NC State Troopers target commercial vehicles along the Gorge Road

By Brian O’Shea

Truck drivers who ignored signs posting weight restrictions along the Gorge Road on Thursday may have made an unexpected stop because the North Carolina State Highway Patrol conducted an exercise targeting commercial vehicles and used a mobile scale to check trucks’ weight.

The specialized Motor Carrier Enforcement unit set up a mobile weigh station at the Highlands Community Building to make sure all vehicles that were stopped were within the 20,000-pound weight limit.

“It gives us a safe place to do it, so once we pull them over, we drive them back here and do the inspection,” said State Trooper Sgt. Gregg Dills, part of the MCE unit.

Dills’ unit specializes in improving driver safety by monitoring vehicle travel to decrease commercial-vehicle related fatalities. Before Thursday’s enforcement action, Dills met with Highlands Police Chief Bill Harrell and Town of Highlands Mayor Pat Taylor to discuss the issue of trucks driving up the Gorge.

“Parade photos”

The annual Highlands School Homecoming Dance was held Saturday, Dec. 1 in Coleman Hall at First Presbyterian Church. Each year, two seniors are picked as King and Queen by their classmates. Pictured are Jake Billingsley and Abby Olvera. See more Homecoming photos on page 13.

“Street name ‘Paul Walden Rd’ remains”

By Brittney Lofthouse

During the October meeting of the Macon County Board of Commissioners, residents from Highlands filled the boardroom to discuss the possibility of changing the name of Paul Walden Road. After discussion from commissioners and listening to both proponents and opponents of the change, commissioners denied the change due to lack of logical reason.

“It appears that the request has meet the criteria, but I tend to try to look at it from a practical stand point,” said Commissioner Karl Gillespie. “What the practical reason is for changing the name is what I struggle with.”

Paul Walden Road sits just off the intersection of Upper Lake Road and Biscuit Rock Road in Highlands and a group of residents petitioned the county to consider changing the name to Bear Cub Trail. Property owners along the road were not in agreement to change the name of road, and with residents of the road unable to agree, the board of commissioner didn’t vote for the change.

Diana Pinner and Louise Royal were first to speak in favor of changing the road name and supported the change because it was more in line with Big Bear Pen.
Last week was busy beyond just the Christmas Tree issue. Let me cover two other issues.

First, the Land Use Committee met with NCDOT officials and Highlands Chamber of Commerce representatives to discuss the parking and tree issue on Main Street. I was not at the meeting since my presence would have violated the quorum rule that the town has to follow.

I have seen the plans that were reviewed at the meeting. They called for a two trees to be planted approximately five feet from the travel lanes on two diagonal spots per block. There is no loss of parking, no parallel parking and no curbing.

A few days after the meeting the DOT folks informed us they are willing to issue an encroachment permit for that plan. I received feedback that all parties at the meeting thought progress had been made. The next step will be a full update and review by board of commissioners at the December 13 meeting.

Last Thursday there was a strong town presence of NC State Troopers in Highlands conducting an enforcement check for overweight trucks. According to Sergeant Gregory Dills, the regional supervisor the Motor Carrier Safety Assistance Program, these operations routinely take place throughout this 17-county region.

I had the opportunity to meet with Sergeant Dills, Chief Harrell and Town Manager Ward to discuss the issue of tractor trailer trucks using the Gorge Road. Sergeant Dills agreed that this is a major problem and gave his support to work with us in solving this problem.

Our police will be sending the sergeant reports of tractor trailer truck violations on the Gorge Road. He will notify his federal counterparts in the US Department of Transportation of these violations. The transportation department can send out notices to truckers and to insurance companies. These violations impact truck operators safety scores and also impact insurance rates and licensing privileges. Sergeant Dills says that the federal government can also direct truck companies to change their GPS systems to divert trucks from this route. All of this will not happen overnight but working together improvements should take place over time.

Also, I showed Trooper Dills our drawings of radar activated signs that would direct truckers away from the Gorge Road. He believes that the signs are a very good step and encouraged us to get DOT to place the signs on both ends of the Gorge Road.

He also stressed that the law governing tractor trailer trucks on the Gorge Road needs to be changed. Currently, the law is very complex involving 4 or 5 axle trucks and also has weight restrictions. Sergeant Dills stated it is currently difficult to enforce, and that the problem is tractor trailer trucks on the Gorge Road, period. He recommends we work with our state legislative representatives to get the law changed to ban all tractor trailer trucks on the road regardless of the number of axles, weight and size.

I will be working with county and Franklin officials in contacting our representatives to get this law modified as Sergeant Dills has recommended. Again, it will take time.

NCDOT OK’d the 5-ft encroachment from the travel-way rather than demanding eight feet. This means the plan to put two trees at the end of two diagonal parking spots on two blocks on Main Street will be considered at the Dec. 13 Town Board meeting. There will be a drain flush with the pavement and trees will be encircled with a wrought iron tree guard.

Theodore F. Wisniewski


He was born and raised in Buffalo New York, moving to Highlands North Carolina a few years ago, where he lived with his son at The Mountain. For Ted, the Mountain was a place of healing and acceptance.

He was the beloved husband of Pauline C. Harry Wisniewski; brother to Thomas F., devoted father of Najhe (Dave) Danglis, Amber (Mark) Zych, Dawn Kotin, Theodore

For Real-time Weather and the Extended Forecast, go to www.highlandsinfo.com and click on Weather.
HIGHLANDS IN-TOWN  Beautiful 3BR/3BA home in highly desirable Mirrormont. This charming home has been updated with all the bells and whistles you would expect to find in a brand new home. Gorgeous hard wood flooring on the main level with carpet in the bedrooms and slate tile in the bathrooms. Enjoy outside living on the huge back deck which has both open and enclosed areas for relaxation and taking advantage of our perfect climate. Only minutes to Main Street by car or minutes to Mirror Lake by foot. This home also has great potential as a rental with its proximity to town and everything Highlands has to offer. Whole home generator.

MLS# 88541 | Offered for $565,000

HIGHLANDS FALLS CC  Mountain views can be seen from this well-maintained 3BR/3.5BA home located in Highlands Falls Country Club where membership is OPTIONAL. Open floor plan, loft, plus a room upstairs for office/den or extra sleeping quarters, stone fireplace, wood floors in main area, vaulted ceilings, cul-de-sac location. HFCC provides 24-hour manned, gated security. If you choose to become a club member, amenities include an 18-hole beautiful golf course, croquet courts with a pavilion and fireplace, swim and tennis center, clubhouse with indoor and outdoor dining, a fitness center, and fishing.

MLS# 89575 | Offered for $499,000

PANTHER MOUNTAIN  Nestled next to the national forest, this home is located on Panther Mountain. Enjoy the peace and quiet while sitting out on the back deck enjoying the view. You will fall in love with the coziness, charm, and privacy this home has to offer. This home has an updated floor plan, neutral colors, whole house generator, and towel warmers are a few of the upgrades.

MLS# 89224 | Offered for $459,000

HIGHLANDS FALLS CC  This lovely villa has a wonderful screened porch plus two open decks for enjoying cool summer evenings. The great room has high vaulted, beamed ceiling with a floor-to-ceiling stone fireplace and handsome wood floors. This home was custom built and features include a larger master bath with jetted tub, separate shower, and dual vanities. Home owners are members of two HOAs - Highlands Falls Community Association and the Laurelwood Neighborhood HOA. Social or Golf Membership in HFCC is available with approval but not required.

MLS# 89398 | Offered for $495,000
**Highlands Area Dining**

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Join us for the Holidays and our New Year’s Gala

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Serving Lunch
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7 days a week

Serving Dinner
from 5:30p
7 days a week

**DUSTY’S**

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Beef Stew
With Garlic Cheese
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Salad for two
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$17.95
Heat and Eat call to reserve
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HIGHLANDS FALLS CC   Adorable
cottage has an older pedigree but has been updat-
ed with the addition of a large master suite plus a
lower level which features a family room and addi-
tional guest quarters. The main level features an
updated kitchen with a breakfast bar and opens
to the great room with stone fireplace. Large deck
with view of Shortoff Mountain. Offered completely
furnished and ready to enjoy.

MLS# 89050 | Offered for $445,000

CHESTNUT HILL One level living with a
living room and a den separated by a see-through
fireplace. The kitchen is open to the living room
and has SS appliances and granite countertops.
The bedrooms are large, each with a private bath
and the master has a walk-in closet. All exterior
home maintenance provided by the HOA includ-
ing roofs and siding plus road, landscape mainte-
nance, water and sewer. Beautifully furnished.

MLS# 89650 | Offered for $359,000

COLD SPRINGS This wonderful home is great for a
family. The front yard is perfect for children or pets and the back
covered deck is large and welcoming. The master boasts a fire-
place, a walk through closet, and a large bath with double vani-
ties, separate tub, and shower. Another bedroom suite is on the
lower level along with a wine storage closet and a sauna.

MLS# 89105 | Offered for $450,000

PINES Great large family home close to downtown Highlands. Home has 5BR/3BA with 3BR/
2BA on the main level. Separate kitchen and liv-
ing room, along with 2BR/1BA on the lower level.
Great for an apartment, mother-in-law suite, or
rental as it has its own entrance. Beautifully land-
saped outdoor space in a quiet community on
a level lot. Exterior building could be used as a
guesthouse or workshop.

MLS# 88586 | Offered for $365,000

HIGHLANDS This all on one level 3BR/
2BA home features wood floors, beautiful furnish-
ings, and a location that is only 6 minutes by car to
the center of downtown. A peaceful deck overlooks
the back yard and the wooded view. In a small
neighborhood of four homes, this home has easy
access off Highway 106. Attached two-car garage
with plenty of storage. Immaculately maintained
and perfect for year round home or rental income.

MLS# 87965 | Offered for $335,000
...on the Verandah Restaurant on Lake Sequoyah
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US 64 west • Highlands
Closed now.
Open Dec. 21-31
For reservations, call 828-526-2338

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LAKESIDE RESTAURANT
A UNIQUE FINE DINING EXPERIENCE
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www.lakesiderestaurant.info
Open for Dinner in December at 5:30
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Call 828.526.9419 for Reservations
531 Smallwood Ave. | On Harris Lake | Highlands

Let Dusty’s Prepare Your Holiday Sides and Desserts!
Serves 6-8
Squash Casserole
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*Holiday Pound Cake

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We will be closed Dec. 3-4, 10-25.
Make your reservations to celebrate New Year’s Eve with us!
www.wolfgangsn.net

Open New Year’s Eve!

For reservations, call 828-526-2338

...OBITUARIES continued from page 2
(Wendy) and Christopher (Heather), and many grandchildren, great-grandchildren and friends. For much of his life, he and his wife were involved in giving back to the community. He will be dearly missed.

If desired, donations to The Mountain Retreat and Learning Center, PO Box 1299, Highlands, NC 28741, would be welcome.

No services are planned at this time. Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.

Jeremy Robinson


He was born in Lansing, MI in 1996 and moved to North Carolina at a young age. Jeremy loved music, video games, playing football, and hanging out with friends.

He is survived by his foster mom, Kendra Johnson of Scaly Mountain, NC; foster dad, Michael Oliver Kelly; parents, Jeremy Roy Robinson of MI and Jennifer Grider (Chris Lindensmith) of NC; siblings, Christiana Robinson of MI and Noah Lindensmith of NC; foster siblings, Kenneth Charles Robinson of Franklin and Susan Marie Johnson of Atlanta; foster niece, Addison Grace Robinson; grandparents, Karen Ann Runken of FL, Charles Robert Robinson Sr. of MI, Fred Runken of Scaly Mountain, NC, Michael Grider of MI, and Sandra Mireles-Miller of NC; and numerous cousins, aunts, and uncles.

A Memorial Service will be held at 2 pm, Friday, December 7 in the Chapel of Macon Funeral Home. Rev. Steve Reeves will officiate.

The family will receive friends one hour prior to the service at Macon Funeral Home. Condolences can be made to the family at www.maconfuneralhome.com

Jeremy Robinson

Prepare to Fight the Winter Blues!
Book a private cooking class with Rachel at the Spice & Tea Exchange shop.
Get a group together and come ready for fun, good food and laughs!
$30/person

828-482-1609 • 330 Main Street, Highlands
Let the Light Shine In

“In order to shine some light on others, you gotta let some light into your life”

- Andy Stanley

What are some of the ways that the light shines in our lives?

During his Inaugural Address in 1989 then President George H.W. Bush (God rest his soul) talked about “A Thousand Points of Light” to celebrate the greatness, hope, and opportunity of American Volunteerism as an example to the rest of the world. There’s no doubt that Highlands, NC, is on that list. Walking around town this time of year, our hearts are warmed by the thousands of Christmas lights adorning local businesses, parks, and streets. After several days of heavy rain, high winds, and freezing temperatures the sun came out and the temps reached 50+ and I couldn’t help but just stand outside and soak it in, take a hike with our dog, and do a little fly fishing. Science tells us that regular doses of Vitamin D from the sun promote human health (as long as you don’t overdo it). Yes indeed, light and life are interwoven in many ways, and the purchase or selling of Real Estate is no exception.

So many times when we’re showing...
Karen Reese, who lives in Highlands year-round, said that a name change would confuse mail delivery and emergency personnel as she believes there are several roads already featuring the name “bear” located in Highlands.

According to Reese, the name should remain the same because Paul Walden played a significant role in the history of Highlands and the name should remain in his honor for his many contributions and service to the community in the 1930s.

Macon County Board of Commissioner Vice-Chair Ronnie Beale agreed with Reese. “I don’t see a good reason to change the name and no reason has been given to make the change,” said Vice-Chair Ronnie Beale. “Even though they are in the majority, I have yet to hear a good reason to change the road name. Ever since I can remember, the road has been called Paul Walden Road. This road name has a legacy, in my mind it has been that way for decades.”

As required, Macon County 911 Addressing Coordinator Angie Kinsland notified all residents of the request road name change via letter. All 12 property owners were made aware of the public hearing and encouraged to weigh in on the decision.

Prior to the public hearing, nine of the 12 property owners along the road agreed to change the name to Bear Cub Trail, however two, including Reese were against the change with a third resident not responding. According to Kinsland, three of the residents along the road have owned property along the road since the 1980s, which predates the road being named in honor of Paul Walden Road.

Paul Walden was married to Sarah Baty Walden and they lived in the first house on the left on Paul Walden Road.

Long ago, Paul was Highlands Santa Claus.

The Board of Commissioners voted four to one to not approve the request for the name change. Commissioner Chair and Highlands representative Jim Tate voted against denying the name change. Tate said he voted against denying the request because the majority of property owners supported the name change.

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...GORGE continued from page 1

“It’s an area that needs to be addressed,” said Dills. “I met with the Mayor and Chief and discussed getting some stricter rules in place. It comes down to drivers obeying the signs.”

But it’s not always the driver ignoring signage, Harrell said approximately 98 percent of drivers found in violation of road restrictions said their employers sent them along this route.

“The way the statute is written now, it would be an injustice to think these drivers have the time to read the fine print and know it front to back,” said Harrell. “Most of the blame goes to the dispatchers. That’s who send them this way. And the majority of drivers don’t want to come back here once they’ve been here.”

He added that many transportation companies are willing to take the ticket in violation for the more direct route.

“They’re not working for the truckers, they’re working for themselves,” said Harrell. “They don’t understand that even though it’s shorter on the map, it’s very tedious.”

So, what happens to repeat-offender who want to keep taking the ticket for the more direct route? Dills said that’s when the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, the agency in charge of all commercial travel in the United States, gets involved.

“These guys step in when carriers don’t obey,” said Dills. “They basically have the authority to shut them down and put them out of business, but it takes a lot to get to that point. Basically, I think the best thing to do is restrict all commercial traffic in the Cullasaja Gorge.”

Harrell said tractor-trailers are allowed to make deliveries up the mountain as long as their destination location is along the Gorge Road or an adjoining-side road.

This is an ongoing issue that has been discussed at Highlands Board of Commissioner’s meetings about working with the N.C. Department of Transportation to add some improvements to the signage or other systems to draw more attention to the restrictions of the Gorge Road. Mayor Taylor sent a letter to state representatives encouraging legislation that would ban tractor-trailer traffic coming up the mountain and asks area residents to do the same.

“I have written a letter concerning tractor-trailer trucks on the Gorge Road to Representative Kevin Corbin and Senator Jim Davis,” said Taylor. “I will request a follow up meeting with them to request new state legislation that would ban all tractor-trailer trucks on the Gorge Road regardless of the number of axles on the truck. This change would help law enforcement officers apply the law consistently. I encourage concerned citizens to contact their legislators requesting such a change.”

As of press time, it is unknown how many trucks were stopped or how many citations were issued at Thursday’s enforcement exercise.

Representative Kevin Corbin
828-524-7799
kevin.corbin@ncleg.net
P.O. Box 758, Franklin, N.C., 28744

Senator Jim Davis
828-342-4483
jim.davis@ncleg.net
37 Georgia Road, Franklin, N.C., 28734

Getting the overgrowth away from the house and roof will allow your property to breathe as the sun gets higher come springtime. Debris and roof moss are a leading cause of leaks inside the home, so the more direct sunshine your roof can take in, the better. Don’t worry, living in our rainforest will have your entire yard and canopy back in full bloom by June, I promise.

As Maya Angelou once said...

“Nothing can dim the light that shines from within.” It’s Christmas, may your heart and your home be filled with light, life, and joy. Merry Christmas everyone.

Pat Gleeson, his wife Deborah (aka Bee), and their dog Gemma are owners and brokers of White Oak Realty Group, located on 4th Street across from the Old Edwards Inn. White Oak Realty Group, founded in 2009 by Susie deVille, is one of the leading boutique brokerage firms on the Highlands-Cashiers Plateau. You can reach Pat, Bee, and Susie deVille at 828.526.8118.

...INVESTING continued from page 8
**Highlands Area Events**

**Ongoing**
- Movies at the Playhouse: Fri. & Sat.: 1, 4 & 7pm; Sun.: 1 & 4pm; Mon. & Tues.: 1, 4 & 7pm

**First Mondays**
- Shortoff Baptist Church non-denominational Men’s Mtg at 7p.

**Mondays**
- At the Rec Park, High Cardio Zumba Fitness with Certified Instructor Tiffany Austin at 5:15 p.m.
- First Mondays
  - Shortoff Baptist Church non-denominational Men’s Mtg at 7p.
  - At the Rec Park, High Cardio Zumba Fitness with Certified Instructor Tiffany Austin at 5:15 p.m.

**Mon. & Thurs.**
- The Joy Program at HUMC 11:30a to 1:30p. Includes a free lunch and a variety of programs and games. All seniors are welcome. For more info, call Tricia Smith at 828-338-8167.
- Mon. & Wed.
  - Gentle Yoga at the Rec park at 9:30. All levels welcome.
- Mon., Wed., Thurs.
  - Pickle Ball at the Recreation Department Gym 10:30am - 1pm
  - FREE Community Table Dinner at the Community Bldg. at 6p.

**Tuesdays**
- The Humanist Discussion Group meets from 10:30-11:30a in the Meeting Room in the back of Hudson Library.
- The Highlands Writers Group meets to read, workshop, or to just share information on writing, every Tuesday, 3pm-5pm, in the downstairs board room at The Bascom, 323 Franklin Road, Highlands. For more information, call 828-526-3190.
- 2nd and 4th Tuesdays
  - OccupyWNC meets at the 7pm in the Sneak E. Squirrel Community Room (1314 Main St., Sylva. Visit www.occupywnc.org or call 828-331-1252

**Third Tuesday**
- The Macon County Poultry club meets to discuss topics related to raising backyard chickens. For more information please call 828-349-2046 or 828-369-3916.
- Third Tuesday
  - The Macon County Poultry club meets to discuss topics related to raising backyard chickens. For more information please call 828-349-2046 or 828-369-3916.
  - Highlands School Winter Concert at 6 pm in Highlands School Old Gym. K-8 students will perform a mix of winter and holiday music.
  - Winter Special through December: 10% off all dog toys!!!

**Wed., Sat.**
- Exercise Class with Michelle Lane at 5:15. A combination class with many different styles of exercise at Rec Park.
- Wed. - Sat.
  - At Highlands Inn on Main Street held in the dining room. Afternoon Tea 2-4:30pm. Royal Tea: $45; Classic Tea: $35. Call 828-526-9380 for more information.

**First Wednesdays**
- Family Movies at the Hudson Library at 3:30p. Call 828-526-3031 for titles.
- 3rd Wednesdays
  - Recently released movies at Hudson Library at 2pm. Call 828-526-3031 for titles.

**2nd and 3rd Thursdays**
- Indivisible Highlands, a non-partisan activist group meets at the Hudson Library at 5p. For info call 770-823-0601.

**Third Thursdays**
- Kidney Smart Classes in Franklin: from 4:30-6pm, Angel Medical Center, Video Conference Room, 3rd Floor, 120 Riverview St. Contact Majestic 828-369-9474

**Fourth Thursday**
- At the Hudson Library, Kids Zone LEGO Club. Intended primarily for kids in grades 1-5, LEGO Club allows creativity and STEM skills to develop together as kids enjoy making LEGO creations.

**Saturdays**
- At The Bascom, Pottery Sale in the barn from 10a to 5p.
- Scrabble at Hudson Library from 1-4 p.m. Bring board if possible. All are welcome. 727-871-8298.
- The Bascom Knitters on the Terrace at The Bascom from 10 am until noon or downstairs in The Bascom Library room.

**Sundays**
- Live Music in OEI’s Hummingbird Lounge 8 p.m. to close with Paul Jones.

**Through Dec 30**
- At The Bascom, interweaving Southern Baskets. The art of basketry, including examples of Native American works and fine art baskets.

**Thurs., Dec. 6**
- Highlands School Winter Concert at 6 pm in Highlands School Old Gym. K-8 students will perform a mix of winter and holiday music.
- Lively Kirtan and Bhaga-
BULGOGI, a classic Korean grilled beef, is easy to make and traditionally made for sharing. A perfect addition to the holiday meal planning! Enjoy!

**Korean Beef Bulgogi**

**Ingredients from The Spice & Tea Exchange:**
- 2 TBS Korean Bbq rub
- 4 tsp garlic powder
- 1/2 TBS white sesame seeds

**From Grocer:**
- 4 TBS soy sauce
- 3 sesame oil, divided
- 1 TBS brown sugar
- 1/2 sweet Fuji apple
- 1/2 onion
- 3 green onions
- 1/2 large carrot
- 1 1/2 lb thinly sliced beef

**Preparation:**

**Make the marinade**

ADD soy sauce, 2 TBS sesame oil, brown sugar, Korean Bbq rub, and garlic powder in a large bowl or zip lock bag.

**GRATE** 1/2 of a sweet Fuji apple into the marinade and mix well.

**CUT** onion and green onion into thin, 2 inch slices, then cut lengthwise. Add to mixture, reserving a bit of green onion for garnish.

**PEEL** carrot (or julienne) into 2-4 inch slices. Add to mixture.

**ADD** meat into the marinade and mix well.

**Prepare the meat:**

**HEAT** 1 TBS sesame oil in a large skillet (or wok) on medium heat.

**COOK** the marinated beef until cooked through, about 5-10 minutes until browned and remove from pan.

**ADD** white sesame seeds to pan and toast lightly, 1-2 minutes.

**Meanwhile,** chop reserved green onion into smaller slices.

**SERVE** beef sprinkled with toasted white sesame seeds and green onions.

**Pair with one of our delicious rice blends:**
- Saffron Yellow, Bamboo Green or Coconut Green.

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**Special event at the Highlands Playhouse, Dec. 8**

Continuing our tradition of bringing Hollywood to your door, on Saturday, December 8, we will host a special presentation of the hit film *Instant Family,* starring Mark Wahlberg and Rose Byrne.

Also featured in the film is a local canine named Keeper. Keeper, his owner, and his handler from the film will be here at the Playhouse for a Special Benefit showing of the film.

Prior to the 4p show, we’ll host a Q & A with Elizabeth and Keeper and find out what it was like being a part of a major Hollywood production.

At 4p we’ll enjoy the movie, then follow the film with a chance to meet Keeper and take home a souvenir photo or “paw-0-graph.”

This event is a fundraiser benefitting the Highlands Playhouse, so show your support for cinema on the plateau and take part in this special afternoon.

Tickets are only $10 and will be available at highlandsplyhouse.org or in our box office on Monday December 3rd.
Let's Go Again

Experts in Orthopedic Care for every adventure.
With board-certified orthopedic surgeons, outpatient therapy that accepts appointments without a physician referral, restorative care and pain management, Harris Regional Hospital offers comprehensive orthopedic care. We are committed to caring for you where you need it most—close to home and with the providers and staff you trust.

For an appointment with a provider that is an expert in your orthopedic care, call 844.414.DOCS.
MyHarrisRegional.com

Despite the rain, 40 floats turned out for the parade spreading the Christmas spirit to all who braved the elements.

– photos by Kim Lewicki

Rain or Shine ... Highlands Annual Christmas Parade, Sat., Dec. 1

Despite the rain, 40 floats turned out for the parade spreading the Christmas spirit to all who braved the elements.

– photos by Kim Lewicki
Highlands School Homecoming Dance, Sat. Dec. 1

This year’s celebration was held in Coleman Hall at the First Presbyterian Church on Saturday, Dec. 1 – Photos by Sunset Staff

Harris Regional Hospital welcomes Todd Davis, MD
Family Care

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WALK-IN’S WELCOME
High school basketball played Franklin and Hayesville for their first two games of the season.

All four teams played these games. Neither JV girls nor Varsity girls could pull out a win against Hayesville.

However, JV boys and Varsity boys were both able to pull out the win over Hayesville.

Later that week for their homecoming game they played Franklin at home. None of the teams were quite able to finish on top although a majority of them ended very closely.

Their next home game will be on Monday, Dec. 11. JV girls will start at 4, JV boys following, then Varsity girls, and finally Varsity boys. They will play against Hiwassee Dam for their first conference game.

Middle school basketball played Blue Ridge, Rabun Gap, and Summit.

The girls were unable to finish with a win in any of the games but gave a strong fight through them all.

The boys beat both Blue Ridge and Summit. They were unable to finish against Rabun Gap with a win but did so in their other games.

Their next home game will be on Thurs., January 17. Only the boys will play, starting at 5 pm against Eagle Ridge.

Come out and support your Highlander Basketball teams!

Note:
For aspiring basketball team players, December 10th is the last day to sign up for Macon County Boys Basketball. Sign up online or at the Highlands Rec Park.
For more information, call Rec Park Director Lester Norris at 828.526.3556.
Looking for Something to Do?

According to statistics collected by the Corporation for National and Community Service, approximately one in four Americans perform some sort of volunteer service. North Carolina ranks 29th among states at 25.9% volunteer participation.

The missus and I both volunteer regularly, as do many of the folks we know. We volunteered while we were still working full-time and we probably will continue, in some form or another, for as long as we can.

If we could determine participation here on the Highlands-Cashiers plateau, my guess is we’d outperform both the state and the national numbers, likely because we have so many people with available time to engage in volunteer community service, especially now, around the holidays.

I was stunned one day when a good friend, whom I hold in the highest possible regard, told me that he’s never volunteered, for anything. He said he never even gave it much thought and didn’t really understand why people do volunteer.

This reminded me of a joke another good friend once told a gathering of volunteers in Orlando, Florida, where we used to live:

“The word ‘volunteer’ is rooted in the Greek word, ‘volun,’ which loosely translates as, ‘to kill one’s self,’ and ‘teer,’ which comes from the Latin, and means, ‘for nothing.’”

Everyone in the room got the joke, and my friend moved on with his presentation. I think this probably, when taken literally, explains the attitude of my other friend, who never participated in any organized volunteerism. I mean, who wants to kill himself for nothing?

As the conversation deepened, I learned my friend sometimes was a lector in his church. I also found out he regularly carted pet food he’d purchased, even when he didn’t have a pet, to his local animal shelter. And, when he was a younger man, he sat on the board of a trade organization.

Even those who say they don’t, often do volunteer without really thinking about what it means to do so.

I believe, with every fiber of my being, one of the worst things we ever did as a nation involved eliminating the military draft in the wake of the Vietnam War. I didn’t always feel this way. In fact, even though I personally volunteered to serve in the Air Force for four years during the Vietnam era, I thought at the time our participation in that war was so wrong and so misguided that no young man or woman should be conscripted to serve there.

That said, I now also fervently believe our country should institute some kind of mandatory national service, for from two to four years, including military service, for literally every young person, at some time between his or her seventeenth and twenty-sixth birthdays.

This, I believe, would instill in young Americans some notion of service, an ethic to be carried forward throughout adulthood.

The volunteer need in our nation, state, and local community is enormous. Very often, those with either a built-in or learned volunteer mentality tend to volunteer in multiple situations. We know those people. Some of us are, or have been those people.

Volunteering, beyond those in religious or business-related cases, can make a huge positive impact in non-profit areas such as health and human services, arts and culture, education, and our environment. Even here, on our little plateau, there are numerous opportunities, if you are so inclined.

My friend’s attempt at humor notwithstanding, volunteering isn’t the act of killing one’s self for nothing. The true definition involves willingly donating one’s time or talents for charitable or other worthwhile endeavors and activities, especially in one’s community.

Some folks, as was the case with my first friend, participate without knowing or thinking about it. Some others, who place a higher value on their time, thankfully choose to provide financial resources. This is welcome as well.

And, while any notion of “return on investment” shouldn’t be a reason for doing service in the community, the rewards, both tangible and intangible, are typically pretty spectacular.

The government report referenced earlier indicated nearly 25% of Americans volunteer. The other 75%, for whatever reason, either don’t or, as I like to think, haven’t yet had the chance. I learned a long time ago that people become volunteers when the right person asks another right person. Chances are excellent you know where you can find an opportunity to put your available time and talent to work for the benefit of your community. Do it now!

Consider yourselves asked.
A bookaholic problem

We bookaholics would say you can never have too many books, but I’m beginning to think I have too many on my TBR (to be read) list. I can’t help myself. I see book reviews in the paper and add books to the list; I get Amazon emails with book suggestions and add more to my list; I get BookBub emails and do the same; my friends make suggestions on GoodReads and many of those titles go on the list. Do you see my problem?

Never mind reading all these books; the way I keep my list is problematic too. I scribble titles and authors on scraps of paper by my easy chair or near the glider on the screened porch. Eventually, those scraps make it to my office and then three different lists take shape.

I start by checking the library online to see if they have the books either in hard copy or in ebook form. Reading two books a week means the library is always the first stop. If I’m lucky enough to find the titles there, I put them on my library wish lists so I can later place the book on hold. Because the library system tracks ebooks separately from hard copies, I have two lists there.

If the books aren’t available at the library, which is the case for books early in a series or for many of the British mysteries I like, then I visit Amazon. There too, I can add books to my wishlist. This process means I am constantly updating three different lists, and sooner or later I have to find time to order and read the darned things.

Don’t get me wrong, I live to read. I must read for at least 30 minutes before I turn out the lights at night. Often, the time stretches to two hours, yet I can’t even begin to get to all the books on my multiple lists. Perhaps if I hadn’t taken up writing, I could devote more time to reading, but that’s another story entirely.

Curious readers may wonder, “What books are on these lists?” Let’s start with a handful from the hard copy library list, and, omigosh, there are 55 books on that one: Finding Atticus, My Sister’s Grave, Eleanor Oliphant is Completely Fine, The Janus Stone, The Butterfly Garden, The Case of the Baker Street Irregulars, The Wife Between Us, Let the Devil Sleep.

On the ebook list are those that aren’t available in paper or a few that I may want to take on a trip, where Kindle reading is preferable. Phew, there are only 15 there:

See ALL ABOUT BOOKS page 17
• Police & Fire Reports •

Highlands Police entries from Nov. 9. Only the names of persons arrested, issued a Class-3 misdemeanor or public officials have been used.

Nov. 9
- At 3:26 p.m., officers received a report of a simple assault at a restaurant on Main Street.
- At 6:30 a.m., officers received a report of destruction and vandalism to Town of Highlands property in the public restrooms in K-H Founders Park where the hand towel dispenser and soap dispenser were damaged. Damages are estimated at $300.
- At 1:30 p.m., police received a report of a breaking and entering at a residence on Horse Cove Road.
- At 11:56 a.m., officers responded to a two-vehicle accident on NC 106 near Spring Street.

Nov. 17
- At 5:45 p.m., officers received a report of a resident on NC 106 receiving threatening messages via phone.
- At 10:38 a.m., officers responded to a two-vehicle accident on Satulah Road.

Nov. 19
- At 9 a.m., officers received a report that a mailbox at a residence on Buttermilk Lane was opened. At 4 p.m., officers responded to a one-vehicle accident on Oak Street.

Nov. 20
- At 3:15 p.m., officers received a report of a shoplifting incident where merchandise valued at $395 was taken and put in a purse at Vivace on S. 4th Street.

Nov. 21
- At 9 a.m., officers responded to a one-vehicle accident on NC 106.

Nov. 27
- At 12:28 p.m., officers responded to a two-vehicle accident on Poplar Street.

Nov. 29
- At 1:30 p.m., officers responded to a two-vehicle accident at Old Edwards parking lot near Spring Street.

The Highlands Fire & Rescue log from Nov. 14.
Nov. 14
- At 12:47, the dept. was first-respond-

...ALL ABOUT BOOKS from page 16

Body on Baker Street, Sweet Little Lies, Every Last Lie, Different Class, The Storied Life of A. J. Fikry, A Spool of Blue Thread.

Last but not least, there’s the Amazon list: Don’t Let Go, Sherlock Holmes and the Shakespeare Globe Murders, Queen of Camelot, European Travel for the Monstrous Gentlewoman, The Forever King.

If you look these titles up, you’ll find mostly mysteries, many set in England or Europe. A few books dubbed literary fiction also show up, as do one or two about dogs or cats.

What, you may ask, is wrong with having long lists of books to read? Perhaps it’s realizing there’s no chance I’ll ever get to read them all unless I cease adding new titles. Cease adding new titles? Horrors. Any bookaholic will tell you that’s not likely. And so, I may have to resign myself to never reading all the books that interest me. I guess there are worse problems for a gal to have.

- Kathy is a Georgia resident. Find her books “The Ink Penn: Celebrating the Magic in the Everyday” and “Lord Banjo the Royal Pooch” at Books Unlimited in Franklin and on Amazon. “Lord Banjo the Royal Pooch” is also available at Highlands Mountain Paws. Contact her at inkpenn119@gmail.com, and follow her on Facebook, www.facebook.com/KathyManosPenny.Author/.

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Are You in a Good Prison?

By Dr. Gary Hewins
Community Bible Church

I recently had the privilege of sharing a week of teaching with a highly persecuted group of Christian church leaders in the Middle East. This “semi-covert-op” was eye concerning at times, but deeply gratifying. There is nothing like the reality of potential persecution to refocus one’s perspective on our Christianity here in the west.

One particular new pastor friend of mine shared his experience of imprisonment with me. From the day this mild-mannered, quiet soul entered the prison, he had no idea how long his stay would be. From day to day he had no idea if he would be incarcerated for a year, for two years, or even for 20 years. A target date for his release was not his reality. Therefore, there was no need to count days or look forward to anything in any way.

But to him, a release date didn’t matter much, because those who imprisoned him did not really place him there. Nor did they have much say-so as to when he could leave. Prior to his incarceration, he had asked the Lord to do anything necessary to transform his character as a man to reflect the beatitudes in Matthew 5. To my friend, the Lord placed him in that prison to develop a poverty of spirit, a sense of mourning over that which grieves the Holy Spirit, a deeply teachable meekness, a hunger and a thirst for righteousness, a mercy for those who guarded him, a purity of heart, a ministry of reconciliation among those who sought to destroy him, and a joy in his persecution.

To my new friend, he was imprisoned by the Lord for the purpose of becoming more Christ-like because he had asked for such a Christ-likeness. His arrest sheet said something different but the truth is, he was imprisoned to become “freer” as a believer. Sometimes if we want to grow in Christ we must go where he went, into a dungeon.

Here is a man that while in prison longed less for deliverance and more for the Deliverer. He sought the fulfillment of the purpose of his imprisonment because in time, freedom would be the result of that purpose being fulfilled. Time heals no wounds; Jesus is the healer.

Upon my return home, these men and women of faith left me pondering a great deal about challenges in life. When in a “prison” of sorts, ask the Lord what His purpose is while you are restricted by sickness, lack, loss, depression, or some other “wall.” His answer will likely be a greater dependence upon Him, a deeper intimacy, and a richer honesty between you and Him. Perhaps nearness to Him should be our primary prayer request rather than the knowledge of our release date. Some prisons are so dark and solitary that only He can lead you out.

Conversely, not all prisons in life are bad. Some actually should be sought after. Upon my return home I thought of Philemon v. 1. “Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother, To Philemon our dear friend and fellow worker.” In a way, the committed believer in the 21st century wants to be a prisoner of Christ. This does not mean that you long to be confined to some cell somewhere only to be forgotten. No, on the contrary, perhaps we should all long to be prisoners in Christ that...
...SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING continued from page 17

...POLICE & FIRE continued from page 17

ers to a residence on High Pasture Road.
- At 12:58, the dept. was first-re-
sponders to a residence on Oak Road.

Nov. 15
- At 2:56 a.m., the dept. was first-re-
sponders to a residence on the Franklin
Road.
- At 6:49 a.m., the dept. responded to
a motor vehicle accident on Walhalla
Road.

Nov. 17
- At 6:02 p.m., the dept. was first-
responders to a residence on Woodland
Hills.

Nov. 18
- At 3:09 p.m., the dept. responded to
a motor vehicle accident at 5th and
Spring streets.
- At 3:47 p.m., the dept. responded to
a motor vehicle accident on NC 106.

Nov. 19
- At 1:39 p.m., the dept. responded to
a fire alarm at a residence on Half Mile
Drive.

Nov. 20
- At 6:16 a.m., the dept. responded to
a grease fire on Main Street.
- At 2:24 p.m., the dept. was first-re-
sponders to a residence on Foreman Road.
- At 9:13 p.m., the dept. responded to a
CO2 alarm at a residence on Bowery Road.

Nov. 21
- At 8:54 a.m., the dept. responded to a
motor vehicle accident on NC 106.
- At 11:01 a.m., the dept. responded to
a fire alarm on Hudson Road.

Nov. 22
- At 8:52 a.m., the dept. was first-re-
sponders to a location on Main Street.

Nov. 23
- At 2:38 p.m., the dept. provided mu-
tual assistance to Scaly for a fire on Lazy
A Rd.
- At 7:53 p.m., the dept. was first-
responders to a residence on Chestnut
Street.
- At 9:53 p.m., the dept. responded to
a fire alarm at a residence on Shortoff Lane.

Nov. 20
- At 6:16 a.m., the dept. responded to
a grease fire on Main Street.
- At 2:24 p.m., the dept. was first-re-
sponders to a residence on Foreman Road.
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CO2 alarm at a residence on Bowery Road.

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- At 2:38 p.m., the dept. provided mu-
tual assistance to Scaly for a fire on Lazy
A Rd.
- At 7:53 p.m., the dept. was first-
responders to a residence on Chestnut
Street.
- At 9:53 p.m., the dept. responded to
a fire alarm at a residence on Shortoff Lane.

Perhaps the difficulties that we have
endured had within them a greater purpose
that we somehow missed. Perhaps we can
waste these challenges and never seize the
deep liberation that would have come from
seeking Him and His kingdom in the dark-
est and dampest seasons of our life.

Perhaps, on another occasion, I will
share with you the stories of the men and
women that my new friend led to the Lord
while in “prison:” men and women that he
would likely have never met apart from his
imprisonment. Regardless of your situa-
tion, however painful or agonizing, it is
quite true that His grace is sufficient. May
you live today nearer to the freedom that
only those who have been imprisoned can
enjoy.

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Dec. 5, 4-6p and Dec. 9, 10a to 1p. Six complete hotel suites for sale - king beds, sofa beds, tables, chairs, curtains, TVs & more! Mountain Brook Suites, 411 N. 4th Street, Highlands. Cash only & pick up immediately. 404-323-9444.

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IN TOWN, 1.21 acres for sale by owner. If the property is not sold by Dec 31, 2005, then the deed may be void. The purchaser will have no further remedy.

NOTE: UNDERMEN WOULD BE IMMEDIATELY DUE AND OWING.

If the trustee is unable to convey title to this property for any reason, the sole remedy of the purchaser is the return of the deposit. Reasons of such inability to convey include, but are not limited to, the filing of a bankruptcy petition prior to the confirmation of the sale and reinstatement of the loan without the knowledge of the trustee. If the validity of the sale is challenged by any party, the trustee, in their sole discretion, if they believe the challenge to have merit, may request the court to declare the sale to be void and return the deposit. The purchaser will have no further remedy.

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