraps around your shoulders like a handmade shawl, full of the love from the hand and heart of the creator.

When I am in this setting — at this house — I am a million miles from the every day. The clamor of schedules, over doing, obligations, and robust interaction with clients and colleagues simply slips away from my soul and lands in a soft heap at my ankles. It is here that I think with a fresh mind, find perspective, recharge, and receive divine downloads. No matter the quandary, I can ascend to the Whiteside house with the confidence that clarity is already in escrow, waiting for me to claim it.

I am continually mesmerized by similar stories from clients who have made Highlands their seasonal or full-time residence. Stories of childhoods spent in family summer homes in these mountains with parents and grandparents. Stories of endless afternoons spent salamander and crawfish hunting, heavenly nights on sleeping porches, misty mornings on fern-laden trails, native azalea on golf fairways, bare feet across the lawn, and a freedom afforded to explore and discover. As adults, they now share those experiences with their own children and as children themselves, anew. The clock turns back not only in memory, but also in both spirit and body. And no matter how long it has been since one were here, the rejuvenation is immediate and complete as if one were here only yesterday.

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

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Highlands, NC 28741

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Entrance is on the R

www.highlandsnchomesites.com

828-508-9952
...DIRECTV continued from page 1

According to the court transcripts, Judge Reidinger said what is unusual about this case is that gain does not seem to have a commensurate loss on the other side of the ledger.

“In other words, the loss to DirecTV, it is clear, is nowhere near that $150,000 and that plays into the seriousness of the offense, but it is important that the defendant and any others understand that you are merely being too clever by half to try to figure out a scheme whereby you gain unjustly even though the person from whom you gain is not suffering a loss. This is nonetheless a fraud,” he said.

Judge Reidinger didn’t demand restitution to DirecTV, but through the civil courts DirecTV could attempt to recoup money it believes it lost through Bond’s scheme.

Bond entered into a contract with DirecTV for several residential accounts to acquire specific stations and then sold his customers the viewing package from 2003 to 2011.

In other words, instead of entering into a commercial contract with DirecTV, he opened residential accounts which are substantially less expensive and then profited by reselling the stations to his clients in the Highlands area.

The DirecTV spokesperson said fraudulently retransmitting TV signals is a matter that is taken very seriously by both DirecTV and the federal courts, as indicated by the severity of the penalties imposed in this case. “An analysis of the seriousness shows that this is serious. It is serious enough to be a basis for causing the defendant to forfeit and disgorge his profit, $149,697.89, and to impose upon the defendant a fine; to place him on probation to make certain that he does not do something like this ever again,” said Judge Reidinger in the transcript. “I believe that all of those factors are sufficient to deter— to deter not only this defendant but to deter anyone else who may contemplate this sort of scheme. Any profit that you get, even though it may not be at the expense of another, if it is an unjust enrichment it will be disgorged. Not only will be disgorged but there will be something layered on top of that in the form of a fine and you will have somebody looking over your shoulder very carefully for quite a while. I hope that is a sufficient deterrence.”

DirecTV said this sort of fraudulent activity will not be tolerated. “We will continue to work with local, state and federal authorities to pursue anyone who may be broadcasting DirecTV signals without our authorization,” they said in an email to Highlands Newspaper.

Probation is the suspension of a jail sentence that allows a person convicted of a crime a chance to remain in the community, instead of going to jail. Probation requires that certain court-ordered rules and conditions are followed under the supervision of a probation officer.

As stated in the probation document, “Bond shall comply with the standard conditions that have been adopted by this court and any additional conditions ordered reads the terms.”

Bond’s probation conditions follow:

1. The defendant shall not commit another federal, state, or local crime.
2. The defendant shall refrain from possessing a firearm, destructive device, or other dangerous weapon.
3. The defendant shall pay any financial obligation imposed by this judgment remaining unpaid as of the commencement of the sentence of probation or the term of supervised release on a schedule to be established by the Court.
4. The defendant shall provide access to any personal or business financial information as requested by the probation officer.
5. The defendant shall not acquire any new lines of credit unless authorized to do so in advance by the probation officer.
6. The defendant shall not leave the Western District of North Carolina without the permission of the Court or probation officer.
7. The defendant shall report to the probation officer in a manner and frequency directed by the court or probation officer.
8. A defendant on supervised release shall report in person to the probation officer in the district to which he or she is released within 72 hours of release from custody of the Bureau of Prisons.
9. The defendant shall answer truthfully all inquiries by the probation officer and follow the instructions of the probation officer.
10. The defendant shall support his or her dependents and meet other family responsibilities.
11. The defendant shall work regularly at a lawful occupation unless excused by the probation officer.
12. The defendant shall notify the probation officer within 72 hours of any change in residence or employment.
13. The defendant shall refrain from excessive use of alcohol and shall not unlawfully purchase, possess, use, distribute or administer any narcotic or other controlled substance, or any paraphernalia related to such substances, except as duly prescribed by a licensed physician.
14. The defendant shall participate in a program of testing and treatment or both for substance abuse if directed to do so by the probation officer, until such time as the defendant is released from the program by the probation officer; provided, however, that defendant shall submit to a drug test within 15 days of release on probation or supervised release and at least two periodic drug tests thereafter for use of any controlled substance, subject to the provisions of 18:3563(a)(5) or 18:3583(d), respectively; The defendant shall refrain from obstructing or attempting to obstruct or tamper, in any fashion, with the efficiency and accuracy of any prohibited substance testing or monitoring which is (are) required as a condition of supervision.
15. The defendant shall not frequent places where controlled substances are illegally sold, used, distributed, or administered.
16. The defendant shall not associate with any persons engaged in criminal activity, and shall not associate with any person convicted of a felony unless granted permission to do so by the probation officer.
17. The defendant shall submit his person, residence, vehicle, and/or any computer system including computer data storage media, or any electronic device capable of storing, retrieving, and/or accessing data to which they have access or control, to a search, from time to time, conducted by any U.S. Probation Officer and such other law enforcement personnel as the probation officer may deem advisable, without a warrant. The defendant shall warn other residents or occupants that such premises or vehicle may be subject to searches pursuant to this condition.
18. The defendant shall permit a probation officer to visit him or her at any time at home or elsewhere and shall permit confiscation of any contraband observed by the probation officer.
19. The defendant shall notify the probation officer within 72 hours of defendant’s being arrested or questioned by a law enforcement officer.
20. The defendant shall not enter into any agreement to act as an informer or a special agent of a law enforcement agency without the permission of the Court.
21. As directed by the probation officer, the defendant shall notify third parties of risks that may be occasioned by the defendant’s criminal record or personal history or characteristics, and shall permit the probation officer to make such notifications and to confirm the defendant’s compliance with such notification requirements.
22. If the instant offense or any prohibited substance testing or monitoring which is (are) required as a condition of supervision.

With the efficiency and accuracy of any prohibited substance testing or monitoring which is (are) required as a condition of supervision.

With the efficiency and accuracy of any prohibited substance testing or monitoring which is (are) required as a condition of supervision.
Growing up, Commissioner Jim Tate would go to church with his family on Sunday morning, then break away into the Georgia forest to hunt. Because of his rooted cultural connection and fond memories of the practice, Tate cast the only opposing vote on the board of commissioners last week to send a letter to state representatives asking them not to pass a bill that would allow hunting on Sunday throughout the state.

“I personally believe that Sunday hunting should be allowed,” said Commissioner Tate. “In my opinion, it is an activity and personal property right just like playing golf or shooting skeet is. I do not understand how you can be allowed to do either of these activities or many others on a Sunday, but you are not allowed to hunt? There is also the argument that can be made that if you have a regular work week (Monday through Friday), then it only allows you one day to hunt.”

Currently, North Carolina is one of 11 states in the country that prohibits Sunday hunting, something Tate would like to see changed.

“Sunday hunting is presently allowed in all, but 11 states with the majority being in the Northeast,” said Tate. “I think it would be great if Sunday hunting was allowed; it would be beneficial to Macon County.”

Senator Jim Davis, who is facing the vote on Senate Bill 658, which calls for Sunday hunting to be allowed throughout the state, without lifting the ban for just private landowners, said when and if the vote is called for in the Senate, he would be falling in line with commissioners in opposing the bill.

The North Carolina Wildlife Commission has come out in support of the house bill, citing economic benefits for the state and increased opportunities to enjoy North Carolina’s rich outdoor heritage.

In the commissioners’ letter sent to both Senator Davis and Rep. Roger West, the board says, “In short, the Macon County Commissioners do not believe that Sunday hunting is in the best interests of the citizens of Macon County or the State of North Carolina.”

Tuesday night the bill passed in the House 83-35. It now moves to the Senate.
The definition of sin has changed

The concept of sin has not completely disappeared from our culture, but the actions that are considered sinful have changed, and the definition of sin is changing. Americans still talk about evil and sin – and some of these are very important. But in our transformation of what sin is, we are on the verge of losing a real sense of personal sin. Sadly, sin is often thought of in terms of “what the other side believes” politically or on the conservative-liberal social spectrum. Ross Douthat, columnist for the New York Times introduced four ways that sin has changed in our present culture, and I will comment on each.

First, there has occurred a “structuralization of ideas of sin.” On many campuses today and in the media you hear talk of structural evils that affect society as a whole, such as racism, sexism, homophobia, human trafficking, the “pornification” of culture, etc. These issues have religious and constitutional roots, and are important. But they have given rise to a “hyper scrutiny of language” and “political correctness.” Any nuanced disagreement from the acceptable public discourse as well as the new guidelines of tolerance and progressive definitions of sin will quickly get you marginalized as bigot, racist, homophobic, or a sexist “Bible thumper.” Refuse to give ground on the Biblical ideas of marriage, the beginning of life, and justice, and suddenly you are the sinner. You are the great evil plaguing our world!

Second, Douthat has noted that sin has changed to concerns about physical health, spiritual health and overall human flourishing. Today, we actually hear people talking about diet, physical health and mental well-being in a moralistic way. Governments are actually getting into the business of trying to right the evils of society like obesity, proper diets, unwanted pregnancies, and guarding our emotional well-being by passing laws that are for our best and will keep us from sin and our bad choices – at least as the government defines it.

They are being “moral” without being guided by the foundation of our morals and absolutes – the Word of God. They are transforming the definitions of sin.

Third, sin has become a public issue – only those things that most of us can agree upon. Simply, we have democratized sin and formed a consensus on those things that we can commonly agree upon to be outraged by while ignoring our own personal, interpersonal and everyday sins. This way, sin doesn’t touch us – it’s out there. ISIS is evil – and they are! But my own greed, lust, and hypocrisy hurt no one, and are therefore less than sinful.

And last, Douthat feels that we have lost not so much a sense of sin, but possibly a sense of penance. Citing theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer’s notion of “cheap grace,” he asks us to consider that we keep ourselves from personal sin while ignoring our own personal, interpersonal and everyday sins. This way, sin doesn’t touch us – it’s out there.
The Highlands Police log entries from April 12. Only the names of persons arrested, issued a Class-3 misdemeanor or public officials have been used.

April 12
• At 12:40 p.m., officers responded to a call about a breaking and entering at an office on Carolina Way where someone entered the office and closed the blinds.

April 17
• At 7:30 a.m., officers responded to a two-vehicle accident on NC 106 near Munger Lane.
• At 8:50 a.m., officers responded to a two-vehicle accident on US 64 west near Holt Knob Road.

April 21
• At 11:05 a.m., officers responded to a two-vehicle accident on Horsecove Road near Gibson Road.

April 23
• At 10:55 a.m., officers responded to a two-vehicle accident on US 64 east near Pine Street.

April 24
• At 11:30 a.m., officers responded to a car about a bear attempting to break glass to gain entry into the garage at a residence on Sagee Drive.

April 26
• At 3 p.m., officers responded to a report of a larceny on the Highlands Greenway Trail off Bowery Road where a chainsaws stuck in a tree were taken.

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

April 17
• At 6:51 a.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at the Cul-sasaja Club.

April 20
• At 8:14 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Mack Wilson Road.

April 21
• At 11:24 a.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at the Cul-sasaja Club.
• At 3:53 p.m. the dept. was first-responders to a residence on S. 5th. Street.

April 23.
• At 9:53 a.m., the dept. responded to a motor vehicle accident on US 64 west.
• At 10:48 a.m., the dept. was first-responders on Main Street.

• At 10:55 a.m., the dept. was first-responders on Main Street.
• At 9:38 p.m., the dept. was first-responders on Main Street.

...SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING
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grace” – or forgiveness without repentance – many in the changing public square recognize that certain actions are wrong, but don’t reach the depths of sinful, and therefore don’t require repentance. I make mistakes or I have some flaws, but I’m not a really bad person. And under my new definition of sin, penance is rarely if ever required. I just need tolerance and acceptance from others.

Today’s notions of sin have changed. But let us never forget, God’s definition of sin and the standard by which we are judged has not and never will change. Sin is sin, always has been and always will be, because God changes not. What is so hard to accept as a Christian today is that to criticize sinful practices and lifestyle makes you the sinner. But let God be true, and all others liars.

...DIRECTV continued from page 16

 offense was committed on or after 4/24/96, the defendant shall notify the probation officer of any material changes in defendant’s economic circumstances which may affect the defendant’s ability to pay any monetary penalty.

23. If home confinement (home detention, home incarceration or curfew) is included you may be required to pay all or part of the cost of the electronic monitoring or other location verification system program based upon your ability to pay as determined by the probation officer.

24. The defendant shall cooperate in the collection of DNA as directed by the probation officer.

25. The defendant shall participate in transitional support services under the guidance and supervision of the U.S. Probation Officer. The defendant shall remain in the services until satisfactorily discharged by the service provider and/or with the approval of the U.S. Probation Officer.

26. Throughout the period of supervision the probation officer shall monitor the defendant’s economic circumstances and shall report to the court, with recommendations as warranted, any material changes that affect the defendant’s ability to pay any court-ordered penalties.

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While the final details and wording are still being worked out, the NCACC leaders developed a mission statement proclaiming the organization’s intent of supporting and promoting the well-being of all North Carolina counties through advocacy, education, research, and member services.

Commissioners also hashed out the importance of establishing the association’s strategic goals, which range from promoting the positive impacts county government has on the lives of citizens as well as the role the association plans in state politics, to promising to enhance leadership capabilities of county officials and to create development opportunities for state leaders.

Highlands Mayor Patrick Taylor was on hand to welcome the group to Macon County on Thursday.

“Meetings like this allow area elected officials to meet and network with other colleagues from across the state,” said Taylor, who encouraged the group to come back and visit Highlands next chance they get. “It also promotes awareness of this beautiful part of North Carolina that is often overlooked because we are at the very western tip of a horizontally long state.”

County Manager Derek Roland, who met with the association throughout the visit, not only touted the economic benefit the group had on the county, but expressed his gratitude for the work the leaders did for the state.

“I feel the greatest benefit for Macon County came in the work performed by the NCACC while it was here. Led by Commissioner Beale, the NCACC advocates for county government before the executive, legislative and judicial branches of state government,” said County Manager Roland. “This organization is one of the most active and successful statewide organizations in the nation. What I find most impressive about this group is its ability to sit down and put partisanship aside when discussing solutions to real problems counties across the state are facing today.”

Commissioner Jim Tate, who welcomed the association during a dinner Thursday night at Holly Springs Baptist Church, commended the group for its foresight and its leadership across the state.

“Communication is probably the most important aspect of governing, and with the NCACC being present in our county, it allowed us to be vocal and to bring awareness of the problems and challenges that we face as commissioners in a mountain community, such as the travel time between our schools and the distance from the services that Raleigh can provide,” Tate said. “Each of the members present was able to see firsthand that all North Carolina counties are not equal and that special provisions can and should be made when topography is a hindrance. We are very fortunate that Commissioner [Ronnie] Beale has taken the time to lead the NCACC and to bring awareness and support for not only Macon County, but for all of Western NC.”

Congressman Mark Meadows agreed.

“The evening was a tremendous honor for western North Carolina, and a real delight for me personally,” he said. “To be able to hear from elected officials from all over the state gave me firsthand knowledge of the challenges that so many of our county governments face each and every day. It was also a testimony to the leadership of our county elected officials.

“We were able to discuss the importance of supporting our law enforcement and first responders as well as our local schools -- something that is near and dear to my heart and a priority that I share with the Macon County board.”

After remarks from Congressman Mark Meadows welcoming the commissioners to western North Carolina, Executive Director of the NCACC Kevin Leonard presented Commissioner Beale and the rest of the board with a plaque recognizing the historical meeting.

“At the reception, President Beale received a plaque commemorating the meeting as the ‘farthest west the NCACC Board has ever met since the organization was founded in 1908,’” said County Manager Roland. “That really brought home to me how monumental this meeting was for Macon County. We are fortunate to have a sitting county commissioner serving as president of this organization. Long after his presidency is over, Macon County citizens can rest assured that every county across the state and every legislator in Raleigh will remember who we are.

As County Manager of Macon County, I would like to personally thank Commissioner Beale for his hard work and dedication to the citizens of this great county.”
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