

Highlands Newspaper

FREE Every Thursday

Volume 12, No. 2

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

Thurs., Jan. 8, 2015

Dramatic increase in flu cases alarms health officials

By Merritt N. Shaw

It's official! The flu season is here and it is turning out to be one of the worst yet.

The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services produces a

weekly "flu surveillance report" that keeps track of diagnosed cases of the flu and reported cases of flu-like symptoms.

In the most recent report, for the week ending December 27, 2014, there have been 17 total

deaths reported in North Carolina since the flu season started on October 4, 2014. Most of those fatalities were over the age of 65.

According to State epidemiologists the number of people sick with the flu virus is

trending upward, and that the percent of doctor visits for flu-related illness has already jumped ahead of those observed over the past four years.

Due to the increase of cases

• See FLU page 6

Noise ordinance coming to Macon Cty

By Brittany Raby

Earlier this year, commissioners tasked the Macon County Planning Board with deciding if a noise ordinance was necessary for the county. After numerous meetings and listening to public input, both for and against the ordinance, Matt Mason, county planner told the board during its December meeting that a noise ordinance is something the county should pursue.

"The planning board heard several people in public comment over the past few months who had some serious issues with their neighbors and noise," said Mason. "It appears that writing a noise ordinance that focuses on malicious type noises, partying all hours of the night, etc... will be things that the board will address."

Mason said the planning

• See NOISE page 5

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Changes happening fast at K-H Park



A new Kelsey-Hutchinson Park, complete with bathrooms, landscaping and a performance pavilion is quickly becoming a reality and is destined to be ready by the summer. — Photo by Jim Lewicki

Acquisition of land owned by a man murdered in 1871 enables expansion of Bartram Trail

By Brittany Raby

A 15-year plan to construct a new section of trail in the Fishhawk Mountains has gained some ground and is finally in process.

The North Carolina Bartram Trail Society has started the process of constructing the new section of trail, which will extend the eastern portion of the hiking trail for about

3.8 miles to a new terminus on Hickory Knoll Road, just south of Franklin.

The project was first thought

• See BARTRAM page 11



Mal Phillips, Broker-in-Charge
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Additional upgrades in the works for Highlands S.

By Brittany Raby

Big changes could be coming for Highlands School.

With a \$300,000 community donation planned to completely overhaul Highlands' athletic facilities, and a complete renovation to Highlands' Elementary School wing being completed in 2013, the only thing left to upgrade is the schools' high school wing, which is now in the school board's sights.

During a joint facilities review committee meeting comprised of MC commissioners and school board members, Superintendent Dr. Chris Baldwin presented county officials with a capital outlay plan for the 2015-'16 school year that listed a complete renovation of the high school wing at Highlands School to the tune of \$1,250,000.

The High School wing at

• See UPGRADES page 4

From Our Hearts to Yours

May 2015 be full of Joy, Love, Hope, and Prosperity of
Spirit (and otherwise!) for us all.
A new adventure, full of promise and opportunity!
Happy 2015! It's going to be a great year!



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• THE PLATEAU'S POSITION •

•MAYOR ON DUTY•

What's up for 2015?



**Highlands Mayor
Patrick Taylor**

Where is the town headed this year? By June I expect Highlands to have a makeover of sorts.

Coming in from Cashiers on US 64, motorists will see a new ball field facility. About a quarter of a mile further they will see a new enclosure for the swimming pool. Going further to downtown they will see a new Kelsey-Hutchinson Park, complete with bathrooms, landscaping and a performance pavilion. If the motorist turns right at the stop light on 4th and Main and proceeds through town they will notice the new rock wall on 3rd Street next to the Main Street Inn. Traveling toward Franklin the motorist will pass by Lake Sequoyah at full pool and see a newly refurbished dam.

Let me share some ideas about where we should be headed as a community. Individual town commissioners may have other priorities and concerns for the community, but my views come from discussions I have had with commissioners, town staff, community leaders and citizens.

A vibrant community in the 21st Century is a connected community. This connectivity is a critical issue for the future of Western North Carolina. Highlands is in a much better position than many of our neighbors, but we still need to provide the infrastructure for better broad band options for both our businesses and especially our residential areas. The town will have to continue to invest in the framework and encourage private companies to compete and provide these needed services.

Now "scouts honor," a person just called me about this issue as I was writing the above paragraph. The caller asked when the town was going to do something about the internet problem. Her son, a research scientist, was visiting Highlands over Christmas. Part of his work requires constant connectivity with his laboratory. He cut his visit to Highlands short because of the problems he had staying connected to his lab. This story illustrates the problem.

Next year will usher in major changes in our Recreation Department in the

upgrading of facilities and in programming. In addition to a new gym floor, other areas of the building will be upgraded and redesigned. Plans for new programs are underway.

The town staff has been working on recycling for business and residential areas. Curb-side recycling would be very expensive and have a low participation rate given our high number of part-time residents. An alternative would be to create a recycling convenience center within the town. Voluntary recycling would have a better rate of participation. The big issue will be to find an affordable location that will not impact neighborhoods.

The town will look to embrace affordable green energy practices. For instance, a transition to low energy light bulbs for streets and town facilities is already underway. Rather than spending \$350,000 to replace all the lights at once, town crews are replacing older lights as they burn out with the more efficient and longer lasting bulbs. We will continue to look for other ways to employ cost effective, green practices.

Dear Editor,

If you ask anyone why they think Highlands is special you will get different answers. It's not just a shoppers paradise, or "where to live if you live for golf," or a cool place to be in the summer.

Highlands is indeed a unique place. Due to a combination of our geography, geology, mountain topography, and climate, the Highlands plateau is the only Mountain Rainforest in eastern U.S. We are surrounded by National Forest that is richer in plant and animal species than any other temperate forest in the world.

For this reason, scientists and naturalists have been visiting and studying this area for almost 250 years, beginning, perhaps, with Andre Michaux, a French botanist who was sent to this wilderness by king Louis XVI and his wife, Marie Antoinette, to collect new and wonderful plants for their gardens in Paris.

In the early 1900s The Highlands Biological Station, now a world-class institution, was first established here to study the great diversity of life forms on the plateau and the surrounding WNC forests. The Highlands Botanical Garden was established as a unique display of our high elevation species in their native habitats and

communities.

Due to the diversity of bird species in forest habitats found here, The Highlands Plateau has been designated by National Audubon as an IBA, an Important Bird Area. You may snicker about birdwatchers, but in rural southeastern Arizona birding brings millions of dollars a year into the local economy, and increasingly to our area as well.

An article in Highlands Newspaper on Nov. 20, 2014 states that in the new plan for the Pisgah and Nantahala National forests, "700,000 acres of national forest will be targeted for timber harvest," and that "no area of the forests are off limits" to timber harvesting.

There was a time when the Forest Service at least gave lip-service to managing our national forests for their "highest and best use." Even the concept of "multiple use" has been abandoned. Instead of managing our forests as healthy, diverse ecosystems that can be harvested sustainably and enjoyed by hunters, fishermen, hikers, biologists, campers, orienteers, and birdwatchers, the plan seems to be to gradually liquidate our rich and diverse forests and turn them into tree farms and game farms.

Sadly, the proposed plan is not a "forest" management plan, it is a "timber" management plan. Why not let the forest grow?

My concern is not just with the destruction of our forest ecosystems. I wonder about what the effect will be on property values and the local economy, not just of Highlands, but all of western NC?

I wonder, how many logging jobs are expected to be generated, and will they make up for the loss of tourism and second-homes? Where will all the timber go that will be harvested? To China?

Some years ago, much of the old-growth forests of the Tongass, in Alaska was floating in storage off the coast of Japan. Part of our national heritage sold for a pittance. I hope our proud USA is not turning into a third world country, shipping out our precious, irreplaceable natural resources.

Please do not allow the timber industry to dictate forest policy. This plan does not reflect good stewardship or sound forest management practices. It is exploitation, pure and simple. Lord help us if we Americans are in such dire straits that we

•LETTER•

Let the forest grow

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Toll Free FAX: 866-212-8913 • (828) 200-1371

Email: HighlandsEditor@aol.com

Publisher/Editor: Kim Lewicki; Reporter: Brittany Raby

Copy Editor: Glenda Bell; Digital Media - Jim Lewicki

Locally owned and operated by Kim & Jim Lewicki

Adobe PDF version at www.HighlandsInfo.com
265 Oak St.; P.O. Box 2703, Highlands, N.C., 28741

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• OBITUARIES •

Kyle Demont Thomas

Kyle Demont Thomas, 83, of Franklin, NC, passed away Thursday, December 25, 2014.

Born in Chicago, IL, he was the son of the late Frank Russell Thomas and Ruth Russell Thomas. In addition to his parents, he is preceded in death by his brothers, Ballard and Donald Thomas, and his son, Stuart Russell Thomas. Kyle was retired from GTE/Automatic Electric and had served in the U.S. Marine Corps, as a First Lieutenant. He was an Episcopalian, enjoyed woodworking, and had a great love for his family and his animals.

He is survived by his wife of 58 years, Nancy White Thomas; daughter, Isabel Thomas Evans and husband the Reverend Jeffrey K. Evans of Athens, AL; daughter-in-law, Nancy Dee Thomas of New Hope, AL; brother, William Thomas of Romanica, CA and three grandchildren, Dan Christopher Thomas, Ethan Thomas Evans, and Dylan Kyle Evans.

A private memorial service will be held at a later date.

Macon Funeral Home is in charge of the arrangements. Online condolences can be made at maconfuneralhome.com

Conrad (Juanita W.) McCall

Mrs. Conrad (Juanita W.) McCall went to meet the Lord on January 2, 2015. There will not be a funeral service. Donations can be made to the Pleasant Grove Baptist Church Cemetery Fund, PO Box 822, Cashiers, NC 28717. The family sincerely appreciates your thoughts, prayers and telephone calls. A special thank you to the Cashiers Glenville Rescue Squad, fire department, first responders, Mama Helicopter Crew and Mission Hospital ER Staff.

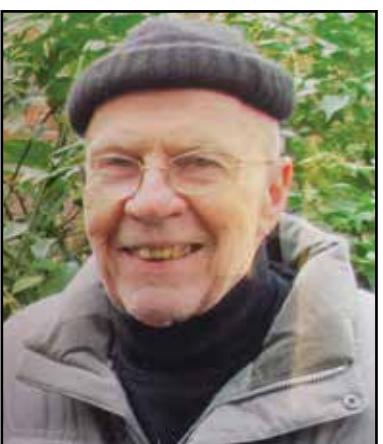
Bryant-Grant Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements. Online condolences may be made by visiting www.bryantgrantfuneralhome.com

Robert Ernest Cornell

Robert Ernest (Bob) Cornell, 85, of Highlands, died peacefully on Jan. 3.

Bob is survived by his sweetheart Cathie McKeon, his two daughters Lonnie Carey (Paul) and Anne Cornell (David Kridler); his seven granddaughters, Adda Kridler, Ellen McGinnis (Tom), Laura Carey (Mike), Emily Bell (Jared), Sarah Carroll (Tom), Elizabeth Carey and Susan Kridler. He had two great grandchildren: Franklin Carey Green and Vivian Bell. Bob was preceded in death by his twin brother Dick and sister Mary Charlotte Cornell.

Bob was born in Columbus, Ohio,



May 13, 1929. He graduated from Westerville High School in Ohio and received a BS in Mechanical Engineering from the Ohio State University. (Go Buckeyes!)

Bob founded the tire repair manufacturing business – 31 Incorporated – whose international headquarters is still in Newcomerstown, Ohio.

Bob recently said that he felt like he had had a long, happy and fulfilling life.

In honor of Bob, contributions may be made to the Cashiers-Highlands Humane Society and the Cornell School (5250 Johnstown Alexandria Road, Johnstown, Ohio, 43031).

...LETTER continued from page 2

have to liquidate so much of the Pisgah and Nantahala National Forests, with NO allowance for protecting even a few acres of God's beloved creation.

Remember: "... the land is Mine, and ye are but guests and sojourners..." Leviticus 25:23

Glenda Zahner
Highlands



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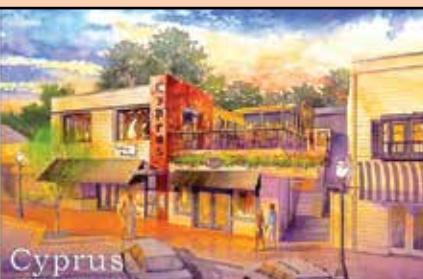
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...UPGRADES from page 1

Highlands, which serves just over 100 students, opened to students the fall of 1986 and has been maintained with minor repairs over the years.

According to Dr. Baldwin, the renovations involve replacing inefficient windows and HVAC systems, improving the insulation of the ceiling and replacing worn hardware and electrical systems. This will include new floors (CVI) and paint. The intercom system will also be replaced.

Additional improvements to Highlands identified on the capital outlay requests submitted by principal Brian Jetter include \$30,000 for new stage lights, and \$1,700 for a new concession stand door.

Dr. Baldwin told commissioners that the project at the high school could be eligible for QZAB (Qualified Zone Academy Bonds) funding from the state. QZAB funds, which were used to renovate the middle school and portions of Nantahala School, as well as other projects in the school system, are funds allocated to states from the United States Department of Education. The federal government issues about \$400 million to states annually, of which North Carolina received about \$13 million in 2012 and another \$13 million in 2013. The funds are available to local school districts at a zero interest rate.

To be eligible for QZAB funding, public schools must be located in empowerment zones or enterprise communities and public schools must have 35 percent or more of their student body on the free and/or reduced lunch programs.

The funds can be used for renovation and rehabilitation projects (including energy projects), as well as equipment purchases (including computers).

QZABs cannot be used for new building construction. The school district must obtain matching funds from a private-sector/non-profit partner equal to at least 10 percent of the cost of the proposed project. The matching portion of the projects has come from county funds in the past in Macon County.

The county's capital outlay priority for the 2015-'16 school year is Union Academy. By state law, school districts have to provide a space for alternative classrooms and Macon County has done that with Union Academy. Using an

• See UPDATES page 11

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...NOISE continued from page 1

board took the task of deciding if an ordinance was necessary very seriously and gathered endless evidence and heard from both sides of the debate.

"We broke down all calls to our dispatch center and classified the calls by type of call for 2013 and 2014," explained Mason. "Actual noise related calls were less than one percent, but the one percent calling into 911 need their issues addressed. I have seen people speaking in public meetings about noise issues actually break down and begin weeping. I feel that writing an ordinance to deal with malicious type noises is a great idea and a positive step for Macon County."

The ordinance, whose development gained unanimous consent from the board, will be a county-wide ordinance, but will not be the law inside the town limits of Franklin or Highlands, as those are regulated by local boards.

"This ordinance would not affect residents inside the town of Highlands but it could impact residents living outside the town limits," said Mason.

While the board of commissioners unanimously approved the planning board's desire to draft an ordinance, they did so with caution. Commission Chair Kevin Corbin explained the importance of not over regulating residents and drafting an ordinance that focuses on malicious, intentional harmful noises, and not things

such as barking dogs.

Commissioner Jim Tate, who served as the planning board liaison during the process, agreed with Corbin and thinks a carefully developed plan will be of benefit.

"In the three years that I have been a Commissioner, I have had at least 15 noise related complaints from Macon County residents – two from the Highlands area," said Tate. "The consensus of the board of commissioners as well as the planning board is that noises that have purposeful and/or malicious intent need to be regulated. One of the Highlands complaints that I received would fall into this category."

Another focus of the ordinance will be time restrictions of noise, explained Mason. The planning board will be looking at intentional noises such as loud music, that is played late at night or early mornings. Tate believes that while the county ordinance will be broad, the time constraints will help to alleviate some of the current complaints.

"There is a very strict noise ordinance in place within the town of Highlands jurisdiction, so anything that the county enacts would be extremely bland in comparison," said Tate. "I can foresee the county potentially passing some regulations which could control obnoxious sounds in the early morning hours and/or sounds that are made with the purposeful intent of disturbing a neighbor. I know that this

• See NOISE page 11



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...FLU continued from page 1

in such a short time period, the virus is considered widespread. Mission Health started limiting patient visitations in all affiliate facilities on December 5, due to the increase. The restrictions include Highlands/Cashiers Hospital in Highlands and Angel Medical in Franklin. According to Jerri Jameson, Public Relations Manager for Mission Health, it is in their policy to implement these procedures when there is a clear increase in flu activity from 2% to 6%. Jameson said the restrictions will stay in place "until the level of flu-like activity decreases to below 6% as reported by the state department of public health."

"The overall health and well-being of our patients and caregivers is our utmost priority and therefore, sometimes we must take steps for extra protection," he said.

They request anyone with flu or flu-like symptoms to make phone calls rather than visit patients in their facilities. Visitation is limited to immediate family members 12 years and older and direct caregivers only. The reason they are restricting children under the age of 12 years old is they are more susceptible to the flu and tend to be less diligent in using preventative measures such as washing their hands or sneezing into their arms.

The Macon County School System also sent a message via the Robo call system and

Facebook, the Sunday before school started back, asking parents to keep their kids home if they exhibit any signs of the flu or flu-like symptoms.

Influenza can sometimes get confused with other flu-like symptoms. According to the Center for Disease Control (CDC), influenza (also known as the flu) is a contagious respiratory illness that can come on suddenly and includes symptoms such as cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, muscle or body aches, headaches, fatigue (tiredness), fever or feeling feverish/chills and sometimes vomiting and/or diarrhea (most common in children) and is caused by a virus. Not everyone with the flu will have a fever.

Anyone can get the flu, but people at high-risk are elderly people (over 65 years old), women who are pregnant, infants, children and adults with chronic illnesses such as asthma, diabetes and/or heart disease.

Macon County Health Director, Jim Bruckner says the first and best way to protect again influenza is to get the flu vaccination. Bruckner suggests preventative steps to stay healthy such as washing your hands or if you are caring for someone with the flu, check with your doctor about antiviral medications. If you have flu

• See FLU page 9



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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

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.

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.

Mon., Wed., Fri.

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.

1st & 3rd Thursdays

Free local ongoing support group for caregivers. Are you involved with the care of a loved one who is physically or mentally facing challenges? Sponsored by The Counseling and Psychotherapy Center of Highlands and the Highlands United Methodist Church, this group meets at 4 p.m. at Room

203 at the Peggy Crosby Center. Facilitated by Bonnie Gramlich, a licensed professional. Drop in or call for further info, 828.342.0546.

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 (National Alliance on Mental Illness) offers a peer support group for individuals that are dealing with depression, anxiety, PTSD, bipolar, schizophrenia, etc. and the family members or friends of loved ones dealing with these challenges. Join us in a safe, confidential environment to share concerns and gain insight. Join us for our Weekly Support Group from 7 – 8:15 pm @ 14 West Palmer Street in Franklin NC, email dc-withnami@yahoo.com, Donita (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

Saturdays

Free wine tastings at MountainTop Wine Shoppe from 1-3p.

Sundays

At Highlands Inn, Sequoyah Room at 4:30 pm. Multi-denominational, Interactive Bible Study and Fellowship. Open to all.

Jan 9-Jan 16

The movie, Theory of Everything at the Highlands Playhouse, 8p Friday, Saturday and Thursday. The movie Exodus at 2p and 5p. Fri-Sun. and Thurs.

Sun., Jan. 11

Modern Western Square Dance classes begin Sunday at 2:30 P.M. at the Environmental Center in Franklin.

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at
8pm Fri, Sat and Thurs

&

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• AREA EVENTS •

• Auditions for the spring play, "Welcome to Mitford" by Robert Inman and directed by Donna Cochran, will be held Sun. Jan. 11, 2015 starting at 2:30 at the Performing Arts Center. Performance dates are Thurs. thru Sun May 21-24 and Thurs thru Sun May 28-31. Rehearsals start around April 1. Scripts are available at Franklin, Cashiers, and Highlands libraries. For more information call Donna at 828 526 2080.

Sunday, Jan. 18

The next Bolivian Mission fundraiser will be the Pizza dinner during the conference NFL playoffs on January 18, 2015. As usual you can order a pizza and it will be delivered or can be picked up at the Highlands United Methodist Church between noon and 8PM. Pizzas can be ordered by calling the church secretary at 526-3376 or Dr. Baumrucker at 526-3605.

Saturday, Jan. 24

The Friends of the Scottish Tartans Museum and Heritage Center present THE BURNS NIGHT DINNER honoring the 255th anniversary of the birth of poet Robert Burns on Saturday at 5:30 pm in Tartan Hall, Franklin Presbyterian Church. Tickets available at the Scottish Tartans Museum (828-524-7472) or tartans@scottishtartans.org. Reservations by January 20, 2015

Tues., Jan. 27

Ladies Night Out Program on Healthy Eating. The guest speaker will be Jeffrey Whitridge, RD, CSO, LDN. Healthy eating starts with learning new ways to eat, such as adding more fresh fruits, vegetables and whole grains and cutting back on foods that have a lot of fat, sugar and salt, and includes learning about balance, variety and moderation. Please join us to learn more about this important topic. This program will be held in the cafeteria at AMC two times this date. One will be at 4 p.m. and one will be at 6:30 p.m., so you can choose which one you want to attend. The same presentation will be given at both meetings. All women are invited to attend one of these meetings and are asked to encourage all the women in their life, who are over the age of 13 years, to attend with them.

At the Tuesday Men's Night Out Program, the topic will be Financial/Investments. The guest speaker will be Russell W. Hawkins, II, Financial Advisor with Edward Jones. The meeting will be at Angel Medical Center in the Video Conference Room on the 3rd floor, at 6:30 p.m. For more information about Men's Night Out, please contact Don Capaforte at 349-6887 or Dawn Wilde Burgess at 349-2426.

Sat., Jan. 31

• At the Satolah Fire Dept., chili, music and more. Eating begins at 5p: \$6 plate includes chili, cornbread and a drink. Take out available. Music begins at 6p. Oliver Rice and Mark Visage. Auction items. Cake Auction. All money raised goes to the Clear Creek Baptist Church to help with its furnace replacement cost.

Thurs.-Sun., Feb. 19-22

• HCP's "Murder Not Prohibited" at PAC.

Thurs.-Sun., Feb 27-March

• HCP's "Murder Not Prohibited" at PAC.

...FLU from page 6

symptoms, you should stay home and avoid contact with other people. If you go to the doctor, consider wearing a mask and make sure to cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue.

Weekly updates given by the NC Department of Health and Human Services state that the flu vaccine protects against three (trivalent) or four (quadrivalent) different influenza viruses, depending on which vaccine you receive. Some places have the trivalent version left, but the quadrivalent version went fast.

Macon County Public Health is offering the flu vaccine on a walk-in basis Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Supplies are "extremely limited" so people should call first to see if the vaccine is available before coming to the health department (828-349-2081). The cost of the regular vaccine is \$25 and insurance may be filed.

The flu vaccine can take up to two weeks to work after being administered.

"There is a limited amount of vaccines available at this time, even though we are in what is typically the peak of the flu season and there is a higher number of flu cases this year as compared to in the past," said Becky Barr with the MC Public Health Dept. Despite that, Barr said Macon County Public Health currently has no plans to order additional vaccine; however this may change in the future based on community need.

According to the CDC, it is not known how well this season's flu vaccine will work. "Laboratory analysis of circulating flu viruses this season indicates that most of the H3N2 viruses are antigenically or genetically different than the H3N2 vaccine virus." This means that most of the flu viruses that are making people sick this season are different from the vaccine virus which can reduce the effectiveness of the vaccine, but "it should work well against the minority of circulating H3N2 viruses."

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SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING •**Don't put everything away so quickly**

By Father Bruce Walker
Episcopal Church of the Incarnation

As I contemplate this article, I am looking around and seeing the things that not so long ago were coming out of boxes are now going back in. Our Christmas tree is down and with it many of the lovely reminders of the Season.

We are leaving 2014 behind and with it the trappings of Christmas and the Holiday season.

As we put away the ornaments and reminders of the Season, we may also be putting away the memories, some good, some not so good. One thing for certain is that we are in the process of packing up and getting back to our normal lives.

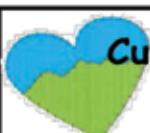
I would caution not to put everything away so quickly. What if we left a few things out on display? What would it really hurt to leave the Creche up a bit longer? Wouldn't it help to hold on to the good memories of cherished times with family and friends?

What if we were to hold on to those unsolicited acts of affection, the unexpected kindness given and received, and the gifts of joy and gladness? If we did I think it would be good for our souls and in the long run good for our community and the world around us.

How about this for a New Years' resolution? Let's hang on to the Holy Days and let them shape our lives in the year ahead.

Was there some special event or happening that took hold of your heart this past Christmas? Perhaps an estranged child returned home or you were given a sacrificial gift from your spouse. There may have been a time of intense nostalgia for friends long gone or a moment of deep inspiration when you recognized the deeper mystery behind the story of the Nativity.

What was that special time from which God might fashion a useful memory for you? When you find it, hang on to it and don't pack it away just yet. Rather let God use it to shape your life into one of true joy and happiness, making you ready for the year ahead and the Holy times to come!



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...BARTRAM continued from page 1

about in the 1990s when the idea of developing a new trail segment began. With little momentum, the expansion remained just an idea. But after land acquisition, and securing a \$75,000 grant, the project is gaining steam.

"The Society does not want to build its trails on private property, and the new trail would have to traverse a small in-holding surrounded by Forest Service lands," said Walter Wingfield with the Bartram Trail Society. "Upon searching the Macon County deed records it was discovered that this small in-holding of approximately 10 acres had not had a recorded owner since the 1800s. The Society was advised to record a quitclaim deed asserting its ownership to the tract with the Macon County Register of Deeds, and this was done in 2000. The purpose of filing this quitclaim deed was to position the Society to acquire title to the property under North Carolina's adverse possession law. To acquire title in this manner it is necessary to show open and notorious possession under a claim of right for a period of seven years."

The ten-acre tract of land that was acquired by adverse possession was last owned of record by Nimrod S. Jarrett, an early Macon County businessman and landowner. He once owned several thousand acres of land in the area. His home was in the area of the Appletree Group Camp on the Nantahala River, a camping area for hiking groups that is maintained by the Forest Service. Mr. Jarrett was ambushed, murdered and robbed in 1871 while on his way from his home to Franklin, and his killer was eventually caught and hanged for the crime. Somehow, his heirs never found out about the small tract he owned in the Fishhawks, and the land was never claimed by anyone.

At about the same time the Society began searching for the 10 acres, it also acquired a 3-acre tract fronting on Hickory Knoll Road from a private landowner, using its own funds and funds obtained pursuant to a North Carolina state grant under the Adopt-a-Trails program. The Society was able to sell this tract to the U.S. Forest Service in 2006.

According to Wingfield, in 2007, the required seven-year period of adverse possession was satisfied, and in 2009 the Society obtained an order from the Macon County Superior Court granting it full ownership of the 10-acre tract covered by the 2000 quitclaim deed.

"Subsequently, in 2011, the U.S. Forest Service purchased this tract from the Society, thus putting the Society in the position of being able to construct

the new trail segment," said Wingfield. "Constructing a trail segment is a very expensive proposition, so in 2012 the Society applied for a matching grant under the Federally-sponsored Recreational Trails Program, and this grant was approved in the amount of \$75,000."

Although the Society received the funding, the all-volunteer group ran into some difficulties in managing the funds through contracts to complete the project.

"Since the Society consists entirely of volunteers who are not experienced with contracting, the Society turned the administration of the grant over to the U.S. Forest Service, and this past fall the Forest Service contracted with High Country Conservation, LLC to construct the new trail," said Wingfield. "Work began in early November and with enough good weather over the winter months the new trail may be ready for hikers as early as spring 2015."

With just a few months until the Spring hiking season kicks off, the Bartram Trail Society is working hard to ensure the project is completed. This new section will replace the current terminus of the eastern segment of the trail at Buckeye Creek trail head off of Tessentee Road and will eliminate several miles of the "road walk" portion of the trail. After the new section is completed, the Buckeye Creek trail head will remain as a secondary trail head that will lead over a spur trail to the junction with the new trail section, approximately three miles north of the Buckeye Creek trail head.

"The Society is very excited about this new trail section, which will eliminate several miles of "road walk" and will be the first addition to its 70-mile trail since the early 1990s," said Wingfield.

The Bartram Trail Society was founded in 1977, in the aftermath of the national bicentennial celebration and the 200th anniversary of naturalist William Bartram's travels in western North Carolina which are so vividly described in his famous book, "Travels" published in 1790.

The mission of the Society is to construct and maintain a hiking trail to commemorate Bartram's journey through this area in 1775 and to promote the legacy of Bartram and his visit here.

Most of the trail was built in the 1970s and 1980s with help from the Forest Service and various organizations such as the Youth Conservation Corps, the Boy Scouts, the Young Adult Conservation Corps and Outward Bound groups. The Society, which is a section 501(c)(3) organization, has over 250 members and continues to maintain the trail, which connects with the Appalachian Trail at two points but provides greater solitude for hiking than the much-used AT.

...UPGRADES continued from page 4

existing facility, Union Academy was created. The building has remained untouched by any major improvements since possibly the '80s. Since growth at Union Academy isn't expected to decrease, Commissioner Ronnie Beale, who is one of two commissioners who serve as liaisons to the school board, noted that repairs to Union Academy, which serves students throughout the entire county, including Highlands, should be a primary focus.

According to Dr. Baldwin, renovations at Union Academy mirror those needed

...NOISE continued from page 5

sounds crazy to a reasonable person, but we have documented evidence of people blaring obscene music at all hours of the night with the intent of driving their neighbors crazy and currently we have no way to control or stop it. And, yes, this has happened in the Highlands area. We are hoping that we can give the Sheriff a means to stop it, whereas

at Highlands High School and would cost around \$1,250,000 to complete. Dr. Baldwin said it might be possible to combine the two projects and receive QZAB funding for both projects.

Commissioner Beale instructed the school board to prioritize the needs at Union and explore the option of a joint QZAB application for both Union and Highlands. The two entities plan to reconvene later in January to further discuss possibilities and needs within the district.

currently he cannot."

Over the next few months, the planning board will work to draft an ordinance that meets the requests of commissioners and provides law enforcement with some grounds to legally enforce noise control in the county. Upon completion it will be presented to commissioners for approval.

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• FIRE REPORT •

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

Dec. 17

- At 11:56, the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Sunset Trace.

Dec. 18

- At 8:35 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Mayflower Drive.
- At 11:39 a.m., the dept. responded to a call about a gas leak at a residence on NC 106.

Dec. 20

- At 7:13 p.m., the dept. provided public assistance to a residence on Cullasaja Drive.

Dec. 22

- At 6:38 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence.

Dec. 24

- At 4:07, the dept. was first-responders to Main Street.

Dec. 26

- At 6:33 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Shortoff Road.

Dec. 27

- At 6:57 p.m., the dept. responded to a chimney fire at a residence on Laurelwood Road.

Dec. 28

- At 2:17 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Brooks Road.

Dec. 29

- At 1:38 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to the Highlands Mountain Club.

Dec. 30

- At 4:56 p.m. the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Cobb Road.

- At 5:11 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Moorewood Road.

• INVESTING AT 4,118 FT. •

Memories are made of this



Pat Allen
Broker-in-charge
Cell: 828-200-9179
Office: 828-526-8784

At Christmas I was reminded of how precious memories are once more. The days when there were no empty seats at the table, Santa was still real, and laughter filled the home. This is the true meaning of life and the one word that describes it all is love. Families and friends gathered together warm the heart and we look forward to this every year...our chance to reflect on the past and share dreams for the future. We are older and wiser and sometimes new little ones fill the empty seats and new pets are a reminder of good times to come. The promise of love is there for the taking.

There are so many ways to create memories in Highlands and hopefully you will begin the New Year with that in mind. Let us help you explore what our little town has to offer. Start your new traditions on a mountain hike, zip-line through the trees, picnic on Sunset Rock, feast at a fabulous restaurant, learn about art and learn to sculpt, partake at wine tastings, laugh or cry at a play or concert, take a drive along the rushing river, be mesmerized beside a waterfall or simply revel in the sounds of silence. Whenever you are ready...we are here for you.

Pat Allen Realty Group expanded in 2014 and moved to 295 Dillard Road and added four new brokers to serve all your real estate needs in Highlands, Cashiers, Sapphire, and Scaly Mountain.

Pat Allen is owner/BIC at Pat Allen Realty Group located at 295 Dillard Road. She is a Certified Luxury Home Marketing Specialist and may be reached at 828-526-8784 or 828-200-9179. You may visit on the web at PatAllenRealtyGroup.com or email Pat at pat.f.allen@gmail.com

• BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NEWS •

Mitzi Rauers joins Meadows Mountain Realty



ganizations.

Prior to moving to Highlands, utilizing her talent for decorating and design, Mitzi and Hammond have shared their passion for buying and renovating older homes in several southern communities including Charleston, SC and Gainesville, GA.

Mitzi's experience in sales, marketing and attention to customer service coupled with her extensive knowledge and enthusiasm for real estate investing, restoration and décor make her move into full-time real estate sales a natural.

Rauers noted, "I did an exhaustive search for the real estate firm that was the best fit for me and am looking forward to becoming a part of the Meadows Mountain Realty team."

Mitzi Rauers, having spent 20 years involved in the medical field as a respiratory therapist and owner of a successful respiratory equipment company, sold her business in 2007. Armed with her lifetime affection for small town charm went off in search of her dream destination. And, as a result of many weekend visits to Highlands, Mitzi and her husband Hammond, who is the co-owner of Franklin Ford in Franklin, eventually bought their permanent home in Highlands Country Club. In the years following their move, the Rauers, while enjoying the wonderful restaurants, arts, plays and social environment of Highlands, have also become deeply involved in all aspects of our small community...participating, donating and serving in leadership capacities for numerous civic and charitable organizations.

• CLASSIFIEDS •

HELP WANTED

MOUNTAIN FRESH GROCERY IN HIGHLANDS is hiring full-time for positions on the grill. Contact Don at 828.526.2400

EXPERIENCED ELECTRICIAN NEEDED. Edwards Electrical Services. 828-526-5147. (st. 10/2)

CNA, NURSES, CAREGIVERS needed for Home Care Agency serving Older Adults in Macon, Jackson and Transylvania counties. Call 828-200-9000. (st. 5/15)

SALES ASSOCIATE FOR HIGH END RETAIL CLOTHING STORE IN HIGHLANDS, NC. full time, part-time and seasonal. Must be available to work weekends. Retail clothing sales experience preferred. Please call 828-200-1703. (st. 3/13)

RESIDENTIAL FOR RENT HOUSE FOR RENT IN BLUE VALLEY. \$1,650. 4BR/3.5BA. Unfurnished. 6 month lease or possible month-to-month. 828-713-6101. (st. 12/11)

1BR/1BA APARTMENT. All utilities included. No pets. 828-200-2061. (st. 11/26)

HIGHLANDS CREEK VILLAGE, 460 DILLARD ROAD. Live or/and work, units available. Please Call 828-787-1923 for tour. (12/18)

TWO BEDROOM AND THREE BEDROOM THREE BATH HOUSES AVAILABLE. Just 3 miles from Main St. Freshly painted and Propane Heat. 6-12 month lease available. Call 828-421-4681. (st. 11/20)

2 BR, 1 BA. APT. FOR RENT, DOWNTOWN, 2nd floor, washer/dryer, unfurnished. \$725 plus utilities. (828) 526-9227. (st. 10/30)

SAPPHIRE NC. Partitioned Home for lease"- 2 Bedroom (mountain views) with 2-car Garage. Easy access Sapphire NC. 561-346-6400 (11/20)

COMMERCIAL FOR RENT FABULOUS SMALL OFFICE/ PROFESSIONAL SPACE. Located 1 block off Main Street in Highlands, NC. Excellent visibility and parking. \$550 per month. Call John Dotson (828) 526-5587 for details. (st. 1/8)

VACATION RENTAL HIGHLANDSVACATION RENT. AL DOWNTOWN. 2/2 updated in 2014 with luxury master bath, king bed, marble & SS kitchen. Second floor condo two blocks off Main. Renovated like an Old Edwards Suite! W/D in unit, flat screen T.V., gas fireplace, off street parking. Available monthly \$1,600. Call 850-570-8210. (st. 12/25)

CLEAN 2/2 COTTAGE IN SKY VALLEY. \$540 weekly. \$1900 monthly. Furnished, utilities included, carport/ extra parking. Call: 706-746-3593. (st. 9/4)

RESIDENTIAL FOR SALE

CABINS FOR SALE/RENT. Located on Sawmill Road in Clear Creek. 4.63 acres. Call 828-526-2720. Price Negotiable. (1/8)

2BED/2BATH 1.20 AC. Fantastic views & Privacy \$88,999.00. Call 482.2050 706.782.9728. Cypresslanesale@facebook. (st. 8/7)

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

NORDIC TRACK TREADMILL. Brand new, paid over \$2000. Will sell for \$500. (st. 1/8)

FUR COAT - Mink with Fox Collar. Like new - \$2300. 828 526-4818 (st. 12/25)

SAMSUNG 55" FLAT SCREEN TV W/50" STAND. \$400. In Otto. 828-349-1453. (12/18).

5TH-WHEEL MOTOR HOME. Wanderer by Thor. 27ft. w/10ft. slideout. 2ft. repair needed. \$2,500. 828-200-9143. (st. 10/30)

PIANOS FOR SALE - 2 consoles, 1 spinet, 1 upright, 1 electric organ, \$150 each, all 5 for \$500. Call 526 4818 (st. 10/23)

WORMY CHESTNUT FOR SALE: Approximately 300 square feet of 3/4" wormy chestnut wainscot milled and finished. Board length 36"; width varies from 4" to 8". \$2800 lot price. 404-944-5298 (st. 3/20)

SERVICES

ALL AROUND OFFICE SOLUTIONS - Bookkeeping Services, Payroll Prep, Payroll Tax Prep, Billing Services, Virtual Assistant, Data Base Management, Administrative Services, Research Assistance, Quickbooks Set-up and Training. Call Mary James at 828-421-0002 or email mjames@allaroundofficesolutions.com (st. 12/4)

HIGH COUNTRY PHOTO/KEVIN VINSON: scanning photos, slides & negatives to CD or DVD for easier viewing. Video transfer to DVD. Everything done in house. Leave message at 828-526-5208. (st. 12/4)

HANDYMAN SERVICE - Electrical, plumbing, pressure cleaning, painting, carpentry, yardwork. References. Call Al Edgar at

cell: 332-7271 or 369-6245.(11/30)

I PAY TOP DOLLAR for premium low mileage automobiles 828-347-6600. (st. 6/5)

HIGHLANDS-CASHIERS

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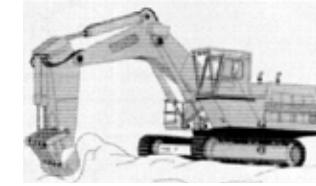
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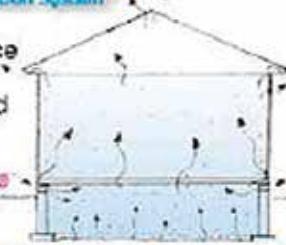
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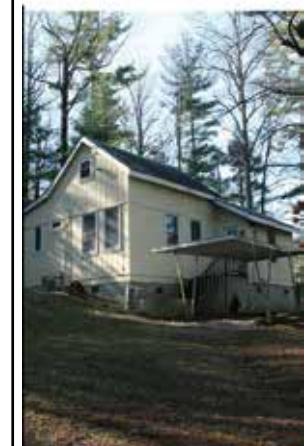
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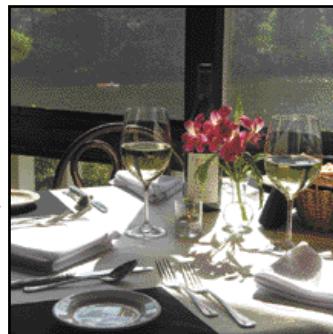


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