

Highlands Newspaper

FREE Every Thursday

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The money side of town business

Thanks to an upswing in the economy, which has translated into increased sales, franchise and property tax revenues – not to mention the town's healthy

Electric Fund – the mid-year review presented at the annual Town Board retreat March 8 revealed a very healthy bottom line for Highlands.

According to Town Manager Josh Ward and Town Finance Director Rebecca Shuler, compared to February 2017, all revenues are

• See MONEY page 10

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Highlands School students help feed the hungry



The Highlands Middle and High School SGA, Interact, Beta Club and FCA with the help of students and their families in elementary, middle and high school collected items for the area's local food pantries. The three pantries contacted were The International Friendship Center's Food Pantry at the Highlands United Methodist Church, the Highlands Emergency Council and Fishes and Loaves in Cashiers. The food drive ran from March 5-16. This week, Penny Wars began and the money collected from Penny Wars will be divided between the three local pantries. All three food pantries are MANNA food banks. The Food Pantry is located on the lower level of the Highlands United Methodist Church Fellowship Hall on the Spring Street side. Distribution of food is on Mondays from 3:15-5:30 p.m. In 2017, 70 families were served. The Emergency Council is on Poplar Street. In 2017 it served 96 families. The Loaves and Fishes food bank is on Frank Allen Road in Cashiers behind the Cashiers Fire Department. It is staffed each Monday and Thursday from 4:30-6:30 p.m. It serves upward of 2,000 families each year.

Sheriffs, superintendents weigh in on arming volunteers in schools

In 2013, North Carolina legislators passed a law that would allow non-deputized law enforcement officers or former military to serve as armed guards for schools. The law, which was passed in response to the Sandy Hook tragedy, would allow armed, trained volunteers to provide extra security at schools, but they'd have to meet specific qualifications.

According to the law, volunteers would be heavily vetted and need to meet a strict set of criteria. For example, they must have experience as a sworn law enforcement officer, or as a military police officer with at least two years experience. If a person is no longer with the armed services, they must have had an honorable discharge.

Just a week after the school shooting in Parkland, FL, one North Carolina sheriff was supported by members of the NC legislative body, including Speaker of the House Tim Moore, at a press conference announcing his intent to develop such a program.

Rockingham County Sheriff Sam Page, along with the Rockingham County Schools Superintendent Dr. Rodney Shotwell want to start the program this fall.

In Western North Carolina, school superintendents in both Macon and Jackson counties said the possibility of such a program locally would be left up to the respective sheriffs.

"We are open to hearing suggestions regarding volunteers in our schools and we encourage you to contact Sheriff Chip Hall to discuss details," said Jackson County Schools Superintendent Kim Elliot. "The sheriff and his department have worked closely with our schools to ensure safety and we are extremely appreciative of our collaborative work."

Macon County Schools Superintendent Dr. Chris Baldwin said that he is familiar with the law but would leave such a decision up to Sheriff Robert Holland.

"I am aware of the legislation

• See ARMING page 14

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• THE PLATEAU'S POSITION •

• MAYOR ON DUTY •

Road paving, dogs, Duke and more

The March Highlands Town Board meeting is tonight at the Highlands Community Building next to the ball field. It begins a 7pm with the public comment period being as always, the first item on the agenda.

There will be several important items up for approval. At the town retreat a draft dog ordinance was presented. The ordinance has a civil fine of \$250 for not properly removing dog waste from public and town property, including Founders Park. Another part of the proposed ordinance would require dogs to be on leash in all areas zoned for business or governmental property such as parks and recreational areas. The only exception would be The Greenway where dog owners would be required to maintain control of their animals.

Our Public Works Director and Town Engineer, Lamar Nix, will report on two proposed road projects. At the town retreat, Lamar presented four options to pave Sunset Rock Road. All options were expensive, and there was no certainty the paved road surface would last. Some commissioners thought there were other paving



Highlands Mayor
Patrick Taylor

projects that had higher priority. Lamar will also present a plan not to pave the road and to keep it a pedestrian venue. He will also provide his assessment of paving Arnold Road.

The Hudson Library will be hosting the Community Coffee with the Mayor tomorrow at 11 pm. My guest will be Town Manager Josh Ward. He will talk about the development of the town budget and other town matters. As always, questions and ideas are welcomed.

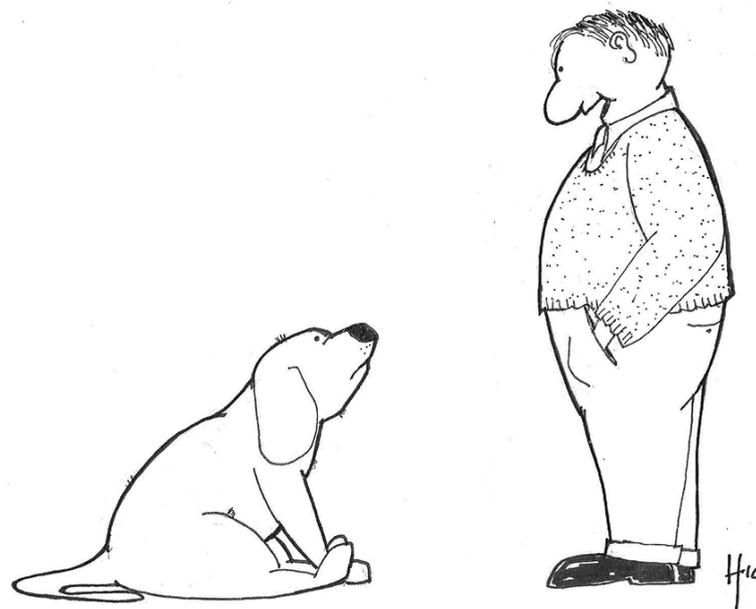
Saturday, April 21 is the Highlands Plateau Cleanup. It is sponsored by the Highlands Chamber of Commerce with support from the US Forest Service and the Town of Highlands. Volunteers are encouraged to call the Chamber at 526-2112 in advance to sign up. Beverly Wichman, the chamber coordinator will need a volunteer count prior to the event. The cleanup begins at the Highlands Chamber of Commerce at 10 am. Volunteers should begin arriving around 9:30 to get their assignments and equipment. Lunch will be served at Cliffside Recreational Area at noon for all the weary volunteers.

Let me share an update concerning Duke coal fees from our consultant, Kevin O'Donnell.

He projects Duke will receive about 90% of the coal ash costs they requested from the North Carolina Utilities Commission. It can only be viewed as a big win for

• See **MAYOR** page 21

• HIC'S VIEW •



whicseven@yahoo.com

"Welcome to our household staff. As head of security, you will get room and board, medical, a window seat, and Thursdays off. Any questions?"

• LETTERS •

USFS proposes cutting old growth forest; Your input is required immediately!

Dear Editor,

The US Forest Service has released details on the Southside Timber Project. Below I have listed reasons why we are op-

posed to the proposal. If you agree please send an e-mail to Ranger Mike Wilkins asking him to withdraw the Southside For-

• See **LETTER** page 7

• WEATHER •

	Friday 3/23		Saturday 3/24		Sunday 3/25	
	Daytime	Overnight	Daytime	Overnight	Daytime	Overnight
Temp	49 F	34 F	47 F	42 F	51 F	30 F
RealFeel [®]	49 F	28 F	52 F	37 F	56 F	41 F
Winds	6 g 9	3 g 6	4 g 6	3 g 5	4 g 7	4 g 6
T-Storms	2%	3%	16%	24%	3%	31%
Rainfall	0	0	0	0.25	0	0.02
Snowfall	0	0	0	0	0	0

For Real-time Weather and the Extended Forecast, go to • www.highlandsinfo.com and click on Weather

Highlands Newspaper

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Letter Policy:

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

• OBITUARIES •

Gregory Paul Alford



Gregory Paul Alford born August 7, 1953 rode his Harley home on September 3, 2017. He was preceded in death by his parents Julius ("Jake") Anderson Alford and Mary Virginia Alford.

Surviving family includes sons Nicholas (Julie) Alford and Jamie Rhymes, and granddaughters Madelyn and Olivia. He is also mourned by his five siblings, Holly (Tom) Coffey, Andy (Gale) Alford, Julie (John) McCall, Chris-

Friend.

topher (Mary) Alford, and Michelle (Matthew) Alford-Williams. "Uncle Lurch" will also be missed by his eight nieces and nephews and six great nieces and nephews.

The family invites friends to attend a Celebration of Life at Goldmine Baptist Church on Saturday, March 24, 2018, at 1 PM followed by a gathering at the Fellowship Hall to remember their loved and missed Father, Brother, Uncle and

Lewis Ellison 'Preacher' Dendy

Lewis Ellison "Preacher" Dendy, 91, of Highlands passed away on Thursday, March 8, 2018 at Memorial Campus of Mission Hospitals in Asheville. Born March 9, 1926 in Highlands, he was a son of the late Floyd and Mae Henry Dendy. He attended Highlands School but was a lifelong learner.

During WWII, he served in the U.S. Navy in the south Pacific, and afterwards he worked as a carpenter and later was employed at the Wildcat Cliffs Country Club. He was a member of Shortoff Baptist Church and the American Legion Post 370 in Highlands.

The great outdoors is where he felt most at home as he enjoyed fishing, hunting, golfing, gem and mineral collecting, and the study of Native American heritage.

In addition to his parents, he is preceded in death by his siblings, Alvin Dendy, Jessie Dendy, Carrie Neely, and Margaret Neely. Surviving are his wife of 70 years, Mary Lou Wines Dendy; children, Robert Dendy of Highlands, Dorothy Dendy Smith of Black Mountain, and Barbara Dendy of Winston Salem; siblings, Mozelle Edwards of Highlands, Ervin Dendy and spouse, Barbara, of Clyde, and JoAnne Elmore and her spouse, Harris, of Highlands; grandchildren, Eric C. Smith and his spouse, Jessa Decker-Smith, of Denver, Natalie Dendy of Franklin, Jeffery Smith of Black Mountain, and Michelle Pendergrass and her spouse, Travis, of Franklin; and great grandchildren, Taylor, Eli, Amos, and Hazel.

A celebration of his life will be held in the summer of 2018. Memorials may be made to Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy, 372 Merrimon Avenue, Asheville, NC 28801. Condolences may be made to the family at www.ashevilleareaalternative.com.

Elizabeth Russell McCall

Elizabeth Russell McCall, 83, of Leesburg, FL, formerly of Highlands, NC, passed away Friday, March 9, 2018. Born in Macon County, she was the daughter of the late James Russell and Martha Munger Russell. She was married to Willis G. McCall, Sr. who preceded her in death December, 1999.

Mrs. McCall was employed by the Lake County School System as a school bus driver. She was a devoted wife, mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, sister and friend.

Survivors include her daughters, Wilma Carpenter (Michael) of Murphy, Sarah Carpenter (Morris) of Leesburg, FL, Cathy McCall of Virginia and Teresa Fry (Bruce) of Nashville, TN; her son, Willis Gordon McCall (Mary) of Dona Vista, FL; sisters, Mary Lynch of Leesburg, FL, and Faye Dill of Grovetown, GA; brothers, Milford Russell of High Springs, FL, James Russell of Cashiers, John Russell of Oregon and Charles Russell of Frankfort, Germany and many grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

In addition to her parents and husband she was preceded in death by a sister, Martha Carl.

A funeral service was held Friday, March 16, 2018 at noon at Clear Creek Baptist Church with Rev. Oliver Rice officiating. Burial followed in the church cemetery.

Online condolences are available at bryantgrantfuneralhome.com. Bryant-Grant Funeral Home and Crematory is serving the McCall family.



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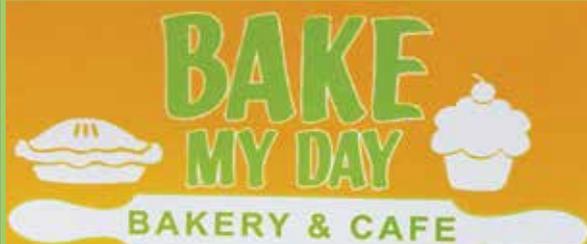
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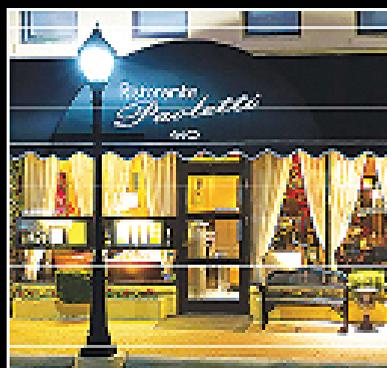
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• MILESTONE •



Golf is in her blood

Anna Stiehler, a 13-year-old and 7th grader on the
Highlands School Golf Team, just won medalist among
girls and 2nd place overall in the first of three Junior
High matches in the Tri-State Conference.

"She mopped the floor with those boys," said her
proud Dad, HCC Golf Course Superintendent. "I sus-
pect she will do big things in high school."

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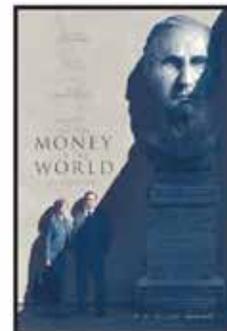
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Ingredients

- 2 bags of Emerald Cove Sea Vegetable Salad
- 4 organic cucumbers



- 1 large yellow onion
- 2 large organic carrots
- Organic gluten-free tamari
- Organic toasted sesame oil
- Organic rice vinegar

Directions

1. Open seaweed salad packages and soak in large bowl of warm filtered water for 10 mins, then drain in colander for 5 minutes.
 2. Using a clean cutting board and sharp chef's knife, chop seaweed evenly into small bite-size pieces.
 3. Wash 4 organic cucumbers -cut off ends, cut lengthwise in half and then quarters, then 1/8" pieces.
 4. Finely mince 1 large yellow onion.
 5. Wash, peel and shred 2 large organic carrots.
 6. Mix everything together in large bowl.
- Dressing**
- 1/2 cup organic gluten-free tamari
 - 4 TBS organic toasted sesame oil
 - 4 TBS organic rice vinegar

Make dressing, pour over salad and stir well. Pour into glass storage container, cover and refrigerate. Garnish with toasted sesame seeds before serving.

Keeps refrigerated for 5-7 day.

Eating healthy on a budget

Join the registered dietitian from Highlands-Cashiers Hospital for a lunch-and-learn presentation about healthy eating on a budget, Tuesday, March 27 at the Highlands Civic Center noon-12:30 p.m. This is a free community event. Lunch will be provided.

Space is limited to 20 guests. RSVP to Anna Claire Ramey at (828) 526-1489.

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2018 Holy Week Schedule:

PALM SUNDAY, March 25th - 11am Mass

**GOOD FRIDAY, March 30th - 12 Noon
Begin Stations of the Cross w/other churches.
Good Friday Service 3 p.m.**

EASTER SUNDAY, April 1st - 11am Mass

**At St. Jude in Sapphire Valley:
HOLY THURSDAY, March 29th - 6 pm Mass
HOLY SATURDAY, March 31st - 7:30 pm Easter Vigil Mass**

... LETTER continued from page 2

est Proposal. Immediate action is required. The USFS requires that comments "should be within the scope of the proposed action, have a direct relationship to the proposed action, and must include supporting reasons for the responsible official to consider". Please send comments to: comments-southern-north-carolinanantahala-nantahala@fs.fed.us. Talking points are listed below:

1. Old Growth Forests to be logged. Almost 60% of the 317 acres proposed for timber harvesting has trees 100 years and up to 200 years old. These forests are rare ecosystems rich in biological diversity. Once cut they will be managed for timber production. Only one half of one percent of our original old

growth forests remain. The given reason for cutting this old growth is to create "early successional habitat" for certain species. This can be accomplished by cutting younger stands in less sensitive areas. The proposal includes cutting old growth on Brushy Mountain and at Granite City. Ask the forest service to not cut old growth at Brushy Mountain and Granite City, and in stands 41/42, 41/44, 41/40 41/47, 40/42, 40/13, and 29/16 that are over 100 years old.

2. Massive amounts of herbicides will be used to select only species for commercial timber harvesting. Other native species like dogwoods and redbud will be eliminated. The World Health Organization says glyphosate is "probably cancer causing." These

chemicals persist in the environment for a significant time period. Access roads will be managed with herbicides as well and this is significant acreage.

3. Timber sales are likely to occur at a loss, costing taxpayers money. The proposal does not disclose and include the cost for road building, administrating and planning sales, burning, and herbiciding. Roads cost \$50-70,000 per mile to build and the expense of maintaining them.

Please send your comments in opposition to the proposed Southside Timber Project by midnight Monday. And spread the word - The more comments, the better!

Jodie Zahner
Highlands

The Macon County Democratic Convention is Saturday, March 24th

The Macon County Democratic Convention is Saturday March 24 at the Robert C. Carpenter Community Building in Franklin on 441S.

The convention begins at 10a and light refreshments will be served.

Democratic candidates will speak with Julia Buckner, President-Elect of the NC Democratic Women, the keynote speaker.

All registered Democrats and Unaffiliated voters are welcome and encouraged to attend.



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Highlands Hurricanes win Winter Invitational

On Saturday, March 3, the Highlands Hurricanes hosted the North Georgia Rapids (NGR), and the Jackson County Swim Team for a Winter Invitational Swim Meet. The Hurricanes prevailed 522 to NGR's 325 and JCST's 77.

The Hurricanes swam 35 swimmers who won 152 ribbons (29 Blue) set 91 personal records (PRs), 16

team records and 11 pool records.

The Hurricanes were led by Jr. Olympic Champion Chase Kenter, Jr. Olympic qualifier Masyn Smith, Savannah Byrd, Jr. Olympian Conner Hughes, and Kate Phillips.

Kenter won five races, set five pool records, four team records, four Personal records and scored 35 points.

Smith won four races, set three pool records, three team records, one PR and scored 33 pts. Byrd won three races and two PRs and scored 31 pts; Hughes and Phillips both scored 29 pts. Hughes won two races, set two team records had three PRs, while Phillips won three races, set three team records and had five PRs.

Elias McKim won three races, set a team record, had three PRs, scored 26 pts, while younger brother Aniah also won three races set a pool record, a team record, had four PRs and scored 25 pts.

Ben Halldin won a race, had four PRs and scored 24 pts. Penelope Hillson and Layla Babak both scored 23 pts. Hillson had a PR, and Babak set a team record and had three PRs. Jordan Powell and Finneaus Garner both scored 21 pts. Powell had two PRs and won a race. Garner had four PRs.

Jr. Olympian Jack Sumner, Aubrey Potts, and Dasha Halldin all scored 20 pts. Sumner had three PRs, Potts two PRs, and Halldin won

a race and had four PRs. Jelehna McKim scored 17 pts, won a race and had three PRs. Justin Powell scored 15 pts, won a race and had three PRs. Lauch Young scored 14 pts and had two PRs. Andre Halldin and Max Jestin both scored 12 pts. Halldin had five PRs, Jestin two PRs. Vivian Kennedy scored 11 pts, and had two PRs. Oliver Dyer scored 10 pts, and had three PRs, while younger brother Townsend scored 8 pts and had two PRs. Peyton Kaylor and Elizabeth Hillson both scored seven pts. Hillson won a race.

Ace Stubblefield and Jackson Bowling both scored five pts, and had two PRs. Max Deppe, Samuel Dyer, Fen Hillson and Asa Garner all scored four pts. Deppe and Dyer had three PRs, Hillson four and Garner two. Mia Kaylor scored two pts and had a PR. Lucas Deppe had three PRs. Henry Couch and Ryder Stubblefield had two PRs.

The Highlands Hurricanes are Highlands Recreation Park Swim Team who practice at the Highlands Recreation Park Pool. The only requirement to join the team is that a candidate must be able to swim 25 yards unassisted. For more information please call Head Coach Steve Hott at 828.421.4121 or the Highlands Recreation Park Pool at 828.526.1595.

Dr. Joseph H. Wilbanks, D.D.S.

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Highlands Middle School Track Team 2018



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- Photo by Kim Lewicki



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... MONEY continued from page 1

up and expenditures are where they are supposed to be.

“As of February 2018, property tax collections have increased \$22,984.06 compared to February 2017 which represents a collection rate of 96.703%,” said Ward. “Sales tax revenue as of February 2018 has increased \$7,230.73 compared to February 2017; Franchise Tax revenue as of February 2018 is \$6,375.70 which is more than in February 2017; and General Fund revenues collected as of February 2018, (not including \$261,946.39 in donations for Police & Recreation projects) is \$355,425.34 more compared to General Fund revenues collected as of February 2017.”

Ward and Shuler said they anticipate

meeting all budgeted utility fund revenues with expenditures holding below the required 66.6% range.

“All utility funds should be at or below 66.6% spent as of February 2018. Water is at 35%, Sewer is at 67%, Sanitation is at 65% and Electric is at 41% spent as of February 2018,” they said.

On July 1, 2017, the beginning of 2017-’18 budget year, the Town made a general fund balance appropriation of \$703,439. As of February 2018, the appropriation was increased an additional \$513,350, which has left \$271,713,60 in the General Fund.

“Budgeted General Fund expenditures are 70% spent,” said Shuler.

In public sector accounting, the prima-

ry or catchall fund of a government, is the General Fund. It is similar to a firm’s general ledger account and records all assets and liabilities of the entity that are not assigned to a special-purpose fund. It provides the resources necessary to sustain the day-to-day activities and thus pays for all administrative and operating expenses.

Aside from the taxes and fees that fund the town’s General Fund, the town of Highlands relies on its Enterprise Funds – electric, water, sewer and sanitation – for income.

Whereas the fees levied for water, sewer and sanitation are priced to basically ensure those departments break-even – it’s a different story for the Electric Fund.

The Electric Fund has always been healthy and helps sustain the town. Money in the fund is routinely transferred to the General Fund, and the other Enterprise Funds as needed – usually for capital expenses regarding repairs and upgrades.

For 2017-’18, \$4,950,000 in revenues was budgeted for the Electric Department – 78% or \$3,816,490.40 has been allocated so far with expenditures at just 41%.

Highlands buys its electricity from Duke Power at a wholesale rate and then sells it back to the residents of Highlands.

Now that the NC Utilities Commission has ruled in Duke’s favor, the town has to include Duke’s coal ash recovery fees on utility bills. It’s an extra \$4.42 for residential users and \$15.46 for commercial users per month. These items are listed as a different line item on the bills so customers know it’s Duke charging them not Highlands.

To date, Highlands has paid \$16,585.31 for Duke’s Coal Ash expenses.

People have long complained that Highlands utility bills are higher than anywhere else. As it turns out that’s not exactly true, but what is true is the town’s 950+ residents – and the full-time ones at that – are shouldering the Electric Fund which basically keeps Highlands running so well.

The electric rate for residential service in Highlands is \$20.31 for the basic charge and .1146 per Kwh.

The basic charge for Duke residential customers in the county outside the town limits is \$11.80 and .0934 per Kwh.

The basic charge for Haywood Electric is \$25 and .012 per Kwh.

Highlands falls right in the middle of the rate structure and to be fair, it’s the money collected for the Electric Fund that has made Highlands a first-rate mountain town.

Highlands boasts top-notch infrastructure including up-to-date water and sewer facilities and an electric grid all of which ensure clean, reliable delivery.

Infrastructure also includes its road-

ways, sidewalks, parks and recreation facilities, arts facilities, street lighting – everything that makes Highlands a place people want to visit or call home.

With Duke already proclaiming the need for a rate hike – 15%-16% for their residential users in the county – it’s likely even Highlands wholesale rates will continue to rise.

But is relying on Highlands Electric Fund as a bank for all Highlands’ needs sustainable – especially when it rests on the backs of so few?

Currently, many seasonal in-town residents close their houses for the winter or lower the thermostat to 50-55 degrees but still the Electric Fund must be fed.

Though it wasn’t discussed at the retreat, that is on the minds of the mayor and commissioners.

One suggestion was to discount the electric rates during peak times.

Another is to raise the money Highlands needs through a room tax. After all, Highlands infrastructure needs grow with increased tourist traffic.

Currently, the Chamber of Commerce gets the 3% room tax proceeds – about \$600,000 a year. However, most tourist communities levy a much higher room tax, upwards of 10%. Mayor Pat Taylor and other municipal leaders in the state are hoping for legislative help on that matter.

Another way to take the pressure off the Electric Fund would be a tax increase – an increase full-time and seasonal in-town residents would shoulder equally.

The town’s current property rate is .164 per \$100 valuation with .015 (1 ½ cents) of that going solely for recreation.

“At current property values, the town gets roughly \$170,000 for each cent levied. The 1 1/2 cent for the recreation nets roughly \$250,000,” said Ward.

Currently, owners of a home valued at \$250,000 pay \$410 in property tax per year.

If the town increased its tax rate by one penny to .174, owners of a home valued at \$250,000 would pay \$435.

If the town increased its tax rate by two cents to .184, owners of a home valued at \$250,000 would pay \$460.

Just two cents would net the town roughly \$340,000, which could lessen the need to continually raise electric rates at Duke’s bidding.

In addition, a couple of cents tax hike, which is basically paid once a year, would ultimately be less than the ever-present, monthly, rising electric bills.

The mayor and at least one commissioner are up for discussing various options, realizing something’s got to give.

– Kim Lewicki

Join us this Easter

celebrating the resurrection of Jesus
at Highlands United Methodist Church

315 Main Street with

Pastor Randy Lucas and Asst. Pastor Jennifer Forrester

March 25

Palm Sunday ~ 9:09 & 10:50 services

March 28

Mid-week Lenten Lunch & Worship Service at noon

Seder Meal `5:15 p.m.

March 29

Maundy Thursday Service ~ 7pm

March 30

Stations of the Cross ~ 12p.m.

Good Friday Service ~ 7 pm

April 1

Ecumenical Sunrise Service ~ 6:45am

Join us and other churches

at K-H Founders Park

Easter Services

The Living Cross ~ 9:09, & 10:50am

Bring a flower to place on the outside living cross
before each service.

Easter Coffee Break ` 9:45 a.m.

Children’s Egg Hunt ~ 10am

For more information, please call 526-3376

DOG SPEAK

• REFLECTIONS FROM LORD BANJO •

Introducing our newest columnist

I have a huge announcement, huge I tell you. While I've occasionally written columns for Mum when she's busy, I was beyond excited when the editor of the Highlands Newspaper asked me to write columns on a regular basis. Hear ye, hear ye, Lord Banjo is now officially a columnist. Yes, you read it here first.

Mum will continue to write "The Ink Penn," and I'll write "Dogspeak: Reflections from Lord Banjo" on alternate weeks. I'll let you be the judge of whose writing is more interesting. Since Mum was once an English teacher, and I learned at her feet, so to speak, I'd say we're both fairly erudite. Whose columns you prefer may depend more on the topics than the style.

Mum will graciously help with my columns, as my paws are too big for the keyboard. That means she'll take dictation, type, and, submit my work. She's also in charge of negotiating my fee. Since we live in Georgia and our editor lives in North Carolina, I can't request payment in belly rubs, as I usually do, and I don't think Mum would accept shipments of the table scraps I crave even if our editor agreed. I may have to settle for boxes of Itty Bitty Biscuits, the only treats allowed on my very strict maintenance diet.

You'll understand about my diet, if you've read my book, and if you haven't, I must ask, "Why not?" It's available on Amazon.

Anyway, the short version of the diet story is that I lost ten pounds on a starvation diet, prescribed and supervised by the Royal Physician, and I've managed to keep



the weight off for over a year. It hasn't been hard to keep off, as the Royal Parents are very careful about what they feed me and very, very vigilant about keeping me away from the cat's wet food.

Will you think less of me if I confess that I chuckle to myself when I hear my parents moan about their winter weight gain? Did you know dogs could chuckle?

You'd chuckle too if you heard my dad complain about his weight, walk me twice a day in an attempt to lose a pound or two, and then ask Mum where she hid the chocolate. He is incorrigible when it comes to chocolate or any sweet for that matter. Snickers and peanut M&Ms are his favorites, and Mum doesn't allow those in the house.

Mum's downfall seems to be cheese and crackers and perhaps the tasty soups and stews she cooks when it's cold outside. Maybe if the Royal Parents stuck to a daily ration of two cups of dry food, supplemented with a dental chewie and a few Itty Bitty Biscuits, they wouldn't have this problem. Can you see why I have not much sympathy for their plight?

Suffice it to say that someone in the Penn household is always on a diet, and from time to time, someone manages to lose a few pounds. The Royal Pooch, so far, is the champ at keeping the pounds off.

Surely, the Penns aren't the only ones fighting winter weight gain. With Easter baskets on the horizon, will you succumb to the temptation of chocolate rabbits or will you start a diet because warm weather is just around the corner? Food for thought?

Plateau Pick-Up is April 21

The Highlands Chamber of Commerce is hosting its annual Plateau Pickup on April 21 – cleaning litter on the Gorge Road between Highlands and Franklin.

If you're interested in volunteering, call the Highlands Chamber of Commerce at 828-526-2112. Volunteers will meet at the Highlands Visitor Center at 10 a.m.

Wear comfortable clothing and shoes and the Chamber will provide the supplies needed for the clean-up – vests, gloves, litter pick up tools, and garbage bags. All volunteers will receive a tee-shirt as a "thank-you" gift.

Following the event, volunteers will be treated to a hamburger and hotdog cookout at Cliffside Lake.

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Springer Mountain Boneless Thighs	2.59 lb.
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Boston Butt Pork Roast	1.59 lb.
Assorted Pork Chops	1.59 lb.
Center Cut Pork Chops	1.99 lb.
Country Style ribs	1.59 lb.
Boneless Pork Loin Whole	1.99 lb.
Boneless Pork Chops	2.99 lb.
Pork Tenderloins	2.99 lb.
Baby Back Ribs	2.89 lb.
BEEF	
Boneless Chuck Roast	3.99 lb.
USDA Choice Strip Steak	9.99 lb.
USDA Select Strip Steak	7.99 lb.
USDA Prime Strip Steak	12.99 lb.
USDA Choice T-Bone Steaks	8.99 lb.
Famiy Pack Ground Chuck	3.79 lb.
Family Pack Ground Beef	2.99 lb.
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• HIGHLANDS AREA EVENTS •

Highlands Rec Park Pool Schedule

- Lap Swim: Monday-Friday, 6am-10am 6 lanes.
- Lap Swim: Monday-Thursday, 6-7pm 1 or 2 lanes. Sharing pool with Water Aerobics @ 6:15.
- Public Swim: Monday-Thursday, 3-6pm, Saturday, 11am-6pm and Sunday 1-6pm.
- Water Aerobics: Monday-Friday, 10:15-11:15am and Monday-Thursday, 6:15-7pm (sharing pool with lap swimmers) and Saturday mornings from 10:15am-Noon.
- Pool available for pool parties Friday, Saturday and Sunday evenings 6-8pm.

Ongoing

- Movies at the Highlands Playhouse: Movies: Fri-Tues, 2, 5 8 p.m.

First Mondays

- Shortoff Baptist Church non-denominational Men's Meeting at 7 pm

Mondays

- At the Rec Park, High Cardio Zumba Fitness with Certified Instructor Tiffany Austin at 5:15 p.m.
- Hip Hop classes with Tori Schmitt at 5:30-6:30 at the Rec Park.

Mon. & Thurs.

- The Joy Program at HUMC from 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., Fri.

- Heart Healthy Exercise Class

Monday, Wednesday and Friday 8:30am-9:30am with Susan Nastasic.

- Aerobics with Tina Rogers 8-9a.

Mon., Wed., Thurs.

- Pickle Ball at the Recreation Department Gym 10:30am -1pm

Tuesdays

- FREE Community Table Dinner at the Community Bldg. at 6p.
- The Humanist Discussion Group meets every Tuesday morning from 10:30-11:30a in the Meeting Room in the back of Hudson Library,

First Tuesdays

- The monthly family support group for those with family members, friends, or loved ones living with the challenge of mental illness meets at 7 p.m. at Memorial United Methodist Church, 4668 Old Murphy Road, Franklin. For info call 369-7385.

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 828.331.1524

Third Tuesday

- The Macon County Poultry Club meets at the NC Cooperative extension office located at 193 Thomas Heights Rd., Franklin on the third Tuesday of each month at 7pm. Meetings are open to the public. Call 828-369-3916.

Tuesday and Thursdays

- Zumba with Connie at the Rec Park 8:15 a.m. \$5 By appt. Call 813-625-6785.

- Exercise Class with Michelle Lane at 5:15. A combination class with many different styles of exercise.

Wednesdays

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

3rd Wednesdays

- Recently released movies at Hudson Library at 2pm. Call 828-526-3031 for titles.

Wed. & Fri.

Duplicate Bridge 12-4pm

Thursdays

- Storytime with Miss Deanna at Hudson Library 10:40 am. Open to the

public.

• NAMI Support Group for individuals dealing with mental illness and the family members of individuals dealing with these challenges from 7 – 8:15 pm. at First United Methodist Church Out Reach Center on West Main Street beside Bryant's Funnel Home. Call Donita for more info (828) 526-9510.

• Hip Hop classes with Tori Schmitt at **6:30-7:30 at the Rec Park.**

2nd Thursdays

• Sapphire Valley Needlepoint Guild meets at the Highlands Rec Park at 10 a.m.

3rd 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

1st and 3rd Thursdays

• Indivisible Highlands, a non-partisan activist group meets weekly at the Hudson Library at 5p. For more info call 770-823-0601

Saturdays

• Zumba with Connie at the Rec Park 10-11am By appointment only. Call 813-625-6785.

• 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.

Thurs.-Sat., March 22-24

• Highlands-Cashiers Players Dinner Theatre with four one-act plays. Seating begins at 6:30 p.m. at the Performing Arts Center on Chestnut Steet in Highlands. Wine will be available at a cash bar. Reservations are required. Tickets may be purchased by calling the box office at 828 526 8084 or on line at highlandscashiersplayers.org.

Thurs., March 22

- Students from local middle

Encore production of Hamlet at PAC this Saturday



The Highlands Performing Arts Center will screen the National Theatre of London's encore production of Shakespeare's classic Hamlet on Saturday, March 24 at 1pm. Academy Award® nominee Benedict Cumberbatch (BBC's Sherlock, The Imitation Game, Frankenstein at the National Theatre) takes on the title role of Shakespeare's great tragedy. As a country arms itself for war, a family tears itself apart. Forced to avenge his father's death but paralyzed by the task ahead, Hamlet rages against the impossibility of his predicament, threatening both his sanity and the security of the state. Tickets are available online: highlandspac.org, at the door or by calling 828.526.9047 All Students will be admitted free of charge. Highlands Performing Arts Center, 507 Chestnut Street Highlands NC

• HIGHLANDS AREA EVENTS •

schools will visit Highlands-Cashiers Hospital as part of the Students@Work program. At 11 a.m., the students will observe a respiratory life-saving-measures demonstration. The respiratory therapist will show the students how to intubate a pig lung, what lungs do for your body and the importance of the organ, and what is the pathway to becoming a respiratory therapist. Students@Work is an initiative that provides middle school students with exposure to potential careers in their local communities. The goal of the initiative is to ignite students' interest in potential careers. Nancy Lindell, Public and Media Relations Manager, Mission Health, (828) 775-4716

Fri., March 23

• Monthly Community Coffee with mayor Pat Taylor which is held on the last Friday of each month at the Hudson Library in the Meeting Room from 11a until noon. This month's talk will be with the mayor and Town Manager Josh Ward on the evolving budget and other town matters. Refreshments will be provided

by Big Brothers Big Sisters of Highlands. For more information call the Hudson Library at 828-526-3031

Sat., March 24

• The Highlands Performing Arts Center will screen the National Theatre of London's encore production of Shakespeare's classic Hamlet at 1 p.m. Tickets are available online: highlandspac.org, at the door or by calling 828.526.9047 All Students will be admitted free of charge. Highlands Performing Arts Center, 507 Chestnut Street Highlands NC

Sun., March 25

• Fiber Sunday will take place at Cowee Textiles from 2-5 p.m. in room 104 at The Cowee School Heritage Center located at 51 Cowee School Dr. Franklin N.C. 28734. Bring a textile project you are working on from spinning, knitting, weaving, rug hooking, baskets etc. Call or e-mail Teresa Bouchonnet at 828 349-3878 or bouchonnet@coweetextiles.com if you have any questions.

Tues., March 27

• Join the registered dietitian from Highlands-Cashiers Hospital for a

lunch-and-learn presentation about healthy eating on a budget, Tuesday at the Highlands Civic Center noon-12:30 p.m. This is a free community event. Lunch will be provided. Space is limited to 20 guests. RSVP to Anna Claire Ramey at (828) 526-1489.

Fri. April 6

• At the Highlands Biological Station, a Mushroom Workshop. Cost is \$50. For more information, call 828-526-2221.

Sat., April 21

• The Highlands Chamber of Commerce is hosting its annual Plateau Pickup on Saturday – cleaning litter on the Gorge Road between Highlands and Franklin. If you're interested in volunteering, call the Highlands Chamber of Commerce at 828-526-2112. Volunteers will meet at the Highlands Visitor Center at 10 a.m.

• Highlands-Cashiers Land Trust, The Village Green and the Albert Carlton-Cashiers' Community Library are teaming up to present to you the Festival of the Stars, a North Carolina Science Festival event. The Festival of the Stars will take place on Saturday, April

21st, 2018 from 5-11 PM at the Village Green in Cashiers, NC. Everyone is welcome at this free family-friendly event!

Wed., April 25

• Principals, students, teachers, clergy, parents, neighbors, law enforcement, health workers, government officials, veterans, senior citizens, and community partners, you are invited to "From Bully-to-Buddy" a community forum for Macon County on Wed., 6-8 pm. at Tartan Hall, Franklin, NC. For the bully, the bullied and those in between – all ages – all genders. Come hear JJ Calloway and Monster share how he overcame difficult times in school www.monstersgreatadventures.com Other guests include: community police, student resource officer, veterans and community partners. Featuring: interaction, role playing, dialogue, discovery and direction, refreshments (and some fun!) Enter our contests for prizes: \$75, \$50, \$25. (256) 398-0039 www.carolynlhiggins.com/bully-to-buddy

Mushroom Workshop at Highlands Bio Station April 6

The Highlands Biological Station will host Grow Your Own Shiitake Mushroom workshop on April 6 at the Station. The workshop will be a morning of learning about fungi and how to inoculate hardwood logs with spores of the shiitake mushroom. For \$50 all the materials will be provided for the workshop and one can leave with a shiitake log to take home and grow mushrooms.

Shiitake mushrooms, the mushrooms of the oak, have been grown in Japan for over 2,000 years. The health benefits of the shiitake, along with its flavor, have made them a staple in the kitchen. Demand for the shiitake has grown and by growing them at home, DIY mycology has taken off in the United States.

This summer, the Highlands Biological Station will offer a variety of workshops sure to peak the interest of every Highlands resident and visitor.

These fun and educational courses are geared toward the community with options for all.

Workshop topics this summer include nature photography, wildflowers, natural science illustration, birding, tree identification, and more. The length of each workshop varies as well so you can find one to fit your summer schedule whether it is 2 hours, 2 days, or a week.

The Highlands Biological Station serves the community of Highlands and all who visit. Please stop by to stroll the Botanical Garden, which is open 365 days a year from dawn until dusk. Plan on joining us this summer as well for our Zahner Conservation Lecture series, an educational workshop, or a children's nature camp.

For more information regarding our summer workshop schedule, visit www.highlandsbiological.org or give us a call at (828) 526-2221.

HCP's Dinner Theatre continues this week Thurs-Sat.



The Highlands Cashiers Players will present a dinner theatre with four light-hearted one-act plays at the Martin-Lipscomb Performing Arts Center on Chestnut Street Thursday through Saturday, March 22-24. This is their first production for the 2018-'19 season. The plays will be performed between courses of dinner served downstairs. Wine will be available at a cash bar. The Dinner Theater will start seating at 6:30. Reservations are required. Tickets may be purchased by calling the box office at 828 526 8084 or on line at highlandscashiersplayers.org.

• HS SPORTS •

with Kedra Mc-



This week, girls soccer played Hayesville, Stephens County, and Madison. They lost all three but are getting more comfortable each game.

They lost 3-2 to Hayesville, 5-0 to Stephens County, and 6-2 to Madison. Their first home game will be on Monday, March 26th. They will play Tri-County EC starting at 4:30 pm.

Both middle school and high school golf teams had matches this week. The middle school team is made up of only Anna Stiehler. She played at Apple Mountain golf course and finished 1st in girls and 2nd overall. The high school had matches at Smokey Mountain and Conestee Falls (Rosman's home course). They finished first at Rosman and 2nd at Smokey.

High school track had their first track meet this past week. Coach Lamb said "I was pleasantly surprised with the team with several high finishes and lots of personal records. Things are looking good." Pablo Jimenez placed 4th in long jump, Anne Marie placed 2nd in the 800, and in the high jump, Maddie Drummond placed 2nd and Zaia Rodriguez placed 4th.

... ARMING continued from page 1

and program in Rockingham County," said Dr. Baldwin. "This statute provides the local Sheriff's Department with another option for securing schools. Our current SRO program is the best in the state, in my opinion. I support Sheriff Holland's decision regarding how to best utilize the authority granted him by this statute."

On Tuesday morning, Sheriff Robert Holland was in route to Raleigh to attend a meeting on School Safety organized by North Carolina House Speaker Tim Moore. Moore appointed the bipartisan House Select Committee on School Safety following the Florida shooting. Sheriff Holland was invited to attend the meeting in Raleigh and to share his expertise on the issue. Sheriff Holland said the possibility of establishing volunteer programs allowed under the law would likely be a topic of discussion at the meeting.

From a local perspective, Sheriff Holland said he hasn't ruled out the possibility, but would want to evaluate a program closely.

"I will research this legislation and see what options we actually have for in the fu-

ture but I will never allow our standards at the MCSO to be lowered in an effort to escape our financial responsibilities," said Sheriff Holland. "I, along with our county leaders, have proven through the years our commitment to supporting safer and more secure schools and it's a continuous and ever changing process. Our commissioners, school board and school superintendent are unified in this endeavor with us. School safety remains a priority for us all and I will continue to be personally involved in making sure only the best qualified candidates for employment are given the opportunity to serve as School Resource Officers to protect our most precious and most vulnerable citizens."

Holland said not just any certified law enforcement officer can be an SRO.

"It takes a special kind of officer to be able to hold that title and accept the responsibilities that come with it," he said. "I have many great officers in my department but only a select few have what it takes to take on this task."

He said each Macon County Sheriff's

• See ARMING page 15

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On the corner of 3rd & Spring

Highschool Track 2018

Jesus Damian, Maddie Drummonds, Pablo Jimenez, Anne Marie Moore, Zaia Rodriguez, Collin Stoltzfus, and Tessa Wiesniewski.

— Photo by Kim Lewicki

... ARMING continued from page 14

Office SRO personally asked for the position and willingly accepted the responsibility that came with it.

"It's far more difficult of a job than most people truly understand or appreciate. I am extremely proud of each of them and the important service they provide to our community," said Holland. "As parents we depend on them to do whatever it takes to protect our children and I'm grateful for what they are doing daily to stay on the top of their game."

Some counties like Rockingham County and school districts don't have a School Resource Officer in every school, which is one of the selling points of the volunteer program. Macon County, however, has funded an SRO for every school in the district.

Full context of the law:

G.S. 162-26 reads:

(a) The sheriff may establish a volunteer school safety resource officer program to provide nonsalaried special deputies to serve as school safety resource

officers in public schools. To be a volunteer in the program, a person must have prior experience as either (i) a sworn law enforcement officer or (ii) a military police officer with a minimum of two years' service. If a person with experience as a military police officer is no longer in the armed services, the person must also have an honorable discharge. A program volunteer must receive training on research into the social and cognitive development of elementary, middle, and high school children and must also meet the selection standards and any additional criteria established by the sheriff.

(b) Each volunteer shall report to the sheriff and shall work under the direction and supervision of the sheriff or the sheriff's designee when carrying out the volunteer's duties as a school safety resource officer. No volunteer may be assigned to a school as a school safety resource officer until the volunteer has updated or renewed the volunteer's law enforcement training and has been certified by the North Carolina Sheriff's Education and Training Standards Commission as meeting the educational and firearms proficiency standards required of persons serving as special deputy sheriffs. A volunteer is not required to meet the physical standards required by the North

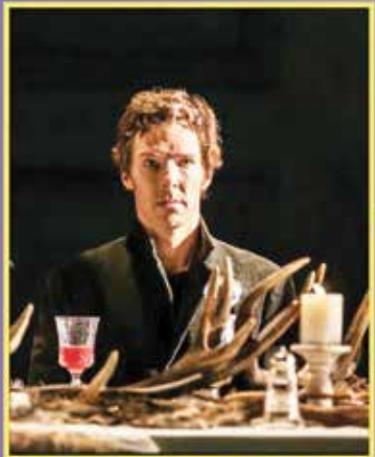
Carolina Sheriff's Education and Training Standards Commission but must have a standard medical exam to ensure the volunteer is in good health. A person selected by the sheriff to serve as a volunteer under this section shall have the power of arrest while performing official duties as a volunteer school safety resource officer.

(c) The sheriff may enter into an agreement with the local board of edu-

cation to provide volunteer school safety resource officers who meet both the criteria established by this section and the selection and training requirements set by the sheriff of the county for the schools. The sheriff shall be responsible for the assignment of any volunteer school safety resource officer assigned to a public school and for the supervision of the officer.

(d) There shall be no liability on the part of and no cause of action shall arise

against a volunteer school safety resource officer, the Sheriff or employees of the sheriff supervising a volunteer school safety officer, or the public school system or its employees for any good-faith action taken by them in the performance of their duties with regard to the volunteer school safety resource officer program established pursuant to this section. (2013-360, s. 8.45(e).)






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A future in the Highlands-Cashiers area is in our sights

By Steve Heatherly
CEO, Harris Regional Hospital

Harris Regional Hospital and Swain Community Hospital have been serving our mountain communities for more than 160 years. We are honored to provide primary care, emergency care, and dozens of subspecialties including orthopaedics, cardiology, surgery, and women's and children's care, in addition to ancillary services such as physical therapy and sports medicine, high-tech imaging, oncology services, pain management, and wound care. Both hospitals became part of Duke LifePoint Healthcare in 2014, joining in western North Carolina Haywood Regional Medical Center, Rutherford Regional Health System, and Frye Regional

Medical Center.

Harris Regional Hospital is not in active dialogue with any regional partner regarding a purchase of Highlands-Cashiers Hospital. A number of conditions, including mutual interest among regional partners, must exist for such activity to occur. Additionally, Harris is not in the process of obtaining land to build a facility in southern Jackson and Macon counties.

Harris Regional Hospital, positioned geographically as a hub for healthcare, is committed to improving access to care for the communities we serve in Jackson, Macon, Swain and Graham counties and the surrounding area. We are pleased to provide a breadth of services, new state-of-the-art technology, and a focus on the patient ex-

perience delivered in a high-quality, safe environment closer to our communities than Asheville, Greenville, Charlotte, or Atlanta.

Our approach to evaluating regional needs has included multiple community forums across the region characterized by open discussion and conversation, and meetings with individuals and community leaders. The purpose of these conversations is to understand how our hospitals and physician practices can serve the needs of the community to a greater degree than what is available now.

In the Highlands-Cashiers communities specifically, we recently shared at one of the forums that Harris Regional Hospital will likely have a local presence within the year pursuant to the organization's strategic planning process. The form of that presence is yet to be determined and under any

circumstance would be incremental in nature.

Recent expansions within women's and children's care have occurred in Macon County as part of Harris Regional Hospital's strategic growth plan and through our response to changing market conditions. Similarly, in Graham County there are evolving needs we believe our hospitals can help address. In all cases we will seek to conduct such discussions thoughtfully and respectfully with local stakeholders and our regional partners, beginning with education on what is currently available and conversation about what can occur. We are excited to work together in delivering on our mission of Making Communities Healthier by creating places people want to come for care, physicians want to practice and employees want to work.



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HONEY**

By
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Directed by
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PLAYBILL

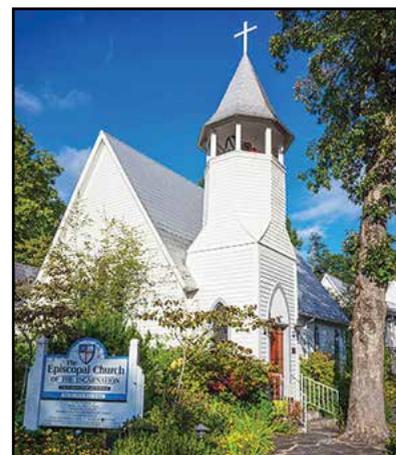
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Levine
Directed by
Paul Herron

Produced by
Donna Cochran

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Highlands

TICKETS: 828-526-8084
highlandscashiersplayers.org



The Episcopal Church of the Incarnation

Holy Week Schedule

Labyrinth Monday March 26 – Friday March 30

Maundy Thursday, March 29

7pm in the Chapel

Good Friday, March 30

12 noon Ecumenical Stations
of the Cross Procession
1pm Good Friday Liturgy in the
Chapel (*Following the Procession*)

Saturday, March 31

7pm The Great Vigil of Easter

Easter Sunday, April 1

6:45am Sunrise Service
K-H Founders Park
9am Holy Eucharist Rite I
11am Holy Eucharist Rite II
Both in the Nave
*No Sunday School
*Nursery available
during both services

Easter Egg Hunt after the 9am service

North Carolina Community Foundation announces new statewide fund to support local nonprofit news

The Democracy Fund establishes the North Carolina Local News Lab Fund to support the future of local news

The North Carolina Community Foundation announces that a group of local and national funders has established the North Carolina Local News Lab Fund with NCCF to support the future of local news.

The North Carolina Local News Lab Fund will invest in organizations that are working to ensure people and communities have access to the news and information they need. The Fund is currently accepting applications from nonprofit news organizations and news providers; other types of information providers such as libraries and community centers; and storytellers that provide news and information such as documentarians, youth media and organizations that work on community engagement.

To learn more and apply, visit <http://bit.ly/NCFUND>. Applications will be accepted until March 30 at 5 p.m.

“Local news is critical to a healthy democracy, and we believe that the future of local news is local,” said Teresa Gorman, local news associate with the Public Square Program at the Democracy Fund. “This simple idea has shaped the way the Democracy Fund has thought about its work to support and strengthen the public square in America.”

The Fund is the start of a new multi-year commitment to the state from the Democracy Fund, which is working together with local funders and stakeholders to build the Fund. Opening with an initial investment of \$720,000, the Fund will be housed at the North Carolina Community Foundation and will be managed by an advisory group made up of local stakeholders and the Democracy Fund. Local partners on the advisory board include representatives from the Z. Smith Reyn-

olds Foundation, Mary Reynolds Babcock Foundation, Prentice Foundation and the A.J. Fletcher Foundation.

The Democracy Fund also launched a sister fund in New Jersey, the New Jersey Local News Lab Fund, in partnership with the Community Foundation of New Jersey.

About the North Carolina Community Foundation

The NCCF is the single statewide community foundation serving North Carolina and has administered more than \$130 million in grants since its inception in 1988. With nearly \$247 million in assets, NCCF sustains 1,200 endowments established to provide long-term support of a broad range of community needs, nonprofit organizations, institutions and scholarships. The NCCF partners with a network of affiliate foundations to provide local resource allocation and community assistance across the state. An important component of NCCF’s mission is to ensure that rural philanthropy has a voice at local, regional and national levels.

For more information, visit nccommunityfoundation.org, like us on Facebook and follow us on LinkedIn and Twitter @NCCF.

About the Democracy Fund

The Democracy Fund is a bipartisan foundation created by eBay founder and philanthropist Pierre Omidyar to help ensure that our political system can withstand new challenges and deliver on its promise to the American people. Since 2011, Democracy Fund has invested more than \$70 million in support of a healthy democracy, including modern elections, effective governance, and a vibrant public square. Learn more by visiting democracyfund.org and localnewsfab.org.

Community Coffee is this Friday

Friday, March 23 is the monthly Community Coffee with mayor Pat Taylor which is held on the last Friday of each month at the Hudson Library in the Meeting Room from 11a until noon

This month’s talk will be with the mayor and Town Manager Josh Ward on the evolving budget and other town matters.

Refreshments will be provided by Big Brothers Big Sisters of Highlands. For more information call the Hudson Library at 828-526-3031



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• SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING •**To Forgive, Divine**

By Champlain Margaret Howell
Holy Family Lutheran Church/ELCA

There is a story about a minister who delivered a sermon based on the timeless story of the Prodigal Son. When he got to the point where the father sees his son returning and races out to meet him, the minister said "Throwing wide his arms, the father said ..." at which point my younger son leaned over to me and whispered, "YOU'RE GROUNDED!" (Homiletics, March 14 2010)

The gospel lesson is perhaps one of the most beloved of all of Jesus' parables. It is as multi-faceted as a well-cut diamond, revealing the truths about Failure, love, sin, forgiveness, resentment, regret, jealousy, grace---the list goes on and on.

I found some wonderful observations on this parable from some expected and unexpected sources. I'd like to share some of them with you.

Regrets:

The Prodigal Son got a huge case of the regrets after he squandered his inheritance.

So can regret be a helpful emotion?

Henry David Thoreau in his Journals, says that we should "make the most of your regrets. . . . To regret deeply is to live afresh."

Resentment:

Henri Nouwen, From Fear to Love: Lenten Reflections on the Parable of the Prodigal Son, wrote, "Did you ever notice how lost you are when you are resentful? It's a very deep lostness. The younger son gets lost in a much more spectacular way — giving in to his lust and his greed, using women, playing poker, and losing his money. His wrongdoing is very clear-cut. He knows it and everybody else does, too. Because of it he can come back, and he can be forgiven. (Now take the older son.: he is resentful of the welcome his ne'er-do-well brother received.) The problem with resentment is that it is not so clear-cut: It's not spectacular. And it is not overt, and it can be covered by the appearance of a holy life. Resentment is so pernicious because it sits very deep in you, in your heart, in your bones, and in your flesh, and often you don't even know it is there. You think you're so good. But in fact you are lost in a very profound way."

Henri Nouwen, From Fear to Love: Lenten Reflections on the Parable of the Prodigal Son, (Fenton, Missouri: Creative Communications for the Parish, 1998), 13-14.

"When you hold resentment toward another, you are bound to that person or condition by an emotional link that is stronger than steel. Forgiveness is the only way to dissolve that link and get free." — Catherine Ponder.

Failure:

Read the gospels and you see that Jesus had a habit of turning failures into the heroes of his stories. Jesus picked losers such as tax collectors to be his disciples and partied with people who everyone in polite and pious society would have considered to be failures on a whole lot of levels. He didn't seem to mind being pictured as a failure because he knew that was the only way that the many faces on whom the rest of the world had stamped him as a failure would come to him. The parable of the loving father and his two sons was designed to invite self-righteous Pharisees and

• See **SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING** page 19

Proverbs 3:5**• PLACES TO WORSHIP •****John 3:16****BLUEVALLEY BAPTIST CHURCH**

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Tues. Guys study 8am, Gals 10am.

CLEAR CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH

Pastor Jim Kinard

Sundays: School: 10 a.m.; Worship: 11 a.m.

1st & 3rd Sunday night Service: 7 p.m.

Wednesdays — Supper at 6 p.m.

COMMUNITY BIBLE CHURCH

www.cbchighlands.com • 526-4685

3645 Cashiers Rd, Highlands, NC • Sr. Pastor Gary Hewins

Sun.: 9:30am: Sunday School

10:30am: Middle & High School; 10:45am: Child. Program,

10:45am: Worship Service

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

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828-526-4153 • www.fbchighlands.org

Dr. Mark Ford, Pastor

220 Main Street, Highlands NC 28741

Sun.: Worship 10:45 am; Sun.: Bible Study 9:30 am

Wed.: Men's Bible Study 8:30 am; Prayer Mtg 6:15 pm; Ch. 5p

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526-3175 • fpchighlands.org

Sun.: Worship: 11 a.m.; School: 9:30

Mondays: 8 a.m.: Men's Prayer Group & Breakfast

Wednesdays: Choir: 6p

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Johnson

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Wed. Kidsquest 6p.; Worship 7p.

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Randy Reed, Pastor 828-421-9172 • 165 S. Sixth Street

Sundays: Worship: 11

HIGHLANDS CENTRAL BAPTIST CHURCH

Pastor Dan Robinson

670 N. 4th Street (next to the Highlands Civic Center)

Sun.: Morning Worship 10:45 a., Evening Worship, 6:30 p.

Wednesday: Prayer Service, 6:30 p.

HIGHLANDS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Pastor Randy Lucas 526-3376

Sun: School 9:45a.; Worship 9:09, 10:50.; Youth 5:30 p.

Wed: Supper: 5:15; youth, & adults activities: 6; Handbell

rehearsal, 6:15; Choir Rehearsal 7. (nursery provided); 7pm

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Chaplain Margaret Howell • 2152 Dillard Road • 526-9741

LutheranChurchoftheHolyFamily.yolasite.com

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Worship/Communion: 10:30

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Wednesdays: Prayer Mtg.: 7 p.m.

SCALY MOUNTAIN CHURCH OF GOD

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Sun.; Tues: Community Supper 5:30 followed by Bible Study.

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Rev. Sam Forrester/Cashiers

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NC Community Foundation awards \$25,000 to help fund Hurricane Matthew documentary

The board of directors of the North Carolina Community Foundation recently awarded a \$25,000 Disaster Relief Fund grant to Longleaf Productions to support the production of a Hurricane Matthew documentary, according to Laura Beasely, statewide grants committee chair and a member of the board of directors.

The grant funding will support the production of a documentary on recovery efforts surrounding Hurricane Matthew. The film will provide an historical overview of the complex and lengthy disaster recovery process and a guide for communities recovering from future natu-

ral disasters. Longleaf Productions is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization that produces videos and other media of cultural, historical, educational and environmental significance.

NCCF CEO Jennifer Tolle Whiteside said that the Foundation's support continues to focus on helping to meet long-term recovery needs in eastern North Carolina. "We are confident that the NCCF Disaster Relief Fund is having an impact, thanks to the generosity of donors who gave to support eastern North Carolina in the aftermath of Hurricane Matthew," she said.

... SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING from page 18

scribes to see how they had become the older brother, failing to experience the joy and celebration that God does when wayward sinners come home. But it was also designed to remind us all of the embarrassing lengths to which God, in the person of Jesus, would go to make that homecoming a reality.

Forgiveness:

"To forgive is to set a prisoner free and discover that the prisoner was you."

— Lewis B. Smedes.

You will know that forgiveness has begun when you recall those who hurt you and feel the power to wish them well."

— Lewis B. Smedes.

"Love is an act of endless forgiveness, a tender look which becomes a habit."

— Peter Ustinov.

Grace:

Philip Yancey, in his best-selling book *What's So Amazing About Grace?* It tells the story of a conference on comparative religions held in Britain several decades ago.

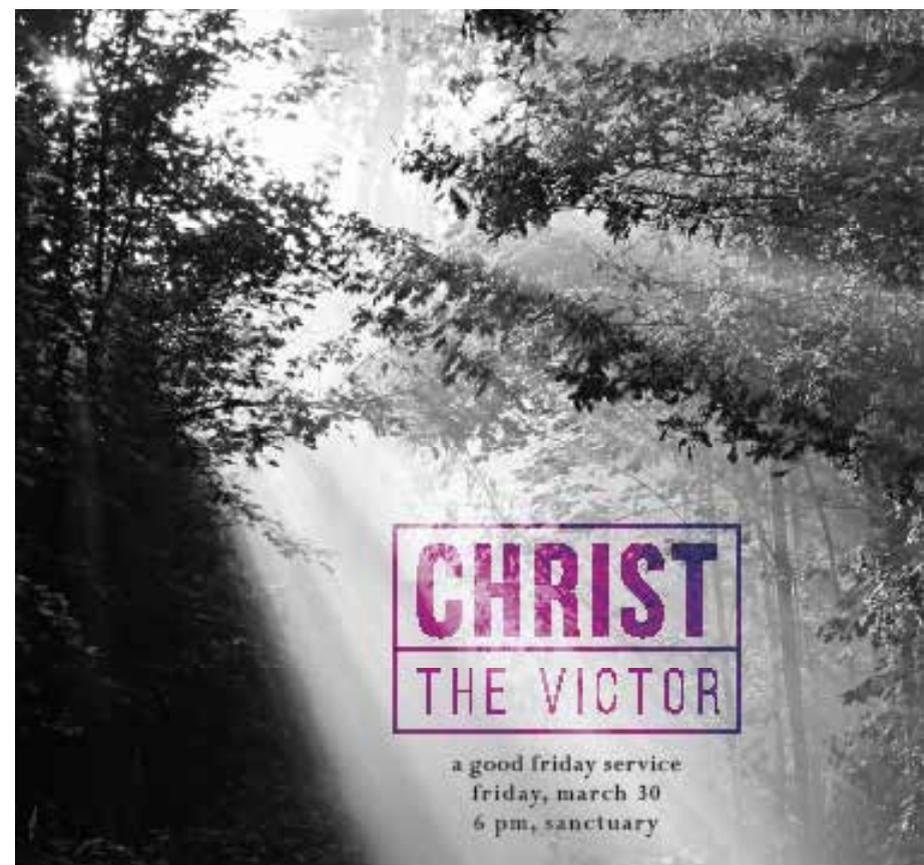
A group of theologians and other religious intellectuals were discussing whether any single belief was totally unique to Christianity. Different possibilities were put forth. Perhaps the Incarnation? No, other religions, including the Greek and Roman mythologies, had stories of gods becoming human in form. Resurrection? No, other religions also had stories of people returning from the dead.

The debate continued for some time, when writer C.S. Lewis wandered into the room. "What's the rumpus about?" he asked. They told him they were discussing what Christianity's unique contribution might be among world religions. Very forthrightly, Lewis responded, "Oh, that's

easy. It's grace."

After some discussion, the conferees had to agree. The concept that God's love comes to us free of charge, with no strings attached, opposes every bit of human logic. The Buddhists have an eightfold path to enlightenment, the Hindus have the concept of Karma, the Jews seek to adhere to the Torah and Muslims have their code of law from the Koran. Each religion has its own way for people to earn divine approval. Only Christianity dares to declare God's love unconditional — grace.

Lent reminds us that the story of Jesus inevitably moves toward the cross, the ultimate picture of failure and disgrace. Jesus was willing to risk the embarrassment of being stripped, beaten and hanged naked to die and to be held up as a failure for the whole world to see on that Friday. It is through failure that God chooses to save the world. As Paul would later put it, the cross was and is "a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength" (1 Corinthians 1:23-25). In Christ, our failures aren't final or fatal. We are sinful, we are full of all the mean things we have examined here today and more, but because of LOVE and GRACE, these flaws needn't be fatal. As St Paul tells us, the realization of our frailties (the purpose of the Law is to point these out) is to create in us a longing for God. In Christ, thru love and grace, we are given new life! St Paul writes: "So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!" (2 Cor. 5: 17)



Easter Service



SUN, APRIL 1 • 10:45 AM • SANCTUARY



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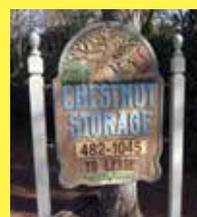
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• POLICE & FIRE •

The Highlands Police log entries from **March 8**. Only the names of persons arrested, issued a **Class-3** misdemeanor or public officials have been used.

March 8

• At 2:06 p.m., a larceny of items left at Mountain Findings on Spruce Street was reported.

March 10

• At 3:45 p.m., Taylor Thomas Earman, 42, of High-

lands, was arrested for one count of misdemeanor larceny. He was issued a \$500 unsecured bond. His trial date is March 29.

March 11

• At 4:09 a.m., officers were called to a residence on Oak Street where a verbal argument was taking place.

• At 4:15 p.m. a breaking and entering at a residence on Many Road was reported with forcible entry through the front door. Damage to the structure is valued at \$500.

March 12

• At 4:25 p.m., a possible abandoned vehicle with a fictitious tag was reported on Pinecrest Road.

March 14

• At 12:15 p.m., a larceny from a residence on Carolina Way was reported.

The Highlands Fire & Rescue Dept. log from March 13

March 13

• At 7:25 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Hudson Road.

March 15

• At 4:32 p.m., the dept. responded to a call of a brush fire on Shortoff Road.

March 16

• At 6:55 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm on Church Street.

March 18

• A little past midnight, the dept. was first-responders to residence on Half Mile Road,

• A little past midnight, the dept. provided public assistance to a motorist on NC 106.

• At 2:23 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to Chestnut Hill Drive.

• At 5:13 a.m., the dept. investigated the cause of smoke on US 64 east.

March 19

• At 9:36 a.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Crescent Trail.

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LOST DOG

Emma. Yellow lab. About 80 pounds. Rainbow collar with info. She is chipped. Last seen on 370 Sassafras Gap Road/Clear Creek area. 28 south. Contact Dori Moschouris 828-421-7403



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... MAYOR continued from
page 2

Duke Energy at the detriment of their customers. Kevin testified before the commission and recommended Duke be granted 25% of the requested rate increase. The Public Staff of the North Carolina Utilities Commission, your consumer advocate group, recommended 50%, while the state attorney general's office recommended 0%.

Also, a seasonal resident sent me an article from the Winston-Salem Journal stating Duke CEO, Lynn Good, will make \$21.4 million dollars this year. I'm all for CEO compensation, but given Duke's negligence, does she really deserve a pay increase? Good was making only 10.8 million in 2015, so I guess it's a cost of living adjustment.

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is seeking a few energetic individuals to join the housekeeping department. Early hours, competitive pay, one daily meal and iforms are provided. If you are interested, please stop by the main office and fill out an application. (3/22-4/4/5)

CELEBRITY COLLECTIONS BOUTIQUE

in Highlands, is looking for a year round part-time sales associate. If you have sales experience, are highly motivated self-starter, available to work weekends and eager to learn a unique and exciting business. For more information. 828-526-4994. (st 3/22)

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF HIGHLANDS

is seeking an Administrator Assistant. It will be for 30 hours a week and salary will be based on experience. Strong computer experience is required. Please call 828-526-4153 to set up an appointment for

an interview. (3/29)

INTERVIEWING FOR PART-TIME, YEAR AROUND, AUDIO/VISUAL TECHNICIAN for Highlands United Methodist Church. Sundays and special events. Call 828-526-3376 or stop by church for an Application. (st. 3/1)

HIGHLANDS INN & HIGHLANDS INN LODGE now accepting applications and interviewing for all positions. Front Desk, Housekeeping, Night Audit, Breakfast Host & cook. Full time and part time available. Call 526-5899 for appointment or stop by 96 log cabin lane for application. Resumes or questions may be emailed to sales@highlandsinn-lodge.com. (st. 3/1)

SKYLINE LODGE - housekeeping staff ,front desk clerks,and maintenance workers wanted for 2018 Season. We offer training. Call 828-526-2121 for an application .Background checks done .(st. 2/22)

INTERVIEWING FOR FULL-TIME

YEAR AROUND SECURITY POSITION for a private community in Highlands. Shift is 3 pm to 11 pm M-F. Full benefits. Call 828-526-4161 or 706-982-5526. (st. 2/1)

AT DUTCHMANS: Full-Time Sales Associate (year-round). REQUIREMENTS: Retail experience a must, need to be able to work weekends and holidays, ability to work in a fast-paced sales-based environment, may include long periods of time standing, positive and friendly attitude, computer skills, interest in interior design. PREFERRED: 2+ years retail or customer service experience, POS experience. (st. 2/1)

NOW HIRING SECURITY OFFICERS - In the Franklin, Highlands & Cashiers area. *Clean background. Clean driving record.* Must be 21 years of age. Please apply at: NC Works 23 Macon Ave, Franklin , NC 828-369-9534 or call 864-888-0518 for more info. (2/15)

CYPRUS INTERNATIONAL CUISINE. Hiring All Positions. Please Contact Dan At Cyprus332@gmail.com. Or Visit Us At 332 Main St. Highland NC (st. 1/11)

MOUNTAIN FRESH GROCERY has full and part-time positions available. Competitive wages in all positions. Please come in person to 521 east Main Street in Highlands to apply or call 828-526-2400.

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FIREWOOD FOR SALE. Seasoned hardwood. Call Matt at 828-482-2214. Please leave message. (st. 10/5)

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DO YOU HAVE POT HOLES NEED WATER DIVERTED CRACKS REPAIRED? Call Daniel at DC Coatings Asphalt patching maintenance and repair at 828-421-7405 (st. 3/1)

MURPHY'S PAINTING CO. Interior & Exterior Painting, Sheetrock Repair, Wallpaper Removal, Log Homes, Decks. Insured. Free Estimates. 828-524-1391 or 828-332-0525. (3/1)

HEALTHY COOKING CLASSES IN YOUR HOME. Learn simple techniques & recipes to make fresh foods taste delicious, as you save money and improve your health! Call Medea Galligan, MS Nutrition, Health Coach at 828-989-9144 and leave your name & number to schedule your class.

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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. 3/1)

MOLD AND MUSTY SMELL IN YOUR HOME? Call for free inspection. 828-743-0900.

REAL ESTATE/BIZ FOR SALE
HOMES FOR SALE: 3Bd 2&1/2Ba home includes 1Bd 1Ba cottage 2 miles from downtown Highlands. By owner 803-315-0715. (st. 2/22)

3.20 ACRES UNRESTRICTED. Power underground, borders National forest, 190 degree view. 10 min to Main Street. 3 septic fields, 1 well 7 g p.m. 2 house foundations established and approved by county inspectors. 2Bed/2Bath Clayton home livable while building. Spring rights and more land available. For beautiful sunsets contact gracefamilia@yahoo.com. (st. 9/21)

1.21 ACRES FOR SALE BY OWNER - OTTO, NC - \$28,000. Lot 12 Quail Haven Road, Otto, NC. Price not firm...open for negotiation. Please email if interested to ddmars15@aol.com or call/text to 239-980-0531. If no answer please leave a message. (st. 7/20)

RENTALS
VACATION RENTAL: In-town Highlands 3bd/3ba, walk-to-town condo. Book now! Available fall 2017 & 2018. \$2500 week includes housekeeping. https://www.vrbo.com/4473684ha more info at Chambers Agency 828-526-3717.



VACATION RENTAL: 3Bd 2&1/2 Ba home \$2400 monthly 1Bd 1Ba cottage \$1200 monthly All utilities included, fully furnished. 803-315-0715 2 miles from downtown Highlands. (st. 2/22)

ROOM FOR RENT. Scaly Mountain home. \$500/month. Pets Negotiable. (610)955-9356. (st. 3/15)

TWO SMALL OFFICE SPACES for rent near the Bascom, or combine for 800 square feet. 828-526-5558. (3/15-3/29)

WANTED
LONG TERM RENTAL, CLOSE TO TOWN. Native Highlander. Very honest and dependable couple. No pets. Open to all options. Please call or text Sandra @ 828-482-2261 (or leave a message). (st. 2/8)

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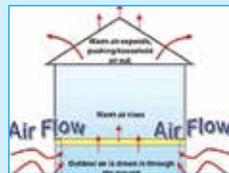
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