

Highlands Newspaper

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Thurs., Feb. 12, 2015

State mandated changes to affect MC property owners

By Merritt N. Shaw

A presentation of the 2014 State of the County Health Report at the MC Health Dept. Board meeting last month revealed some regulation changes that will affect property owners

in Macon County.

The changes included fee increases for lead testing in well water, mandatory Carbon Monoxide detectors for all lodging facilities and new regulations on Construction Authorization Permits

for new and upgrade construction of on-site waste water septic systems.

Kyle Jennings, an Environmental Health Specialist for Macon County, broke the news about the new procedures for construc-

tion authorization permits.

"This department has been issuing Improvement Permits (IP) and Construction Authorizations (CA) together and allowing both permits to stay valid upon the

• See **CHANGES** page 8

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Report Cards:

9 of WNC's 235 public schools earn As

Highlands School earns B; Principal Brian Jetter & MC Superintendent Chris Baldwin weigh in

By Angie Newsome
Carolina Public Press

Last Thursday, the state Department of Public Instruction released school-wide letter grades for every public school – which includes charter schools – located in North Carolina. Known as the School Performance Grade, the A-F letter grades were based largely on student achievement, which makes up 80 percent of the grade. Student growth comprised the remaining 20 percent.

It is the first time the state's educational agency has issued letter-based grades to the public schools. The grades showed that, overall, more than half of North Carolina's more than 2,400 public schools earned a grade of C, D or F for the 2013-2014 school year. The data also showed that 132 North Carolina schools earned an A — the highest grade

possible. More schools — 146 exactly — earned an F, which is the lowest grade possible.

Carolina Public Press analyzed the grades for all public schools located in the 18 western-most counties of the state. The results showed that among the region's 235 schools, 33 percent earned a grade of A or B. Both Haywood and Henderson counties were home to two schools earning an A grade — the most located in any single school system. Many of the schools earning As were early college programs.

However, 13 of the region's 20 school systems had no schools earning an A at all. The only school earning an F in Western North Carolina was a charter school located in Avery County.

(For the purpose of this regional analysis, all charter schools

• See **SCHOOLS** page 7



Dotson wins 2 Emmys in Nashville

WRAL-TV News Producer Miranda Dotson, a 2004 graduate of Highlands School, won two Emmys at the Midsouth Chapter of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences awards ceremony in Nashville,

TN held Sat., Jan. 31.

A previous Emmy Award winner, Dotson won in the Breaking News category for her coverage of the major snowstorm that hit in February 2014 which grid-

• See **DOTSON** page 10

Hopefully, 'station' will keep semis off Gorge Rd.

By Merritt N. Shaw

There's not a citizen in Highlands who hasn't experienced the heart wrenching experience of meeting a tractor-trailer semi on the snaky part of the Cullasaja Gorge road.

Following decades of complaints and reports of near-misses, NC-DOT has begun construction on an information station and truck turn around to divert four axle (and larger) trucks from traveling to Highlands on the Cullasaja Gorge road.

The information and turn around station will be on the south side of the Highlands Road and west side of Hiland

• See **GORGE** page 10

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• THE PLATEAU'S POSITION •

• MAYOR ON DUTY •

Let's be responsible and prepare for the bears

Those messy bears scatter trash all over town. Folks ask me when am I going to do something, and why don't I use idle town employees to clean up.

The bears are about to stir and head into town. Maybe I should issue a mayoral proclamation declaring Highlands as a "bear free zone." I could get the police to ride around with a loud speaker ordering by declaration of the mayor for all bears to leave Highlands, or face arrest and prosecution. I can see it now, a bear handcuffed, in the back police car headed for the Macon County Detention Center. Just a few prosecutions and they would get the message. Garbage marauders will not be tolerated in Highlands!

By the way, town workers have daily duties and assignments. Could our workers on the sanitation trucks pick up the bear trash? The problem is so wide spread, they could spend a large part of their workday picking up bear trash and not completing their daily routes. Then folks would be calling about trash not being picked up on time.

Or, we could all work together to embrace practices that discourage bears from making garbage raids in town. At

our home, we keep our garbage bags in the house until the trash pickup day. Nevertheless, I recently decided to build a bear resistant garbage can holder. I probably over engineered it, and spent about \$200 on heavy wood, bolts, bars and hardware to insure those bears can't get our trash. Bears have even come out of the woods on pickup days to steal my trash. A few years ago I discovered they had created a garbage den in an area that was hidden from sight on our property. What a huge mess.

A key feature on my bear resistant trash holder is a short chain with snap link. It is the same device on the modified commercial trash containers in town. The bears can't operate that little snap link so it foils their trash thievery.

On my Mayor's Walk a couple of Tuesdays ago, Thomas Craig and I walked down Church Street. We inspected a commercial



Highlands Mayor
Patrick Taylor

dumpster that the town had gone to the expense of modifying with a small, light weight door lid and the security chain with the snap link. I explained it was bear proof! I told him that the town is in the process of modifying all the commercial dumpsters.

As we were marveling at the system, I noticed the dumpster lid was open. A young woman from a nearby eating establishment came up, threw a bag in the dumpster and turned to walk away. I asked her if she was going

to close and secure the lid? Her reply was no, that someone on the night shift would probably do it. She looked puzzled that I would ask such a question.

This incident illustrates the problem. Are the bears the only culprits? Could the failure to use reasonable practices in securing our trash make us a big part of the problem, too? Given the opportunity, bears will take advantage of human negligence.

And, is it really the responsibility of the town workers to clean up the mess, or would that practice simply enable more irresponsible behavior? Securing garbage from bears should be a community responsibility for us all.

Some of our business people are very responsible. But, there are folks who use their rented business dumpsters without permission. Some of these "dumpster abusers" are so lazy they will just throw their household garbage bags next to, or on top of a closed dumpster.

Bears appreciate the convenience, but business owners who have paid for the service don't. These dumpster abusers must have been taught they are entitled to put their garbage anywhere they want. My parents taught me that using something you didn't pay for is the same as stealing! I'm old fashioned about that kind of thing.

Let's all be responsible trash managers for the sake of the bears and our town.

I still do a Mayor's Walk every Tuesday at 4:30. Meet me in front of Town Hall.

• LETTERS •

Highlands is lucky to have a hospital

Dear Editor,

I went to the hospital recently to visit a real friend of Highlands and of mine, and it occurred to me to think about what it would be like if we did not have a hospital here. So many communities, communities way larger than ours, are losing their small regional hospitals while we are still holding on to ours.

The hospital is not the same as it was when I got here, and surely it has had, and is having challenges, but I am of the belief we are better with it than without it. And if we are going to have a hospital, keep the hospital, then the community has to and needs to get behind it.

We are far better with it than without it.

Ricky Siegel
Highlands

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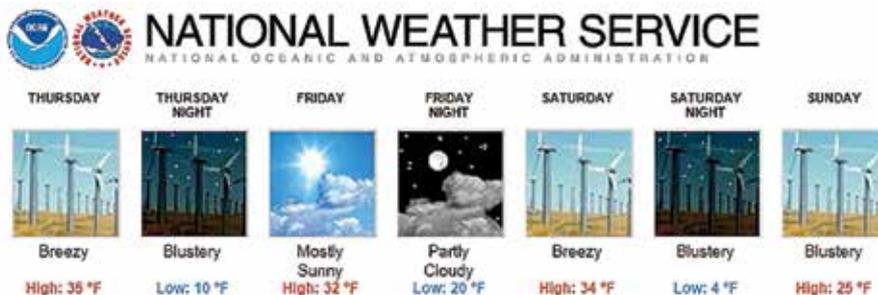
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Letter Policy:

We reserve the right to reject or edit letters-to-the-editor. No anonymous letters will be accepted. Views expressed are not necessarily those of Highlands Newspaper.

• OBITUARIES •

Ruth Ritz McDivitt

Ruth Ritz McDivitt, age 92, of Highlands, NC, passed away Monday, February 2, 2015. She was born in Mt. Vernon, Ohio, the daughter of the late Russell and Esletla E. Baldwin Levering. She was married first to Lloyd E. Ritz who died in 1977 and second to Andrew McDivitt, who died in 2000.

Mrs. McDivitt was a homemaker and loved to play golf and bridge, she was a pink lady volunteer for several years at Middletown Hospital in Middletown, Ohio. She was a member of Browns Run Country Club in Middletown, Ohio a member of Wildcat Cliffs Country Club in Highlands, and a member of Highlands First United Methodist Church.

She is survived by her son Richard B. Ritz and his wife Sherri of Hendersonville, NC. She was preceded in death by a son, David B. Ritz.

Graveside services will be held later in New York.

In lieu of flowers memorial donations may be made to Highlands United Methodist Church, PO Box 1959, Highlands, NC 28741.

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

Stephen W. Ackerman, Jr.,

Stephen W. Ackerman, Jr., died at the age of 86 in Highlands, NC on February 7, 2015. He was born in Hawaii on January 26, 1929, and lived most of his adult life in Atlanta, GA before retiring to Highlands.

Steve went to the US Military Academy at West Point like his father and grandfather before him. After completing his military duty he joined the Atlanta interior design firm of Tigner Interiors and over time became its owner and principal designer. He was noted for his love of and skillful use of color. He served as President of the Georgia Chapter of the American Society of Interior Designers and was the first Georgian to be elected to the College of Fellows of the American Society of Inte-



rior Designers, the Society's highest honor bestowed on less than one percent of the ASID membership.

He is survived by his life partner of 51 years, Charles K. Hammock. Steve loved animals, especially dogs and most of all daschunds. Several beloved daschunds shared his life. A memorial service will be held at the Episcopal Church of the Incarnation in

Highlands, NC at 11 am on Friday, February 13, 2015.

In lieu of flowers please send donations to the Cashiers-Highlands Humane Society, 200 Gable Street, Cashiers, NC 28717. Bryant-Grant Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements. Online condolences may be made at www.bryantgrantfuneralhome.com.

Thomas Roland Brooks

Thomas Roland Brooks (Tommy) 44, of New York City, NY (formerly of Highlands, NC) passed away peacefully in his sleep on Friday, February 6, 2015.

Thomas was the son of Larry Brooks of Franklin and the late Janice Bowman Brooks. Thomas studied at UNC-Wilmington and Johnson and Wales in Charleston, SC. He was however, most gifted at design, and partnered in several businesses in this field.

He had a special place in his heart for animals as well as donating his time and talent to various other charitable organizations. Thomas was passionate, gifted, and kind. He will be greatly missed by his beloved family and friends fortunate enough to have been part of his life.

He leaves behind his father and stepmother Paula, brothers Mark and Ross, step-sister Melissa Chambers, step-brother Greg Worley, Aunts Debra Lamb, Stephanie Bowman and Ruth Sessions. We honor Thomas because of his spirit of encouraging the gifts that make each of us special, the eternal mystery and extraordinary beauty of the human heart. A service will be held in Highlands, NC at a later date.

Donations may be made in his honor to one's favorite charities, God's Love We Deliver, <https://www.glwd.org/>.

Courtesy of Bryant-Grant Funeral Home.



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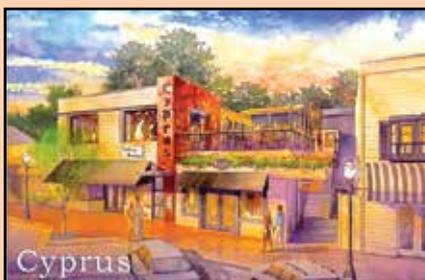
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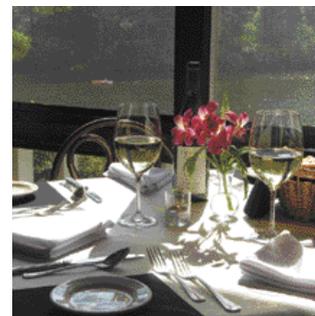
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• TELL TALES •

The latest from Elmer Schmidlap

Bob found Elmer in his rocking chair on the porch, sipping some moonshine again.

"Aw, come on up, Sonny, get on a spell. Want some hooch?"

Don't mind if I do, Sir. Bob sat in the other rocker and poured himself some hooch.

"Whatcha got on your little brain today, sonny?"

Well, you know all the talk about bringing equality and spreading the wealth around.

It's gotten to be a political football lately.

"Yeah, I know. I heard someone call it Envy Economics."

Yes, sir, something like Peter Pan Politics. You got any thoughts on it?

"Yeah, got a couple, I reckon. Anyway, when you are trying to get votes, all you have to do is promise to make everybody rich, even if they don't want to work. Don't matter whether you really can or not, just promise and people follow right in line with you."

In other words, teaching people to be envious of folks who earn more money?

"Right, sonny, and you realize envy is one of the Seven Deadly Sins but they don't care a bit about that. They just want people's votes and will stoop to anything to get it. They know full well there ain't goin' to be no way we can take money from rich folks and still make our economy work. It kills jobs and countries that have tried it stagnate and fall behind."

I remember when Hillary made the stupid statement that companies don't provide jobs.

"She was either nutty as a fruit cake or she had tee many Martooni's when she said that. On the other hand, maybe she sees the government doing all the hiring and owning all the companies. That's the way Communism works and we all know how that bombed in the old Soviet Union. Nobody got paid and nobody worked. If you were one of the political elite, you made a lot of money and your kids went to college. Everybody else worked at jobs they were told to work at, sort of slavery system. Anyway, are we ready for a Hillary/Bill administration?"

Did you hear about Bill Clinton attending a meeting on helping the middle class in Davos, Switzerland?

"Oh yeah, I heard about that. Some 1700 private jets flew in with a load of big



Bob Wilson

brains. One billionaire spoke of the plight of the middle class. How the heck would he know? The problem is that some of the super-rich think that making a lot of money gives them enough intelligence to tell us lower class folks how to live our lives when they should be trying to help folks pull themselves up, not giving hand-outs."

I suppose you heard about the \$60,000 platinum watch Clinton was wearing?

"I wear a 30-dollar Timex, just for the record, sonny. But yeah, something snaps in people who think they are world leaders and have to regulate the rest of us poor dogs. Those folks have the idea that all you have to do is make yet another law to change the way things are. Sonny, you ain't going to change human nature. Some folks got ambition, some don't and there ain't nuthin' you can do to change that."

Is there anything we can do for a kid that drops out of school, gets married, has kids and can't support himself or his family?

"Not much, sonny. And the problem is he'll grow up being envious and jealous of the kids he went to school with who managed to make better lives for themselves. But, you know sumpin, the amazing thing is that many of the folks who became very successful barely made it through high school. They had a talent and all the government in the world can't bring you talent."

And, they obviously had ambition and gumption to get off their butts.

"Right now, politicians keep yapping about how unfair life is and all this accomplishes is teaching people to be jealous of others. I've never seen a more divisive administration running this government. Tax the companies and the rich too much and our economy slows and folks lose their jobs. It's that simple. And, should our economy collapse entirely, we will be set up for a government take-over of our industry and then you end up with something like Cuba or Venezuela has. And who wants that?"

"Scuse me, Elmer, cell phone call. Yes dear, right away dear. Sorry Elmer, gotta leave. Thanks for the hooch. See you soon.

• If Adam and Eve were still on this planet, he'd probably ask Adam if he has a navel and Bob loves to aggravate the left by asking too many questions.

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Weak portion of US 64 at Big Creek gets permanent fix

A few weeks ago, a 50+ year-old rusted metal culvert pipe underneath US 64 west at Big Creek gave way causing a portion of the road to collapse. Traffic was delayed while NC-DOT made a temporary patch.

This past week, motorists were delayed again while NC-DOT worked on a permanent solution to the problem.

“The NC-DOT and its contractor are sealing off the ends of the old metal culvert by driving ‘sheet piles’ which will seal each end. Next, they will pour concrete into the pipe to fill it, then the pipe will be left abandoned. Filled with concrete, the pipe will not collapse in the future,” said Town Engineer Lamar Nix.

– Photo by Kim Lewicki



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...SCHOOLS continued from page 1

Macon County 2013-2014 School Performance Grade, Growth Status

School Name	SPG Grade	Reading SPG Grade	Math SPG Grade	EVAAS Growth Status	Overall Achievement Score
Cartoogechaye Elementary	C	C	B	Met	63
East Franklin Elementary	C	C	C	Not Met	58
Franklin High	B			Exceeded	70
Highlands School	B	B	C	Exceeded	69
Iotia Valley Elementary	C	C	C	Met	58
Macon Early College High School	B			Met	76
Macon Middle School	C	C	D	Met	56
Mountain View Intermediate	C	C	C	Exceeded	54
Nantahala School	C	C	C	Exceeded	60
South Macon Elementary	C	C	C	Exceeded	63
Union Academy	N/A	N/A	N/A		

Source: N.C. Department of Public Instruction. Angie Newsome/Carolina Public Press

NOTE: N/A or I (Insufficient data) or a blank cell indicates a school does not have tested grades/sufficient data for reporting.

We are pleased with the results of the new School Report cards. Highlands School, Franklin High School and Macon Early College all scored above average on the new instrument. Our other schools were rated as average. These results were based only upon the results of two tests at the elementary level, reading and math. The middle school results also included science test results while the high school model looked at EOC scores, ACT results, graduation rate, math rigor, and WorkKeys scores. All models counted proficiency (80%) and growth (20%). We expect to see steady improvement on the school report cards as our teachers and students become more familiar with the curriculum and exams. I also expect to see some changes in the school report cards and how the grades are determined that will benefit our schools.

– Superintendent Dr. Chris Baldwin

were grouped together, though they operate independent of one another.)

Back Story: 2013–14 School Performance Grades (A–F) for North Carolina Public Schools

Statistical Summary of Results

On September 4, 2014, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction released school, district, and state accountability results for end-of-grade (EOG) and end-of-course (EOC) assessments administered in the 2013–14 school year. In addition, beginning with the 2013–14 school year data, per legislation (G.S. §115C-83.15) passed during the 2013 long session of the North Carolina General Assembly, School Performance Grades (A–F) based on test scores, and for high schools additional indicators that measure college-and-career readiness, are being reported.

The School Performance Grades are based on student achievement (80%) and growth (20%). The indicators and the proficiency standard or benchmark used for achievement include:

1. Annual end-of-grade (EOG) mathematics and reading assessments in grades 3–8 and science assessments in grades 5 and 8 (Level 3 and above)

2. Annual end-of-course (EOC) assessments in Math I, Biology, and English II (Level 3 and above)

3. The percentage of graduates who complete Math III, Algebra II, or Integrated Math III with a passing grade

4. The percentage of grade 11 students who achieve the minimum score required for admission into a constituent institution of The University of North Carolina on The ACT (composite score of 17)

5. The percentage of graduates identified as Career and Technical Education concentrators who meet the Silver Certificate or higher on the ACT WorkKeys assessment

6. The percentage of students who graduate within four years of entering high school (Standard [4-Year] Cohort Graduation Rate)

The EVAAS model, which provides the growth measure, uses current and previous student test data to determine whether schools are maintaining or increasing student achievement from one year to the next. In the event that a school does not have a Growth Score, only the School Achievement Score is used to calculate the Performance Score. For the final Performance Score and Grade, if a school's growth designation is Meets or Exceeds Expected Growth, but the inclusion of the school's Growth Score reduces the school's Performance Score and Grade, the School Achievement Score only may be used for

the Performance Score and Grade. For 2013–14, there were seven (7) schools that met this exception, and growth was not included in their final grades.

For 2013–14, the grade designations are set on a 15 point scale as follows:

A = 85–100; B = 70–84; C = 55–69; D = 40–54; F = 39 or Less

This report provides the state-level distribution of School Performance Grades, including the reading and mathematics grades for the K–8 schools and secondary analyses on growth, school type, poverty, and State Board of Education regions.

Highlands School Principal Jetter weighs in

Highlands School Principal Brian Jetter, questions the way the state figures the grades and believes these report card grades are the beginning of the battle between “student proficiency” and “student growth.” The state’s grades are based on 80% student proficiency and 20% student growth.

“Student proficiency is measuring a student’s knowledge against a common standard at one point in time: grade 3 reading test; grade 7 math test; end of biology class test. In which case, everybody in a class is measured against the same standard at the same time. If the student doesn’t meet the standard at that moment in time (that moment when he takes the test), he is not proficient.

“If all students began school with the exact same knowledge and skills, and made progress at the same rate in all subjects, then doing this moment-in-time testing (measuring) would be fine. However, all students do NOT start school with the exact same knowledge base, nor do they progress in all subjects at the same speed. Therefore, each student will reach ‘proficiency’ at a different moment in time.

“In addition, this grade is for the school. A school’s “purpose” is to take a student from where he was academically when he entered the school to where he can reach his maximum potential academically before he leaves the school. That is known as student growth. It happens to each student individually, at different rates, and with different ceilings in different subjects.

“I believe that student growth is a school’s purpose. Even the state is confused about growth because it says that because we earned a B, we ‘exceeded academic growth’ as compared to the state! Yet, 80% of the grade was from proficiency, not growth!

“I believe the state should be measur-

ing schools primarily on their students’ growth. Growth should count 80% and proficiency should count 20% when figuring a school’s grade – not 80% student proficiency and 20% growth -- if the grade is supposed to measure the effectiveness of the school, and the school’s academic growth in comparison to the state.

“By the way, Highlands School’s Achievement Score, which is totally based on Proficiency is 69. It counts 80% of our grade. Our Growth score is 89.4, and it only counts 20% of our grade.

“I would say that parents are FAR more interested in how much a school helps their child GROW during that child’s years in the school, than in what that child knows about a standard in a moment-in-time compared to other students!” he said.

Using the state’s new criteria, Jetter gave reasons why Highlands School is exceeding the state in academic growth.

“We have really good teachers that focus on increasing student academic achievement. To do that they must know what the state’s standards are; know how to help students learn those standards; know how to motivate students to learn those standards. All of that takes intelligence, knowledge, and darn hard work on our teachers’ part.

“Walk through our halls on any day, at any time, and you will see teachers doing the hard work of teaching. They won’t be sitting at their computer disengaged from their students...they will be engaged with the students who are in their classrooms. That continual engagement is very hard work.

“Our teachers know it is their ‘connection’ to the students in their rooms that leads to increasing student achievement, and they do everything in their power not to break that connection in the classroom. And, yes, I am very proud of them. Our whole community should be proud because the community’s strong support of this community school and its teachers is a very big reason this community’s children do well.

“I think our teachers do a great job of staying focused on the state standards and acquiring the materials that will best help their students learn those standards. They don’t get distracted with the latest education ‘cure-all’. The results their students achieve drive their assimilation and implementation of teaching strategies. That singular focus, powered by the willingness to work hard at improving their students’ achievement, is at the core of Highlands School’s success.

...CHANGES continued from page 1

property changing ownership. We will still be able to issue these permits together, but we will no longer be able to allow the CA to transfer," Jennings said. "Someone who buys a property that has a valid IP/CA will now have to reapply for the CA since the CA became invalid when that property changed hands."

The regulations for on-site wastewa-

ter outline the process for obtaining on-site wastewater permits.

"It specifies that an Improvement Permit (IP) and Construction Authorization (CA) must both be obtained to install a septic system or apply for building permits for a structure that will have plumbing," said Jennings. "The IP is for evaluating the soil and other site characteristics, while the

CA is for designing the wastewater system to meet the specific requirements of the facility (house, retail building, etc.) that it will serve."

The reason for the change comes from the state's Onsite Water Protection Branch which issued a position statement to all NC Health Departments clarifying new and existing regulations. Included in that position statement was the new regulation that CAs are not transferable. All

such position statements under go review by the NC Attorney General's Office.

MC Commissioner, Paul Higdon, asked Jennings how this was going to affect the county's fee structure which he said is already the highest in the state. Jennings said Macon County's isn't out of line with other counties.

"The fees will need to be worked out through the budget process, approved by

• See CHANGES page 12

...LETTERS continued from page 2

Help hikers access to Satulah summit become a reality

Dear Editor,

For many years, researchers and classes associated with the Highlands Biological Station (HBS) have studied and learned about the heath bald ecosystem on Satulah Mountain. In the last two years alone, three UNC Institute for the Environment students have done research on Satulah Mountain in conjunction with the Highlands Cashiers Land Trust. One student examined the dwarf juniper, *Juniperus communis* var. *depressa*, a rare species that is being threatened by encroachment of ericaceous shrubs and other successional species. Two students this past fall compared the flora and fauna on Satulah Mountain and Sunset Rock. Numerous HBS classes and visiting classes have used Satulah Mountain to study plants, fungi, salamanders, and birds.

The researchers and educators at HBS need easy access to Satulah Mountain. For the last 100 years folks have been able to drive up Satulah Mountain and then walk a reasonably short distance to the summit. Recently public access to the top of Satulah Mountain via Satulah Road has been

limited by private ownership.

One compromise to the problem of access to Satulah Mountain is a trail through two lots on Satulah Ridge Road, proposed by the Highlands Plateau Greenway. This trail would cost approximately \$300,000, which would pay for the two lots, a small parking area, and materials for the trail. Greenway volunteers would construct the trail and it would take one to two years to complete. Deadlines for purchase of the two lots and creation of the parking area at the trailhead are fast approaching.

I ask that the people in Highlands support the construction of a trail leading to the summit of Satulah Mountain. A public hearing is scheduled for Monday, March 2nd, from 4-5:30 p.m. at the Civic Center in Highlands. I also ask that you consider donating to this project. Your tax-deductible contributions can be mailed to Highlands Plateau Greenway, P. O. Box 2608, Highlands, NC 28741.

Karen L. Kandl, Ph.D.
Associate Director,
Highlands Biological Station

...SCHOOLS continued from page 7

It isn't so much that we do things differently (though I really don't know what other schools do). I do know that our teachers resist the urge to spend time looking for a 'silver bullet' that will somehow replace the hard work they must do.

Our whole community should be proud because of the community's strong support of this community and its school.

Walk our halls any day, at any time, and you will see parents in the halls and in the classrooms volunteering and working with teachers.

In addition, look at our PTO. We are a small school with a strong PTO that does

things all year to help our school, teachers, and students: funds for classroom materials, cap and gowns for graduating seniors, teacher recognition. Rotary is another community entity that consistently supports our school, teachers and students: dental swish program, dental exams for K-5, help with buying classroom materials, recognizing our 'Students of the Month'.

Strong schools have hard working, dedicated teachers; strong parent involvement; and strong community support." he said.

— Kim Lewicki

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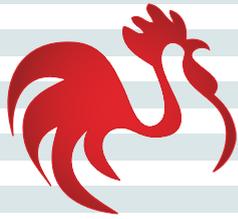


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...DOTSON continued from page 1

locked the state capital. She also won in the Continuing Coverage category for coverage of a bizarre case that involved a Wake Forest man kidnapped, taken and held in an apartment in Atlanta, and finally rescued days later by the FBI.

Miranda is the daughter of John and Mary Dotson of Highlands. She graduated from Highlands High School in 2004, and continued on to Wake Forest University where she received a Bachelor of Arts in Communication and a minor in Political Science. Along with her position at WRAL-TV, Dotson is currently working toward her Masters in Technology and Communication at UNC-Chapel Hill.

Dotson has worked as a News Producer for WRAL-TV since 2011. Last month, she was chosen to launch the station's brand new hour-long 4 p.m. newscast. WRAL-TV, a CBS affiliate, has long been the top station in the country's 25th largest television market.

Judges considered more than 800 entries before announcing the winners at the 29th Annual Midsouth Emmy Awards

ceremony at the Schermerhorn Symphony Center in Nashville, TN.

In all, WRAL-TV and sister station FOX 50 accepted 12 Emmys. Both stations are owned by Capitol Broadcasting Company.

"Our Team works incredibly hard year-round serving our viewers," said WRAL-TV and FOX 50 Vice President and General Manager Steven D. Hammel. "We are honored by the Academy and its judges with the wide range of Emmys won, ranging from our efforts on social media, to writing, to breaking news, to graphics, to set design of an Ice Desk and everything in between! I am so very proud of our Team."

Miranda was also honored in October 2014 with a fellowship from the Radio Television Digital News Foundation (RTDNF). Miranda and 11 other journalists from CNN, NPR, Voice of America, etc. traveled to Germany and Belgium to meet with and be briefed by senior political and diplomatic figures from Germany, the EU and NATO.

...GORGE continued from page 1



Turnaround information center is being built at Hiland Park Road across from the vacant lot where the circus sets up each year. Photo by Merritt Shaw

Park Lane in Franklin – opposite the vacant lot where the circus sets up each year. Completion date is August 2015.

According to NC Department of Transportation Communications Officer Jordan-Ashley Baker the reason for creating the turnaround is because large trucks (four axles and larger) are not allowed to use this section of U.S. 64/N.C. 28 in Macon County even though – despite warning signs -- some drivers of these trucks continue to use this route. It's hoped that truckers will take advantage of the turnaround before proceeding up the Gorge Road.

The existing road is a narrow, two-lane road with sharp curves, a steep grade and only a low stone wall between the travel-way and descent into the Cullasaja River Gorge. Obviously this makes it an unsafe route for truck drivers as well as drivers of vehicles who meet them on the severe curves.

"The information station is only to inform thru trucks and trucks with more than four axles that they are prohibited on US 64 from SR 1533, Walnut Creek Road, to NC 106 in Highlands and offers a place where truckers can turn their vehicles around safely at the information station," said Baker.

There are no plans at this time to modify any of the roads to Highlands to allow large trucks to pass. Nor does NCDOT currently have plans for improvements to NC 106 (Dillard Road). However, there are plans to improve a section of NC 107 from north of Cullowhee to NC 281 in Tuckaseegee.

First Sgt. Chris Wood from the North Carolina Highway Patrol (NCHP) said information stations like this are hugely productive in reducing problems.

"It is usually not the truck driver's fault that they find themselves on the Gorge Road. A lot of times they use GPS (Global Positioning System), and it tends to give the shortest route," he said. "Truckers who have found themselves on that road will turn around or try to turn around when they realize it could be a problem."

However, if drivers of trucks traveling from Franklin to Highlands go past Cook Brother's Lumber, on the Highlands Road in Franklin, about a mile from the base of the Gorge Road, they don't really have a way to turn around – and therein lies the problem.

Sgt. Jerry Brooks, Motor Carrier Officer with NCHP, who personally deals with trucks getting stuck or wrecking on the Gorge Road, said he gets calls weekly from motorists dealing with trucks trying to travel the Gorge Road.

"It's really when they are travelling down from Highlands to Franklin that they have the most trouble. There is not enough room to get past that rock overhang coming from Highlands," he said. "If they are going up and they have not gotten hung up (wrecked or stuck), we can blue-light them the rest of the way up and they will get cited."

Brooks said the information stations

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• HS SPORTS •

Highlands Varsity Basketball

Tuesday, Feb. 3, the teams travelled to Tallulah Falls.

The Lady Highlanders won their game 49 to 42, Kirstyn Lamb was the high scorer with 19 points.

The boys lost their game with a score of 69 to 49. Johnny Lupoli was leading scorer with 23 points.

Thursday, Feb. 5, the teams hosted Andrews.

The Lady Highlanders lost their game, although they went into halftime tied at 20. They came out in the second half to lose 43 to 32. Ann Marie Crowe was the leading scorer with 13 points.

The boys came out strong in the first half and went into half-time with a 41 to 12 lead. They came out just as strong in the second half to win the game 59 to 38.

Johnny Lupoli was leading scorer with 21 points. Collin Weller scored 13 points and Brent Amundrud scored 12 points.

• See HS SPORTS page 18



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Nepal: 2nd leg of Gabbard's journey around the world

By Emily Gabbard
NC-Chapel Hill Gap Student
Dusty, dirty, polluted, colorful, smelly, loud, interesting, busy... These are the words I would use to describe Kathmandu, Nepal.

I have been a part of various volunteer projects my first month here: EDUC, BBC, help-

ing teach math at the vocational school, and Curry Without Worry.

I teach English at the Education and Development for Underprivileged Children (EDUC) institution for two hours every morning. This school is amazing; it gives street vendors' kids an education without funding. It

gives these children living in poverty a chance for success later in their lives.

The principal of this school is one of the coolest people I have met. She is caring, funny, and just amazing. She, along with the rest of the teaching staff, receive little to no income from the school. They are basically volunteering at the school for the betterment of the children.

I help by teaching English to a class of 8, 9, and 10 year olds. The kids are so happy to learn and for the most part they are very attentive. Their teacher stays in the classroom with me and translates what I say into Nepali; however, most of these students understand a lot of English.

I also have been volunteering for Beyond Beijing Committee (BBC) which is dedicated to women's rights and equality. It writes reports about what the government needs to do in order for women's rights to be upheld. I help by editing the reports, which are written in English.

I have also started volunteering at the vocational school to help teach math. The students now have access to a computer lab where they use "Kahn Academy" to learn math. I assist with translating the problems (because they are still learning English) and occasionally help work out the problems. I really love being a part of this program. I have set up my own Kahn Academy ac-

count, which allows me to take many different types of courses. I am currently learning about computer programming in my free time, which has helped me narrow down some possible majors once I go to Carolina this fall.

Another organization I help with is Curry Without Worry. I chop vegetables and make roti for a dinner that serves more than 300 people. This was a great way to learn how to make curry, build relationships, and impact the community.

I love volunteering here, but I have been fortunate enough to do some exploring in my free time. I rode on the back of an

• See GABBARD page 16

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...CHANGES continued from page 8

the health board, then presented to the county commissioners," he said.

He also said the issue of the new CA procedure will go before the county commissioners before a fee schedule is determined.

According to Barry Patter-

son, Environmental Health Services Administrator for Macon County, the fee increase for lead testing was mandated by the state and went from \$20 to \$45.

He said the reason for the increase is that the state revised the State Lab of Public Health budget and now requires them to be "fee based." The lab then raised all fees as a result. The fees for water quality testing are set by the state lab, too. This is considered a "pass through" service by the Health Department for the public.

Higdon suggested using the new fee structure as a stimulus to the local economy.

"For example, waive the fee if someone is willing to build or start construction during a certain period of time," he said.

All environmental health fees must be approved by both the Macon County Board of Health and County Commissioners.

Patrick Muse, (REHS) Environmental Health Program Specialist, who oversees the sanitation inspections of food and lodging establishments in Macon County, said House Bill 74 became effective October 1, 2013, and requires Local Health Departments to oversee the installation of carbon monoxide detectors in all lodging establishments under its inspection. This includes motels,

hotels, bed and breakfasts, summer camps, primitive camps and residential camps.

The law allowed one year to get the detectors hooked to a power source. In the interim establishments were allowed to install battery operated detectors. Most installed hooked to a power source with a battery backup.

On October 1, 2014, authorization to inspect for compliance was transferred to the county Fire Marshal. If the Fire Marshal discovers an establishment is non-compliant, he can allow time for correction or can contact a MC Environmental Health Specialist to take action that could include suspending the operation permit until the detectors are installed or working.

The NC legislature acted after the deaths of three people from carbon monoxide poisoning at the Best Western in Boone. Until the new law was passed, carbon monoxide detectors had not been required in any of North Carolina's lodging establishments.

A study done by Dr. Lindell Weaver of the University of Utah School of Medicine estimated there were 772 people injured and 27 people who died from Carbon Monoxide poisoning in motels, hotels and resorts between 1989 and 2004.

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Jeannie Chambers
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means LOVE.

2) The heart is vital to exist, and

3) The chicken comes before the egg. (Well, two out of three ain't bad).

Now that we've established what the heart means, let's look closer at that beating heart in Highlands. Is it a healthy heart? If real estate is the heart of Highlands, one

could say that it suffered a major heart attack a few years ago. Major, but not fatal.

Highlands real estate has been in the starting stages of recovery, and is now in cardio rehab.

Although the Highlands real estate market is getting better, it's still not fully recovered. Just like humans after a heart attack; some can resume a somewhat normal existence, while others can never do what was done before.

There are some homes on the market now that are plugging right along and will sell this year; while others will have to have some major rehab to sell in 2015.

Some rehabs will have to lower their dose of medicine (as in price reductions) and some will die (as in the grim reaper will pay a visit (aka bank foreclosure).

Some of the Highlands real estate offerings had regular check ups, and their conditions were caught early enough to avoid major heart surgery. That part of Highlands real estate had a stent inserted in the main artery to allow the lifeblood of Highlands to flow freely. Some humans who have received stents have expressed not only more energy but also an exhilaration; a second chance at life.

In 2015, our real estate market has a second chance. The prognosis is in, and based on the number of people who visited Highlands in 2014, and those who have already made plans to be here in 2015, there should be plenty of buyers.

Sellers need to make sure their homes are out of rehab and

• See INVESTING page 15

However, some may argue the chicken and egg theory; we already have the things here that brought people to eat, stay, shop and play. For the sake of the argument, let's just say it doesn't matter which came first. What does matter is that not only do both exist, but both need to thrive for the other to succeed.

While reading this article, picture a beating heart. Did you see the anatomically correct version or the valentine shape?

The use of a heart as a symbol of love possibly dates back to the 13th century, even though St. Valentine purportedly died in the year 270.

The original shape of the heart in literature and art was an inverted ivy leaf, maybe because of its unwillingness to die. For centuries, autopsies and even surgery wasn't allowed, so very few knew the actual shape of a human heart, although they knew it was the lifeblood of the body.

In the Bible, Leviticus 17:11 states: "For the life of the flesh is in the blood..." and was probably written by Moses centuries before Christ was born.

Chaucer may have been the first to associate St. Valentine to LOVE in the 14th century, but it wasn't until the 1800s that hearts were used in greeting cards, and not until the 1970s the heart SYMBOL was introduced in New York – who doesn't remember 'I♥NY' – talk about effective marketing!

So what do we know?

1) The symbol of the heart

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Designed by Dennis DeWolf and built by one of the area's most respected builders, this fully handicapped accessible home is as lovely as it is functional. Situated in a peaceful, pretty setting on 4.21 +/- acres, this spacious, yet cozy, elegant home has light and bright screened porch, two fireplaces, two offices, elevator, mother-in-law suite, double garage, and paved stately driveway. Tremendous value!

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Contact Susie deVille (828) 371-2079.

3 Blocks from Main St. w/View



A rarity! This cute, 2BR/1BA cottage offers the best in in-town living. Take a short stroll, and enjoy all the shopping, fine dining, and fun of Highlands' night life. Lovely view of Sunset Rock with trimming. Some furnishings included. Priced so you may make your own updates. Fireplace ready – just add your own freestanding fireplace/wood stove. Investors: This property would make an amazing rental property.

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In the HEART of Highlands
MLS #78398

• HIGHLANDS AREA EVENTS •

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.

Monday

• 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 Ann for more info (828) 369-7385

Tuesdays

• Reading dog "Beebles" will be at Hudson Library every Tuesday at 3:30pm. Please call (828) 526-3031 to register.

• Free Community Table Dinner at the Community Bldg. at 6p.

• Zumba at the Rec Park at 8:05a. \$5.

Starting Tues., Feb. 24

• 12-week NAMI Program to educate families dealing with mental illness, 6:30 to 8:30p. The course has the dual focus of education, and understanding the experience of living

with mental illness. Confidentiality is maintained. Class size is limited and pre-registration required. Contact: Ann 369-7385 or Linda 369-9838

Mon., Wed., Fri.

• Heart Healthy Exercise Class Monday, Wednesday and Friday 8:30am-9:30am

• Aerobics with Tina Rogers 8-9a.

• Zumba at the Rec Park at 9:05a. \$5

Wednesdays

• First Baptist Church is happy to present a new season of X-treme Games at the Highlands Rec. Park. The games will be held Wednesday nights from 6 to 7:15 pm. For more information or to pre-register your k - 6th grade child, please call 526-4153.

1st Wednesdays

• Family Movies at the Hudson Library at 3:30pm. Call 828-526-3031 for titles.

3rd Wednesdays

• General Audience Movies at Hudson Library at 2pm. Call 828-

526-3031 for titles.

Thursdays

• Storytimes with Miss Carol at Hudson Library 10:40am. Open to the public.

• Highlands Writers' Group meets every Thursday from 1-3:30 pm at Hudson Library. Writers of all genres welcome. For info call 526-8009 or 526-2295.

• NAMI Support Group Meets: For individuals dealing with mental illness: depression, bipolar, schizophrenia, etc. and the family members of individuals dealing with these challenges. Every Thursday from 7 – 8:15 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.

Last Fri. of each month

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

• Community Coffee with Mayor Pat Taylor from 11a to noon at The Hudson Library.

Sundays

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

Through March 2

• Canned food drive at the Eckerd Center. Drop off boxes will be located in the ELC Activities Room, the Lobby Area and the Staff Break Room

Through Feb 14

• Food drive at the Highlands Playhouse. Non-perishable foods and all donations will be given to the local food pantry. For every 3 cans donated, you will get a free small popcorn. Bring five or more items on Feb. 14 and you get "Buy one get one" free tickets to the movies.

Fri., Feb. 13

• Open House at the Highlands Community Child Development Center from 10a to 3p.. For more information, contact Pat Hedden, Executive Director, at 828-526-8905 or visit the Center at 89 Church Street, Highlands.

Sat. Feb. 14

• Highlands Performing Arts Center's Live in HD Series continues with the MET Opera's productions of **Tchaikovsky's Iolanta and Bela Bartók Bluebeard's Castle.** at 12:30 pm. pre-opera discussion at 12 noon. Tickets available online: highlandspac.org or by calling 828.526.9047

Tues., Feb. 17

• Shrove Tuesday Pancake Dinner from 5-7 p.m. at the Episcopal Church of the Incarnation.

• Macon County Poultry Club will meet at 7 p.m., Tuesday at the Cooperative Extension Office on Thomas Heights Road off Highlands Road, Franklin. The public is invited.

Thurs.-Sun., Feb. 19-22

• HCP's "Murder Not Prohibited" at PAC. 6:15 p.m. and 1:15 p.m. Sunday matinees. Come eat, laugh, and test their powers of deduction—all for the bargain price of \$22.85! Tickets are available online, highlandscashiersplayers.org, and at the HCP box office, 526-8084.

Tues., Feb. 24

• Hudson Library Book Club meeting at the Hudson Library at 10:30a featuring the "Book of the Month." Call 526-3031.

Live HD Met Opera at PAC: Iolanta & Bluebeard's Castle



Highlands Performing Arts Center's Live in HD Series continues with the MET Opera's productions of **Tchaikovsky's Iolanta and Bela Bartók Bluebeard's Castle.** Saturday, February 14 at 12:30 pm

On the heels of her triumphant Met performance in *Eugene Onegin*, soprano Anna Netrebko takes on another Tchaikovsky heroine in the first opera of this intriguing double bill, consisting of an enchanting fairy tale (*Iolanta*) followed by an erotic psychological thriller (*Duke Bluebeard's Castle*). Nadja Michael is the unwitting victim of the diabolical Bluebeard. Both operas are directed by Mariusz Trelinski, who was inspired by classic noir films of the 1940s.

Iolanta... is blind. She lives a secluded life and is treated like a doll. A long time ago her father, King René, hid her from the world and placed her in the care of simple people. His greatest concern is for his daughter never to find out she is blind. He also doesn't want the news of Iolanta's blindness to reach Robert, her future husband. Iolanta is convinced that eyes are only for crying. But she is becoming anxious.

Duke Bluebeard's Castle: Judith has come to live with Bluebeard, having left her family home. Bluebeard's secret mesmerizes her—she knows the terrifying rumors, she fears she may be on a road of no return, yet she decides to enter his home. Judith confesses her love for Bluebeard, believing that it will change him and light up his gloomy home. She repeats her profession of love like a mantra as she demands that the doors to seven rooms be opened. She doesn't want to defer to Bluebeard who says, "Love me" and "Ask no questions." Judith responds that she loves him and wants him to open up to her, reveal his inner self, uncover his fears. She demands that all the doors be opened. In the end she is made a part of Bluebeard's space forever. The circle of her journey closes.

The Met Opera's *Iolanta and Bluebeard's Castle* presented on Saturday, February, 14 at **12:30 pm**; pre-opera discussion at 12 noon. Tickets available online: highlandspac.org or by calling 828.526.9047 Highlands Performing Arts Center, 507 Chestnut Street, Highlands

...INVESTING continued from page 13

are ready to resume life with a new buyer.

The prescription?

1) Adjust prices if necessary. While most think of price reductions, some properties may show a rise in price based on improvements, tax appraisals, changes in area conditions, or just an increase over the drastic drop when the seller thought it was flat lining.

2) Improve your property. Sometimes it's as simple as painting, installing a new front door, hiring a landscaper to improve your first impression.

3) Be versatile. If you have a room that has always been an extra sleeping area, consider making it look like a home office, or small study. Let the new buyers come up with their own ideas.

4) Cleanliness is next to

“Sells The Best.” No matter how much vision a buyer says they have, they are usually drawn to clean, uncluttered homes. Buyers have to be able to put themselves in a home, and it's hard to do that when there is so much of the seller left in the home. I'm not saying leave your home devoid of character just not too many characters.

We all have a heart, yeah that's right – even real estate brokers, and we all need to take care of our hearts, and our real estate.

If you, or if someone you love has a sick piece of real estate, better to get them to a professional before it suffers a major attack.

Happy Valentine's Day Highlands! 2015 has rejuvenated lifeblood in real estate and the market is ready for some serious sales relationships between sellers and buyers.

• EVENTS •

Murder mystery/Dinner theater



From left: Actors of HCP's upcoming dinner theater play, "Murder Not Prohibited," scheduled for two weekends at Highlands Performing Arts Center February 20 through 22 and February 27 through March 1. Standing: Wayne Coleman, David Spivey, Michelle Hott, Michael Lanzilotta, Steve Hott. Seated: Virginia Talbot and Dean Zuch.

Where can one get dinner and a show featuring some of the area's best actors for only \$22.85? That's the bargain you'll get when the Highlands Cashiers Players present "Murder Not Prohibited" at the Highlands Performing Arts Center Friday thru Sunday, February 20, 21, 22, and Fridays thru Sunday, February 27, 28, March 1.

Though dinner theater is not the usual thing for HCP, the Players are enthusiastically reviving "Murder Not Prohibited" as their third show of the season. Four of the actors in the current play are performing the same roles they played in 1996. They were part of a small acting

• See EVENTS page 19

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...GABBARD continued from page 12

elephant, went on a jungle walk, went to see Mt. Everest, saw the living goddess, and jumped off a bridge into the highest canyon swing in the world.

I was lucky enough to see the Living Goddess one afternoon. She only appears at a window for 10-15 seconds, so it was very exciting that I was there just in time.

The Living Goddess is from

the highest caste of the Newar community. There are many requirements to become a Living Goddess. She needs to have eyes of a cow, a neck the shape of a seashell, no mark on her body and many other things. Basically the girl has to be beautiful and perfect.

The Living Goddess is chosen during one of Nepal's big-

gest festivals. During the darkest night, buffaloes are sacrificed and their decapitated heads are placed around a bonfire. Girls ages 4 or 5 sit around the decapitated buffalo heads while a man dressed as a demon dances around them. The girl who remains calm is selected to become the Living Goddess. She is supposed to be brave and courageous, which is why she is not afraid during the selection process. Also, the girl must

choose items worn by the previous Living Goddess. After passing many different tests, the girl becomes the Living Goddess.

The Living Goddess is believed to have healing powers and can predict the future. A girl remains as the Living Goddess until she menstruates or loses a great amount of blood from her body, for this means the goddess has left the girl's body.

I took a trip to Chitwan National Park a couple weekends ago with two other volunteers, Emma and Hanna. I rode an elephant, went canoeing with crocodiles, walked through the jungle, and just relaxed in Chitwan. It was interesting to see this part of Nepal because Kathmandu is a smog-filled city. Also, Chitwan was actually warm! I didn't need to sleep with my sleeping bag! It was fantastic.

"Gravity seems like a seductive and cruel mistress as you jump off the 160m high bridge, then free fall 100m into the dramatic gorge before the twin lines take up the tension and pendulum you in a massive arch of 240m at 150km/h."

I admit that I am a little afraid of heights. I finally overcame my fear and jumped off a bridge into the highest canyon swing in the world. My gap year has been about overcoming challenges and fears; jumping off a bridge into a canyon was definitely one of those moments.

...GORGE continued from page 10

are not usually manned. The truckers will pull in and there will be signs posted giving them the warnings and information they need. He said sometimes cameras are installed at these stations but Brian Burch, Construction Engineer for Division 14, said there is no plan to install a camera at the Highlands Road location.

"It will be mandatory for trucks with more than four axles to enter the information station," said Baker. But enforcement will come in the form of a citation if Highway Patrol is notified that a trucker is travelling the road to Highlands, anyway.

My first month in Nepal has been filled with immense joy through my volunteer work and many adventures. I have learned so much in the little time I've been here; one of those things being appreciative of modern, western technology. I have never been so thankful for a washer and dryer, hot water for showers, electricity (there is only power for 11 hours every day), and heat for cold nights; however, I now realize it's possible to live without these modern devices.

I'm not exactly sure what my plans are for my remaining six weeks in Nepal. I really enjoy helping with the Kahn Academy math program in Kathmandu, but I also want to go outside the Kathmandu valley to Bigu and Pokhara. Bigu requires a two-day trek, completely remote with no internet or human interaction, where I would teach English to Buddhist nuns in a monastery. Pokhara is a stunning place, surrounded by the Annapurna mountain range, where I would teach English in a school.

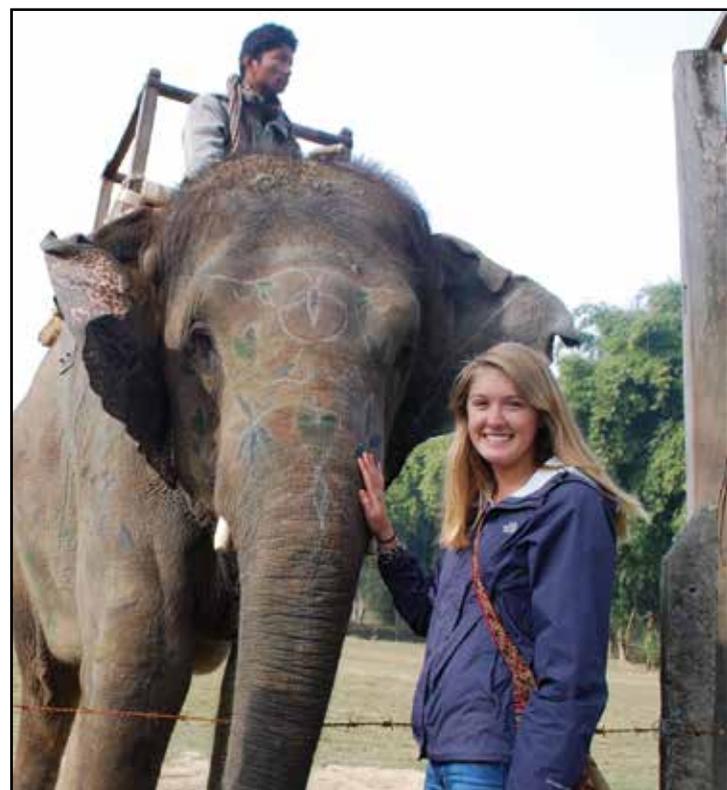
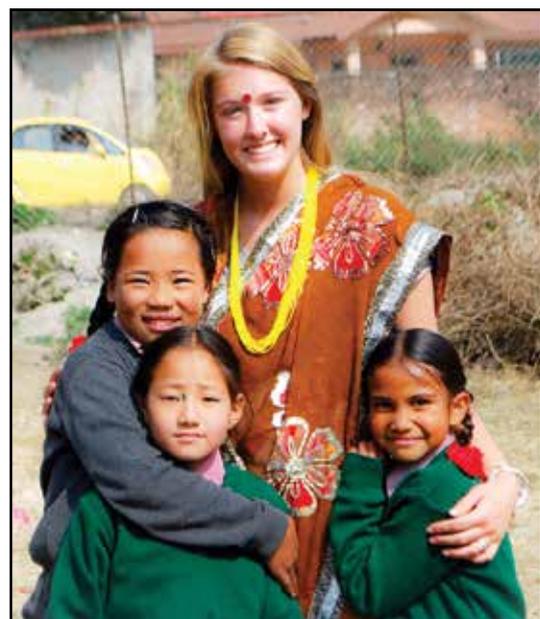
Although I am out exploring the world, I am still reminded of my small hometown quite often.

I have 15 more weeks until I get to be in the comfort of my home, but also 15 more weeks until my gap year is over! I've got mixed feelings about my last day of my trek around the world which is May 9, 2015 – the day I come home.

According to Baker, right-of-ways from two properties were purchased to build the turn around.

The N.C. Board of Transportation awarded a contract for this project in November 2014. The estimated cost of the construction is \$559,935.00 which was the contract amount and was awarded to Franklin based Watson Contracting, Inc., the lowest bidder.

Baker said the projected finish date for the information station will be August 2015 for all work except reforestation. Final completion will be in early 2016.



Clockwise: Emily with the children she teaches at Education and Development for Underprivileged Children Center in Kathmandu, Nepal; working at Curry Without Worry, that cooks and serves dinner for more than 300 people; and about to ride an elephant.

Note: Emily is on the second leg of her journey as a GAP student. She will live in three countries over the 2014-2015 school year. During the first leg she was in Trujillo, Peru where she taught English.

A gap year through UNC-Chapel Hill is when students take a break from formal classroom-based education to travel, volunteer, intern, or work. Typically, it is taken between high school graduation and entry into college. Students gain real-world experience, life skills, independence, and personal growth.

Valentine's Day & President's Day in Highlands!

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• SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING •

Not for self but for Jesus

By Dan Robinson

Highlands Central Baptist Church

Consecration is not a selfish thing. If it sinks into that, it ceases to be consecration. We want our lives kept, not that we may feel happy, and be saved the distress consequent on wandering, but get power with God and man and all the other privileges linked with it.

We shall have all this, because the lower is included in the higher; but our true aim, if the love of Christ constrains us, will be far beyond this. Not for "me" at all, but "for Jesus"; not for my safety, but for His glory; not for my comfort, but for His joy; not that I may find rest, but that He may see the travail of His soul, and be satisfied.

Yes, for Him I want to be kept. Kept for His sake; kept for His use; kept to be His witness; kept for His joy! Kept for Him, that in me He may show forth some tiny sparkle of His light and beauty; kept to do His will and His work in His own way; kept (it may be) to suffer for His sake; kept for Him, that He may do just what seemeth Him good with me; Kept, so that no other lord shall have any more dominion over me, but that Jesus shall have all there is to have – little enough, indeed, but no divided or diminished by any to her claim. Is not this, O you who love the Lord – is not this worth living for, worth asking for, worth trusting for?

Consecration may be in one sense the act of a moment, and in another the work of a lifetime. It must be complete to be real, and yet, if real, it is always incomplete; a point of rest, and yet a perpetual progression. We give our lives over to God definitely and completely. But then begin the practical development of consecration. Here He leads on softly, according as His children are able to endure.

I do not suppose anyone sees all that it involves at the outset. Little by little the Master shows how much more may be made of our lives, how much more He is able to make of them than we died. We shall be willing to work under Him and do exactly what He points out. It will seem as if there is always more and more to be done, the very fact that He is constantly showing us something more to be done in our lives is proving that they are really His. Only let Him have our lives, not matter how poor they may be, and then He will make our wilderness like Eden, and our desert like the garden of the Lord. And then we shall sin,

"My beloved is gone down into His garden to the beds of spices to feed in the gardens and to gather lilies.

(Song 6:2) condensed form kept for The Master's Use, by Frances Ridley Havergal.

...HS SPORTS continued from 11

Friday, Feb. 6, the teams hosted Swain.

The Lady Highlanders took a loss 52 to 42. Ann Marie Crowe was leading scorer with 12 points. Jessica Tilson scored 9 points and Kirstyn Lamb scored 8 points.

The boys also took a loss 68 to 58.

Leading scorer was Johnny Lupoli with 21 points. Brent Amundrud scored 18 points.

The teams will end their regular season this week. They travel to Hiwassee Dam Tuesday, Feb. 10 and to Blue Ridge on Friday, Feb. 13.

– Sierra Nylund

Proverbs 3:5

BLUEVALLEY 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
CHAPEL OF SKY VALLEY
Sky Valley, GA • 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.: 9:15a Christian Education at Buck's Coffee Cashiers
Crossroads; 10:30a Faithful, Family Service w/ Music & Communion.
Mon.: Bible Study & Supper at homes - 6 p.m.

CHRIST CHURCH OF THE VALLEY, CASHIERS
Pastor Steve Kerhoulas • 743-5470
Sun. 10:45am, S.S 9:30am. Wed. 6pm supper and teaching.
Tues. 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: Child. 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
828-526-4153 • www.fbchighlands.org
Dr. Mark Ford, Pastor
220 Main Street, Highlands NC 28741
Sun.: Worship 10:45 am; Sun.: Bible Study 9:30 am
Wed.: Men's Bible Study 8:30 am; Prayer Mtg 6:15 pm;
Choir 5 pm

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Curtis Fussell & Emily Wilmarth, pastors
526-3175 • fpchighlands.org
Sun.: Worship: 11 a.m.; School: 9:30
Mondays: 8 a.m.: Men's Prayer Group & Breakfast
Wednesdays: Choir: 5:30p

GOLDMINE BAPTIST CHURCH
(Off Franklin/Highlands Rd) • Rev. Carson Gibson
Sunday School: 10 am, Worship Service: 11 am
Bible Study: 6 pm

GRACE COMMUNITY CHURCH OF CASHIERS
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www.gracecashiers.com • Pastor Steve Doerter: 743-9814
Services: Sundays 10am - Wed. - 7pm; Dinner - Wed. 6pm

HAMBURG BAPTIST CHURCH
Hwy 107N. • Glenville, Nc • 743-2729

John 3:16

PLACES TO WORSHIP

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: 5:15; youth, & adults activities: 6; Handbell rehearsal, 6:15; Choir Rehearsal 7. (nursery provided);
7:00pm Intercessory Prayer Ministry

HOLY FAMILY LUTHERAN CHURCH: ELCA
Chaplain Margaret Howell • 2152 Dillard Road • 526-9741
Sun: 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
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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 (Father Francis): 526-2418
Mass: Sun: 11 a.m.; Sat. at 4p

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Rev. Marty Kilby
Sundays: School – 10 a.m.; Worship – 11 a.m. & 7
Wednesdays: Prayer Mtg.: 7 p.m.

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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

THE CHURCH OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD
1448 Highway 107 South, Office: 743-2359
Rev. Dr. Virginia Monroe
Oct-May: Sunday Services: Rite I, 8a Rite II, 10:30
June-Sept: Sunday Services: Rite I, 8a, Rite II, 9:15 & 11a
Nursery available for Rite II services
Sept 7- Oct 26- Informal Evening Eucharist- 5:30 p.m.
Thursday: Noon Healing Service with Eucharist.

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85 Sierra Drive • 828-524-6777
Sunday Worship - 11 a.m.
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WHITESIDE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Rev. Sam Forrester/Cashiers
Sunday School: 10 am, Worship Service: 11 am

• POLICE & FIRE REPORTS •

The Highlands Police log entries from Jan. 12 Only the names of persons arrested, issued a Class-3 misdemeanor or public officials have been used.

Jan. 12

• A little past midnight, Jerry Ryan Smith, 47, of Sylva, NC, was arrested for DWI. He was taken to the MC Detention Center and issued at \$750 unsecured bond.

Jan 28

• At 10:22 p.m., Alejandro Cruz, Jr., 22, of Walhalla, SC, was arrested for DWI and for possession of various forms of cocaine and marijuana and paraphernalia. He was taken to the MC Detention Center and issued at \$4,000 secured bond.

The Highlands Fire & Rescue Dept. log entries from Feb. 1.

Feb. 1

At 1:04 p.m., the dept. was first-respond-

ers to a residence on U.S. 64 west.

At 9:31 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on S. 4th St.

Feb. 2

• At 6:56 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Turtle Pond Road.

Feb. 5

• At 4:55 p.m., the dept. responded to a chimney fire at a residence on Dog Mountain Road.

Feb. 8

• At 9:47 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Highlands View Road.

• At 10:13 a.m., the dept. stoodby at the hospital for the MAMA helicopter.

• At 1:29 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Shortoff Road.

...EVENTS continued from page 15

troupe assembled by former Highlander Jody Read to act in her dinner theater company, Carolina Murder Mysteries, which she had established in Chapel Hill with her friend actor/playwright Patti Arnold and brought to Highlands when she became a resident in 1993.

Arriving here, Jody quickly became associated with HCP, known at that time as the Highlands Community Players. She performed the role of Miss Clairee in the Players' first play, "Steel Magnolias" in 1995 and went on to act in 14 more plays, winning an award during the recent 20th anniversary celebration of the Highlands Cashiers Players as one of three actresses who had performed in the most plays.

With her local Highlands troupe she produced several of the murder mystery

plays written by Ms. Arnold with titles such as "Country Club Capers," "The Final Reunion," "Where There's a Will," but the actors' favorite was "Murder Not Prohibited." The names of the characters definitely reveal the comedic character of the play: Harry Huckster, Daisy Darling, Cal Apone, Rightie Ragu, Trixie LaTour, Willie Joe Cobb, and Hope Sober.

The Players invite you to share the food and fun when they present "Murder Not Prohibited" at the Highlands Performing Arts Center on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, Feb. 20 – 22, and Feb. 27 – March 1, 6:15 at night and 1:15 p.m. on Sundays.

Tickets are available at the HCP box office, 526-4904, or online highlandscashiersplayers.org.

For Sale by Owner

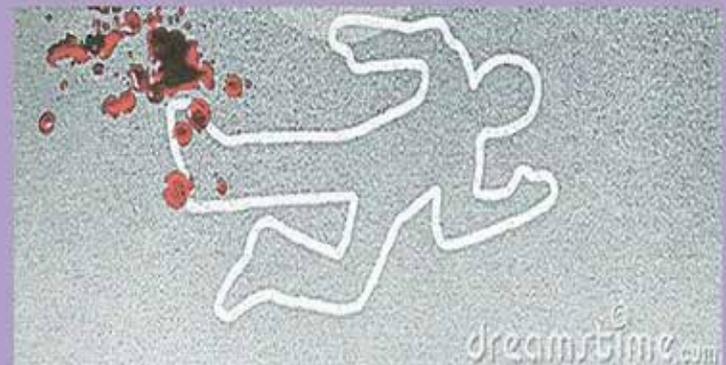


Twelve shares and lots in Chestnut Cottages MOA, Inc. on Chestnut Street, totaling approximately one acre. Fully approved for 12 park model RV-cottages with all hookups in place. Also includes two, 1BR park model RV-cottages in place, ready to use or rent. This is a beautiful creek front setting in an up trending neighborhood in the heart of town, and is only a very short walk to Main Street. Don't miss this unique business opportunity for a wonderful extended family compound, or affordable rental units. Priced to sell at \$950,000 with some owner financing considered. Contact Charlie at: 828-526-8645 or 828-200-2194

Murder Not Prohibited

By Patty Arnold

Highlands Cashiers Players
Murder Mystery Dinner Theater



Feb. 20 - 22 & Feb. 27 – March 1, 2015
Fridays & Saturdays at 6:15 p.m.; Sundays at 1:15 p.m.

Highlands Performing Arts Center
507 Chestnut Street, Highlands NC

Tickets: 828-526-8084

Online: highlandscashiersplayers.org



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Duke Bluebeard's Castle



Double Bill

Saturday, February 14
12:30pm
Pre-Opera Discussion
12:00pm
Lead by Beverly Pittman
Adults: \$24 Members \$20.40

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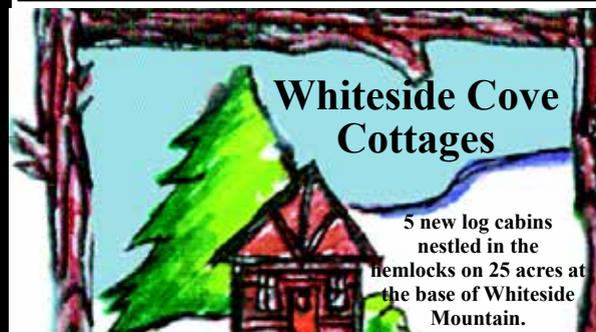
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• BIZ/ORG NEWS •

Highlands Annual Christmas Dinner raises \$60,000



The goals the organizers of the dinner hoped to achieve were realized. Monies that came from sponsorships and donations from local service organizations like The Rotary Clubs of Highlands, businesses of our area and beyond, and many individuals along with the promise of a \$30,000 donation match made it possible to distribute \$60,000 to nonprofits that serve this community. From the beautifully decorated dining room at the Hudson House of the Highlands Country Club to the delicious buffet prepared by Chef Chris Arnold of Lakeside Restaurant with the help of Holly Roberts of The Kitchen and Carryaway to the desserts of Martha Porter and Jan Zehr, The Highlands Christmas Day tradition more than ever exceeded expectations. The organizers wish to thank the community for its continued support. Funding recipients include: Highlands Community Child Care Center, the International Friendship Center, the Highlands Food Pantry, the Highlands Emergency Council, the Literacy Council of Highlands, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Highlands, Highlands Hospice Foundation, Highlands-Cashiers Hospital, Highlands School Library, Highlands Psychotherapy and Counseling Center, The Highlands Free Medical Clinic, Blue Ridge Free Dental Clinic, REACH of Macon County, The Gordon Center, and the Scaly Mountain Women's Club.

Four 2015 Scholarship Opportunities now available from Catch the Spirit of Appalachia, Inc.—Deadline March 10

It is the desire of Catch the Spirit of Appalachia to support and encourage our youth in honoring and preserving our local Appalachian heritage. Therefore, this year our nonprofit organization wishes to once again provide four opportunities for a scholarship in the amount of \$500 each for "Appalachian Studies," to be presented to four deserving seniors in the western NC counties. Each scholarship is focused on a different aspect of our Appalachian heritage, and established in honor of someone in our society who has made a difference.

Scholarship # 1. The Annie Lee Bryson Memorial Scholarship—for a student from these counties who has declared a major or minor in Appalachian Studies or related studies with an interest in "traditional crafts."

Annie Lee became known as "The Corn Husk Doll Lady," teaching and demonstrating all over the area, and each year at the Appalachian Homestead in the Great Smoky Mountain National Park. Her daughters will present the award.

Scholarship # 2. The Mary Jane Queen Memorial Scholarship—the committee will select students who have declared a major or minor in music, with an interest in the traditional music of the Appalachian mountains.

Mary Jane Queen was a balladeer and musician who, along with her family, won numerous awards for her music. Her daughter will present the award.

Scholarship # 3. The Elmer & Irene Hooper Memorial Scholarship—the com-

• See BIZ/ORG page 22

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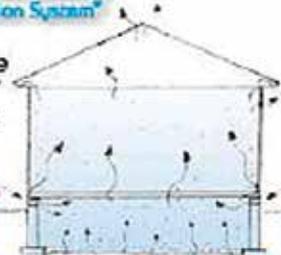
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- Excellent computer/keyboarding skills;
- Extremely detailed oriented;
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- Strong desire to work in a fast-paced environment;
- Ability to learn quickly;
- Marketing and desktop publishing skills a plus

Hours for this position are from 2-5pm, M-F and all day on Saturdays. Additional hours may be added, if desired. Compensation commensurate with experience. Please email your resume and cover letter to susie@WhiteOakRG.com. Interview candidates will be notified by March 5th. Short-list candidates will take two online assessments to determine compatibility with job requirements. No phone inquiries, please. (2/26)

MANAGER & SALES ASSOCIATES NEEDED FOR BARDO, a retail furniture and home accessory store. Full and part time positions in our Cashiers & Highlands locations are available. Send resume Bardo49nc@gmail.com (828) 482-2410. (st. 2/12)

LOCAL CHURCH SEEKS FINANCIAL MANAGER/BOOKKEEPER – Community Bible Church is hiring a full-time financial manager and bookkeeper. Interested parties can submit resumes to CBCFinanceResumes@gmail.com Job responsibilities will include accounts payable and receivable, budget tracking, payroll, financial reports, banking, insurance man-

agement, and asset tracking. Full and working knowledge of QuickBooks and Excel is required. Awareness of specific accounting and reporting requirements for churches is a plus. Salary determined by level of experience. (st. 2/15)

SECRETARY NEEDED with Quick Books experience for full or part time position with Black Bear Construction. Please call 828-200-0949 or resumes can be e-mailed to greenblackbear@gmail.com (st. 2/5)

THE HIGHLANDS PLAYHOUSE is accepting applications for part-time concession and ticket help. Night and weekend availability. Good math and computer skills necessary. Email Joel at highlandisplayhouse@yahoo.com for more information. (st. 2/5)

RESIDENTIAL FOR RENT YEAR-ROUND FURNISHED RENTAL in Highlands Falls Country Club. Nice 3 br/2 basingle family Golf Villa. \$1,200 per month. Call Lynn Kimball at Meadows-Mountain Realty. 828-421-8193 (st. 1/29)

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RESIDENTIAL FOR SALE TWO LAND PARCELS JOINED. NC tract consists of 25.75 acres and a farm house. GA parcel consists of 54 .18 acres, 3 bed/2 bath, full basement, two car garage, 2 barns and 2 outbuildings. Land has pasture, agricultural forestry and 2 creeks. Located in Clear Creek area. \$925,000. For more information contact Fran Wilson at 304-615-3553. (st. 2/12)

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2BR/1BA HOME. Clear Creek Road. New exterior paint, inside paint, Brand new appliances, new flooring throughout. \$165,000. (828) 526 2288/ (828)482-2385. (st. 9/25)

SECLUDED, BUT JUST MINUTES TO TOWN, Adorable two bedroom home with great views and outdoor living spaces. Call 828-421-4681. (st. 5/29)

LOTS/LAND FOR SALE LAND FOR SALE IN CLEAR CREEK: 2.18 acre parcel has road frontage on Mack Wilson Rd. \$17,000. Any reasonable offers will be considered. Call 828-526-2874. (st. 10/23)

FOR SALE BY OWNER – 3 building lots in the gated community of Rustic Falls. Macon County tax records value at \$51,000 each. Must sell due to health reasons. Asking \$15,000 each. Call owner at 803-640-6004. (St. 5/1)

ITEMS FOR SALE 110/220 GENEREC EMERGENCY GENERATOR WITH AUTOMATIC SWITCH. Will require Lic. Electrician to remove. Leaving property. Take advantage of this fantastic offer. \$750 or best offer. Call 828-526-0502. (st. 1/29)

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...BIZ/ORG News continued from page 21

mittee is looking for high school seniors who have demonstrated excellence in volunteerism and leadership and who are committed to making a difference in the community.

Irene will be at the awards ceremony to present the scholarship award.

Scholarship #4. The Founders Scholarship—a scholarship awarded on the basis of merit or potential within the visual arts, writing or history, with consideration of financial need. This award will be presented by Amy Ammons and Doreyl Ammons Cain, cofounders of Catch the Spirit of Appalachia, Inc, in honor of their mother, Cannie Owen Ammons.

Cannie Owen Ammons is the mother of Founders of CSA.

Applicants must submit completed applications and all supporting documents to the Guidance Counselor of the applicant's school by March 10, 2015 to be considered for this year's scholarship awards. Home schooler applicants should complete the application and send it to CSA, 29 Regal Avenue, Sylva, NC 28779 by March 10, 2015. The application packet may be downloaded by going to our website: www.spiritofappalachia.org. or for more information, call 828-631-4587.

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Saturday
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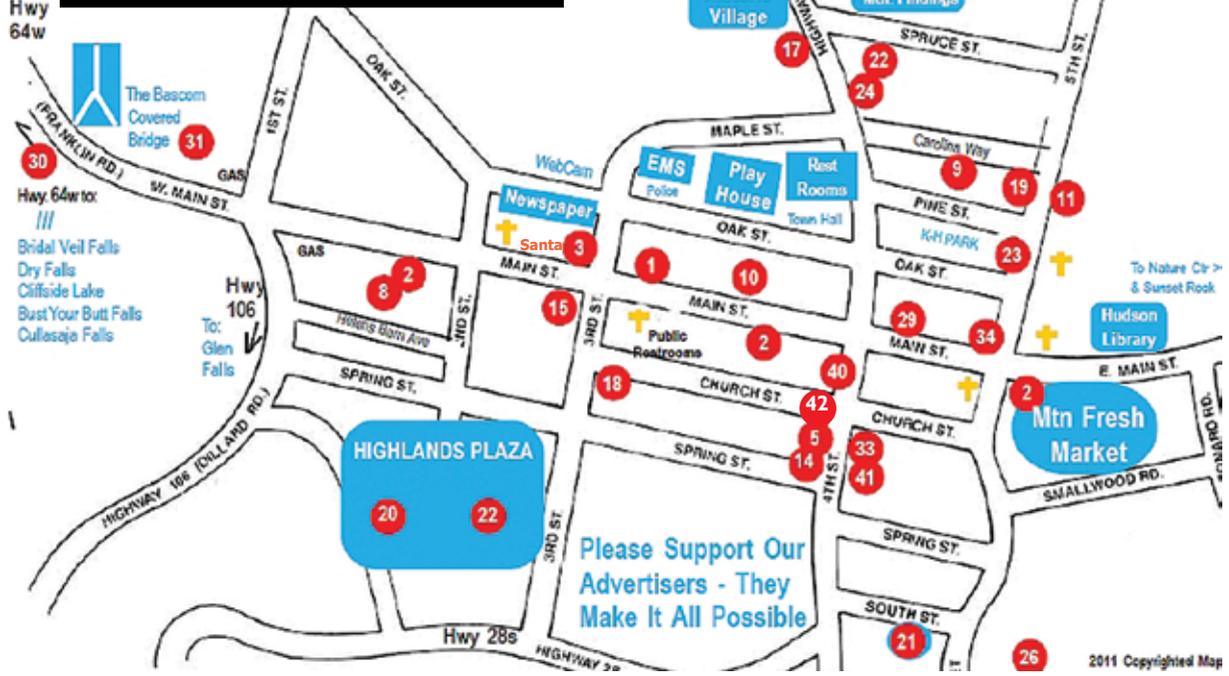
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