Mayor sends AG Stein his HCA concerns

Following a special meeting Sept. 28, between the Highlands Town Board, members of the HC Hospital Board, Hospital President/CNO Jackie Medland and others, the Town Board unanimously passed Resolution, 2018-07, to send to NC Attorney General Josh Stein.

AG Stein has the last word concerning the transaction between Mission Health and the Hospital Corporation of America (HCA).

The resolution, and a letter accompanying it, identifies issues the town has about the local hospital property, the creation of the Dogwood Health Trust and the long-term future of the hospital.

“As stated in the resolution, Mayor sends AG Stein his HCA concerns

2018 Candidate Profile Series

Price is working hard to change WNC representation in Washington D.C.

By Brittney Lofthouse

With early voting underway, voters are in the final stretch of mid-term elections. On the National level, the District 11 seat on the United States House of Representatives is up for grabs and Republican incumbent Mark Meadows is up against a New Democratic challenger in Phillip Price.

Price is a husband, father, Episcopalian, small business owner, carpenter, musician and sportsman. He has lived in Western North Carolina for more than 34 years which he has spent hiking the mountains and fishing the streams long enough to appreciate

• See WASHINGTON page 8

Kate B. Reynolds Foundation helps MPI continue healthcare work

Mountain Projects, Inc. has received a grant to continue the work of enrollment and post-enrollment assistance to help people in the seven western most counties of NC get health insurance and keep it.

The grant is from the Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust in Winston-Salem, NC.

This project will improve the lives of thousands of local residents by helping them maintain coverage or enroll in quality affordable healthcare through the Affordable Care Act Health Insurance Marketplace, they said.

In addition to the $326,337

• See HEALTHCARE page 11

Who Protects the Bear?

By Gary Wein

H-C Land Trust

Every fall, folks flock to Rhodes Big View between Highlands and Cashiers to photograph the bear shadow that appears in the Chattooga River headwaters.

Photographers set up their cameras and patiently wait for the shadow to creep over the mountains.

Have you ever wondered who owns the parking spot at the Macon and Jackson County line where the photographers set up, or who trims the vegetation back so you can see the view? Have you ever wondered who keeps the mountains in the background from sprouting houses?

The answer to the first two questions is easy, the Highlands-Cashiers Land Trust owns the 10 acre parcel where everyone parks. On October 20, 2006,
Main Street, bears and the HCA transaction ... all tonight at Town Board meeting

The October meeting of the Highlands Town Board is tonight at 7 p.m. It will be held at the Highlands Community Building next to the ballfield. Public comment will be the first item on the agenda.

There has been a lot of talk about the bear problem in Highlands this fall. At the last board meeting I did a presentation about moving away from shared dumpsters to an individual bin system, where possible, for downtown merchants, especially behind stores backing Oak Street. Those plans are still under study and in progress.

At tonight’s meeting a more immediate bear problem will be addressed as an agenda item. The bears have been roaming Main Street at night and turning over street cans in search of food. Commissioner Pierson has been working on solutions to this problem. It can be solved, but like almost every problem, it will cost money.

Commissioner Pierson has researched options for bear resistant yet user-friendly street cans. These cans cost over a thousand dollars a unit, but they would deter the bears. The board will have to decide how to proceed in addressing this increasing nuisance.

On Fri., Oct. 26, there will be a Community Coffee with the Mayor at 11 a.m. at the Hudson Library. The topic will be the bear problem in the Town of Highlands. It will be a forum with representatives from the B.E.A.R. Task Force, NC DNR, the Highlands Biological Station and the Highlands Police Department participating along with those in attendance.

The bear problem is just as much a people problem. Irresponsible actions by people go hand-in-hand with the bear behavior. Also, it will cost money to mitigate the problem, and how these costs are shared will be a future issue.

Another major agenda item will be a presentation of revised plan to put tree planters in the central parking area on Main Street. At a September 28 special meeting, the board reviewed a plan to place curbs and planters in the area. The board asked the town staff to do a revised plan that eliminates the curbing and does not cause any parking spaces to be lost. The revised plan meets these two requirements.

Let me provide updates on several items.

I sent the resolution passed by the board at the special meeting concerning the sale of Mission and our hospital to HCA to the North Carolina Attorney General. I also included a cover letter and a memorandum by the town attorney. The AG will be making an approval decision of the transaction in the coming months.

Bid requests for building our fiber optic network have been sent out. Bids will be opened the last week in October. At that time, the exact cost of building the network will be known.

I have sent a letter requesting help to Representative Kevin Corbin and Senator Jim Davis concerning the problem of tractor trailer trucks on the Gorge Road. I have also copied NCDOT officials, Chairman Jim Tate of the Macon County Commission and Mayor Bob Scott of Franklin. I also included some “idea” drawings done by town staff that could serve as starting point for a solution.

Hope to see everyone tonight.

Mikey Crisp Memorial ‘Jam’

Due to pending weather, the location of the memorial celebration for the life of Mikey Crisp has been changed.

It will be still be held Saturday, Oct. 20 from 1-4 p.m. but at the Highlands Community Building next to the ballfield.

Come for an afternoon of music and celebration of a very special man.

To advertise in upcoming issues, please email: highlandseditor@aol.com or call 828-200-1371
HIGHLANDS FALLS COUNTRY CLUB

The magnificent views of Whiteside Mountain greet you as you open the front door to this meticulously maintained home and can be enjoyed from most areas in the house. The main floor includes a beautiful living room with cathedral ceiling and gas stone fireplace, dining area with built in bar and wine storage, up-to-date kitchen with gas stove and electric oven, laundry room with storage and additional full size refrigerator as well as a lovely large screened porch. Also, located on the main level is the master bedroom that boasts another gas stone fireplace as well as a loft for office or storage, his and her closets, and luxurious master bath with double sinks, jetted tub, and separate shower. Additionally, a welcoming, spacious guest bedroom and bath are upstairs. The lower level features a small refrigerator and microwave near the living area, four more guest bedrooms, four baths, and a large screened porch.

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ESTATES OF SATULAH

Located in the Satulah Mountain Historic District, this lovely home is in excellent condition with open floor plan, 3 bedrooms plus a bonus room being used as a 4th bedroom and 3 1/2 baths. Ten foot ceilings on the main level and vaulted ceilings throughout the upper level. Complete privacy with a beautiful water feature that starts in the front with a waterfall and meanders around to the back yard to two waterfalls and a pond which you can enjoy from the screened porch and also from stone patio in the yard. Hardwood floors throughout, granite kitchen counters, updated stainless steel appliances, both the master suite and living room have gas fireplaces (living room could be wood burning), beautiful custom wood trim and moldings. The master suite and laundry room are on the main level. The upper level is a perfect area for guests and/or children and it has an additional sitting room and office.

MLS# 88996 | Offered for $1,190,000 | OWNER/BROKER

HIGHLANDS-CASHIERS CORRIDOR

This wonderful cottage sits up high on the land to maximize the mountain views. There is a stone pathway to the front door and when you enter you will be captivated by the view and the charm. The vaulted, beamed wood ceiling and gleaming hardwood floors set the tone to frame the beautiful mountain view while the floor to ceiling stone fireplace is the focal point in the large living room. The living room opens to a spacious screened porch and a step down outside fireplace deck. Dinner by the fireplace in the dining room will enchant your guests. The kitchen is renovated and boasts painted and glazed cream cabinets with SS appliances and beautiful granite plus a copper sink. There are two gracious guest room suites plus the master which opens to the screened porch all on one level. In addition there is a lovely one bedroom guest house with a large great room complete with kitchenette and a covered porch.

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HIDDEN FALLS  Custom built home with a spacious great room/dining room featuring vaulted pine ceilings & exposed beams plus a massive stone fireplace. The large kitchen boast a breakfast area, granite countertops, custom built wormy maple kitchen cabinets. The screened porch is a great place to relax and enjoy the quiet and the beautiful mountain views. There is wonderful fire pit in the yard perfect for enjoying cool nights. Brazilian cherry hardwood floors, 6” exterior walls, tankless hot water heater, 40 year architectural shingles. Call for appointment; too much to list here!

MLS# 87182 | Offered for $899,000

HIGHLANDS FALLS COUNTRY CLUB  Beautiful terraced gardens greet guests at the front of this stream side golf villa. The focal point of the living room is the stone fireplace and beautiful wet bar set against a wall of floor-to-ceiling wood. The hardwood floors and wood beams on the cathedral ceiling give the living room just the right touch of mountain feel. Sliding doors open the living area to the deck. A beautifully appointed kitchen with sleek cabinetry, dark granite counters and SS appliances, a den which can double as extra sleeping space. Lake view.

MLS# 89466 | Offered for $599,000


MLS# 89554 | Offered for $599,000

GLENVILLE  Enjoy the best of both worlds! This home is located just two miles from Lake Glenville and only seven miles from Cashiers. Enjoy the mountain view of Glassy Rock from the living room window. With three bedrooms and three bath-rooms this home would make a great starter home or vacation home. 2.1 acres.

MLS# 88883 | Offered for $324,000

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the beauty and importance of the environment. Price attended Western Carolina University before pursuing a career as a professional musician. He recorded music and toured throughout the East Coast and into the Midwest with D.S.F. Earth Corps., before settling down with his wife, Michelle, in Asheville and now Nebo in rural McDowell County. Together, they are raising three children in the North Carolina public school system while building a successful business, Antique Reclaimed Lumber.

“I am running for office because I am sick and tired of Mark Meadows and the GOP bullying the low income and middle-class people of the 11th District and across the nation as they shamelessly attempt to take away healthcare from millions of people who need it the most while they give a $1.5 trillion tax cut to their wealthy friends who need it the least,” said Price.

As a small business owner, Price believes that one of the greatest challenges people in Western North Carolina are currently facing is the economy.

“Our greatest challenge is building an economy that creates better jobs with bigger paychecks so that everyone can prosper, not just the billionaires who buy votes from congressmen like Mark Meadows,” said Price. “If we move to a green economy that invests in solar, wind, geothermal and micro hydroelectric power, as well as hemp manufacturing that replaces oil-based plastics with biodegradable plastic, we create better-paying jobs while protecting the environment that is the lifeblood of our tourism economy in Western North Carolina. If we invest in publicly funded higher education, we can train our students for those jobs of tomorrow without saddling them with crushing loan debt. If we have a living wage, fewer people will live in poverty. If we have a Medicare for All healthcare system, we guarantee that profit will not come before healthcare while creating jobs. If we recommit to building our infrastructure, including broadband Internet for the rural areas of our district that do not have Internet service, we create jobs, improve education and transform our rural economy. Or we can remain a 20th century fossil fuel-based economy that continues to pollute our environment and enriches billionaires while denying healthcare and living wages for our citizens—the future the Koch brothers and others have paid Mark Meadows to support over and over again.”

In addition to the economy, Price understands that other issues in WNC are healthcare, opioid addiction, and wage stagnation.

“I believe three of the biggest issues facing North Carolinians, especially those in Western North Carolina, are healthcare, opioid addiction and wage stagnation,” said Price. “All three can be addressed and improved upon by moving the United States to a single-payer Medicare-for-all healthcare system. It will provide affordable, quality healthcare for every American as well as funding for treatment of opioid addiction and create a windfall of revenue that small and large businesses can use to raise workers’ wages.”

Although Price firmly differentiates himself from Meadows, he believes politics shouldn’t be divisive.

“The politics of division is destroying our country,” said Price. “We need leaders who will bring people together, not divide them by pushing for more extremism in government as Meadows has done over and over again. On Nov. 6 voters can say “enough” and vote for Phillip G. Price to help bring change to the culture of Washington. I look forward to serving you in the People’s House.”

Meadows

Congressman Mark Meadows is serving in his third term representing North Carolina’s eleventh district. Before Congress, Meadows was in the private sector for 30 years as a small business owner and specializing in business reorganization. Meadows and his wife Debbie have two children, Blake and Haley, and one granddaughter, Autumn.

I’m running because I believe Washington, D.C. is in need of leaders willing to stand up, challenge the status quo, and return power back where it belongs—in the hands of the American people,” said Meadows. “I’m committed to fighting for Western North Carolinians and advocating for pro-family, pro-worker, and pro-small business principles such as smaller government, lower taxes, and reducing regulations on local businesses and families.”

Meadows has gained national attention since being elected to Congress and has positioned himself closely to President Donald Trump. With a National perspective to compare rural North Carolina to, Meadows said WNC resident’s greatest challenge is the lack of substantial growth in employment opportunities.

“I think job growth is always one of the most important issues in Western NC—and it’s certainly something I’ve focused on heavily during my time in Congress,” said Congressman Meadows. “I’ve long supported policies like tax cuts for families and small businesses, or rolling back burdensome regulations to allow individuals and businesses more economic flexibility to thrive.

“Policies like these have been a major factor in why we’re seeing record numbers of job openings and why unemployment is at its lowest level in 50 years. If Congress focuses on cutting so much of the red tape that holds American workers back, I believe we’re better off.”

Falling in line with Meadows continued focus on job growth, comes improvement in the economy, which Meadows considers to be one of the three biggest issues in WNC.

The economy is always a priority for me,” said Meadows. “Making sure people have access to jobs and that we’re developing an environment that allows workers and small businesses to succeed is very important to me. Cutting taxes and minimizing regulations are two things I think Congress can play a role in here. Coming from the private sector
we do not object to a possible sale of Mission’s assets to HCA,” wrote Mayor Pat Taylor, “but we do object to certain terms of the Asset Purchase Agreement (APA). We understand that there are likely to be benefits for the patient population in Mission’s service area through the efficiencies and expertise that HCA will bring to the operation of Mission’s medical facilities; the sale will result in the contribution of nearly one and a half billion dollars to The Dogwood Health Trust (Dogwood) and Mission has proposed giving $15 million to the Highlands-Cashiers Hospital Foundation.”

But it’s certain terms of the proposed arrangement the Town Board objects to including the elimination of services at Highlands Cashiers Hospital.

Upfront the APA says that unless agreed to in writing by the local advisory board, HCA will not discontinue services unless those services become impossible or commercially unreasonable. But then it says after a 5-year period, HCA can discontinue services accept for emergency services for up to 10 years following the closing date.

“We are quite concerned that when “services become commercially unreasonable, those services can be eliminated, and that the hospital can even be closed,” wrote Taylor. “Even more important is that regardless of conditions which exist, the facilities may be closed with the consent of only the Local Advisory Board and HCA.”

The Local Advisory Board will be eight people – four appointed by the existing HC Hospital Board at the closing of the transaction and four appointed by HCA. There is no provision saying the four appointed by the existing board shall be independent of Mission or HCA but the APA expressly provides that the four appointed by HCA may be employees of HCA.

Taylor said given the language of the sections cited, reduction of services and closures could occur before the time frames of 5 and 10 years set forth in the APA.

“While Mission’s representatives have described and promoted these time frames to the public as guaranties, in fact they are not guaranties because the language contains conditions that would permit earlier closure,” he said. “Also concerning is the provision of the APA which governs disposition of properties comprising the HC Hospital facilities.

It provides that only Mission or The Dogwood Health Trust has the right to receive notice of a proposed sale or transfer of any of the properties and to submit a bid to be considered,” wrote Taylor.

An additional problem with the APA, is that while the Dogwood Health Trust might take possession of the hospital campus, Highlands’ community leadership and organi-

• See NC AG page 31

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Rebecca Rhodes Thomas, Margaret Rhodes Shaffner, and Robert Rhodes, III gave the Big View to the Highlands-Cashiers Land Trust as a way to honor their parents who were long-time residents here. Margaret, still a resident of Highlands, states, “We could think of no better way to honor our parents than to preserve their beautiful view of the mountains in their name.” Check out the plaque located below the guardrail next time you stop—but please be careful when doing so. HCLT staff and volunteers keep the vegetation trimmed as well as we can. Turns out the pesky shrub that sometimes take over the view is a rare endemic Hartwig’s locust, only known from a handful of sites in western North Carolina. We are attempting to balance the growth of the shrub and keeping the view cleared; not always easy with a NC endangered species.

The answer to the last question is perhaps more complicated. This view is dominated by wonderful peaks, two that stand out are Rock Mountain and Chimneytop, both donated by Will and Becky McKee but protected by a conservation easement with HCLT. The story is the same for Timber Ridge, placed into a conservation easement by the Warren family in 2009 and Laurel Knob, placed into an easement in 2006 by Thomas and Georgene German. The rest of the view is conserved by the U.S. Forest Service, the National Park Service (you can see the Blue Ridge Parkway in the distance), and land owners that have chosen to not to develop their lands… yet. I guess you could say, a lot of folks help to protect the bear at the Big View.

To learn more about how your land trust protects the places we all love and need visit www.hicashlt.org or contact them at 526-1111 or info.hitrust@earthlink.net.
from the Trust, other funders include $18,000 from an anonymous source arranged by The Care Share Health Alliance and $795 from the NC Community Foundation of Cherokee County to publicize Open enrollment dates for various health insurance and care options in Cherokee County.

“Having in-person local assistance to help people in Region A get and maintain access to affordable health care is an essential service and improves lives of over 11 thousand residents. Mountain Projects (MPI) has been able to provide this service in the seven western counties with a grant from the Department of Health and Human Services Navigator Program, which has been cut nationwide by nearly 90%. As a result, MPI were not funded for the coming year. However, now in-person assistance with the same familiar staff, now as Certified Application Counselors can continue with funding from Kate B. Reynolds and others beginning immediately because they recognize there is still much more work to do in WNC,” said Patsy Davis, executive director of Mountain Projects.

In 2017, Mountain Projects tracked 7,194 consumer interactions, assisting consumers with general and specific questions about healthcare coverage. These included 6,000 healthcare literacy conversations, 200 referrals to Medicaid and CHIP, resolution of post enrollment issues, and with filing hardship exemption applications that so far have resulted in over $1 million in refunds of the IRS penalty to WNC tax filers who went without coverage in 2016 or 2017, or projected for 2018.

Assistance would have been greatly limited had the Mountain Projects Navigator program not applied for funding from other sources.

Now the grants received from other funders will allow the same in-person expertise to continue but with a new title as Certified Application Counselors (CACs), instead of the federally funded job title of “Navigators.”

MPI will continue to work with it community partners such as DSS, Health Departments, Senior Centers, and other eligibility based programs to make sure consumers can find the services they need.

• Mountain Projects, Inc. (MPI) is a community based non-profit organization, founded in 1965 as a Community Action Agency that provides vital services to the elderly, disadvantaged and general public in Western North Carolina. The agency has grown to an aggregate annual budget of about thirteen million dollars depending on grants received, a staff of over 140, and provides a broad diversity of services to the community in response to its changing needs. The more than 20 programs operated by Mountain Projects are in the areas of housing, education, and human services, such as Head Start, food services, prevention services, public transportation and health care access for the elderly, disadvantaged and general public.

• The Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust was established in 1947 and is now one of the largest private trusts in North Carolina. Its mission is to improve the quality of life and quality of health for the financially needy of North Carolina. The Health Care Division promotes wellness state-wide by investing in prevention and treatment. The Poor and Needy Division of the Trust responds to basic life needs and invests in solutions that improve the quality of life and health for financially needy residents of Forsyth County. Wells Fargo Bank, N.A. serves as sole trustee.

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Rachel’s .... Game Day Pleasers
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Zesty Pizza Seasoning Spice Blend adds a burst of flavor to the ground beef patties used for these sliders. Pepperoni Pizza Burger Sliders make a quick and easy entrée and are delicious served with BBQ Baked Potato Fries.

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Ingredients from the Grocer
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4 TBS unsalted butter
8 slider buns
4 slices of deli style mozzarella cheese, cut in quarters
16 thin slices of pepperoni
4 oz jarred pizza sauce

Preparation
PREHEAT oven to 275°F.
COMBINE ground beef and Pizza Seasoning Spice Blend in a medium bowl and mix gently together.
DIVIDE beef into 8 portions, shape into meatballs, then gently press into round patties.

HEAT a large non-stick skillet or grill pan over medium heat. Grill hamburger patties 3-4 mins on each side until cooked to personal preference. Remove and place on a baking sheet in oven to keep warm.
MELT butter and Romano Cheese Powder together in a bowl in the microwave. Stir well to combine.
BRUSH tops and bottoms of buns with melted butter mixture using a small basting brush. Wipe skillet dry and toast buns face down until lightly browned. Remove and set aside.
REMOVE hamburger patties from oven, place bottom of buns on baking sheet, followed by a patty, mozzarella cheese, 2 slices of pepperoni, and a dollop of pizza sauce.
RETURN sliders to oven, allowing cheese to melt, 4-6 mins. Divide sliders on plates and add tops of buns.

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...HEALTHCARE continued from page 1
4 candidates are running for MC BOC, cont.

By Brittney Lofthouse

November’s midterm election can mean big changes for local politics. With two seats open on the Board of Commissioners, there are four candidates vying for election.

The gaggle of candidates includes incumbent commissions Gary Shields (Republican) and Ronnie Beale (Democrat) as well as challengers, Ron Haven (Republican) and Betty Wallace (Democrat). The top two vote getters in November will be elected to the board. County Commissioner Jim Tate will also be on the November ballot, but because he won the primary election and doesn’t have a Democratic opponent, he will retain his seat for another 4-year term.

In the Oct. 11 edition we learned about their backgrounds, their reasons for running for office and their views on public education and county finances. This week we finish up with their views on economic development for Macon County.

Economic Development.

Everyone wants to create jobs. No one is going to run for office and not say “We need jobs.” But how do you think the county should do that? What specific plans of action or paths should Macon County take to ensure job growth and economic development? Be specific.

Beale:

1) We must continue to look at our workforce development by working closely with SCC and our employers. By doing this you will see better job retention and existing businesses will continue to expand.

2) Continue to encourage entrepreneurial development in our community.

3) Construction is a huge part of our economic stability and we encourage SCC to bring back classes that will put more young people into this type of work.

4) Tourism is and will remain a steady source of sales tax revenue for our area and will continue to provide many jobs.

5) Broadband expansion is a must as we continue to look not only for new business but for new home construction as well.

6) As of now our unemployment rate is very low but as we have seen in the past this can change rapidly. We need as many options as possible to maintain a steady workforce and most of all jobs with good wages.

One of the most pressing issues in our county as in many counties is the continuing epidemic of substance abuse. We started the Mental Health Task Force several years ago which has proven to be of great benefit as several programs has resulted from the work of this Task Force such as the Walk-In Center and the jail program. I along with others have recently started a new initiative called “No Wrong Door” which will give those needing help and their families an avenue to find a get the help they desperately need.

Another pressing need is the concern about the future of healthcare in our county. Macon County is a leader in the far west and we will demand that our citizens have continuing healthcare as has been promised. I can assure you that my voice will not be silent about promises made and promises kept.

As our senior citizen population continues to grow, we must prepare for the future with more space and an updated facility to better serve these citizens.

We also have to continue to look for quality affordable daycare in our area. Most households need two incomes and not having quality daycare is a real problem now and in the future.

We must continue to support the Veterans of Macon County in any and all ways needed. We have a tremendous population of Veterans in our county. They were certainly there for us and we...
Those who forget history are doomed to repeat it

Last month marked the 10th anniversary of the financial crisis and near meltdown of our financial system. I was once again reminded of that time by the articles and television shows documenting the events. Hard to believe it’s been a decade.

In September 2008, we witnessed the collapse of Lehman Brothers, and the near collapse of Merrill Lynch, Morgan Stanley, Goldman Sachs and AIG. Since I was at one of those companies at the time, their balance sheet was of particular interest to me. I was primarily concerned about my clients since more than six months later former clients of Bear Stearns still had not been able to access their accounts. It was by far the scariest week of my professional life.

While it’s clear many millions of Americans and others around the world suffered through the aftermath of the “Great Recession,” I’m not sure even now many people understand what took place inside the institutions entrusted with our money.

One of the best examples I’ve heard is that “somebody put sugar into the gas tank of our financial system.” The system began to seize up and it was so bad, banks refused to lend to each other overnight! At my then firm, we were told shortly after Bear Stearns collapsed that “we were fine and had $82 billion in cash.” Unfortunately, advisors had no way of knowing the firm had retained the riskiest of the assets that were falling apart. So, on a weekend in mid-September 2008, we became part of a bank and shortly after I left to become and independent advisor.

They say those who forget history are doomed to repeat it, so it may be worth a look back at some of the things that got us there:

1. Excess/easy leverage – While leverage (or debt) is not necessarily a bad thing, it always presumes on the future. Most people, including me, only borrow money we are confident we can pay back. But it is always a “put” on our financial futures and an assumption we will somehow earn the money to pay it back. The financial services industry and many individuals in our country had come to embrace leverage as an easy means to an end and it almost brought down our economy.

2. Complicated financial products – When it comes to financial engineering, there is no shortage of “geniuses” on Wall Street. Remember CMO’s (Collateralized Mortgage Obligations), or CDO’s (Collateralized Debt Obligations). These were securities traded among institutions as insurance in case the underlying debt went bad. Unfortunately, no one ever thought so much debt could go so bad so fast, and when it did, no one knew who owned what or if they even had the money to pay.

3. Excess risk taking – Capitalism is based on a certain level of risk taking. There is always risk when you hand over your money to others expecting a return on your investment. However, in 2008, a few were taking so much risk, they were putting all of us at risk. They were able accomplish this through the “securitization of risk”. In other words, they took risk and then spread that risk through the sale of the securities mentioned above. And, relative to the size of the industry, it was a very small number of people who created and benefited from the excess risk they represented.

Historically, most if not all financial bubbles have occurred because of excesses. Excess debt, excess spending, excess risk, excess exuberance. And since this crisis was because of systemic financial excesses, it’s taken longer than normal to recover. Let’s hope history doesn’t repeat itself any time soon.

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A short trip to Montero, Bolivia

By Dr. John Baumrucker

The construction of the Mama Joanna Guest House is complete, but the building must be furnished before it can be used. The Rotary Club of Highlands, Mountaintop with help from the noonday Highlands Rotary Club and the Waynesville Sunrise Rotary Club all collaborated to get a grant from Rotary International and District 7670 for $40,000 to fully equip the eight bedroom house. All the bedrooms have private bath rooms and air-conditioners.

Volunteers from all over the world frequent Montero to offer help in many different ways.

The Highlands Bolivian Mission has been assisting the poor in Bolivia for 21 years. First, the mission was concerned with equipping the General Hospital that had little in the way of modern medical paraphernalia. They didn’t even have an electrocardiograph, let alone defibrillators, respirators or cardiac monitors.

Next, the mission focused on housing as the homemade dwellings were made of free supplies, like adobe and palm fronds. The problem with homes like these is an insect lives in the dirt walls and causes the inhabitants to develop Chagas disease, an insidious illness that eventually affects the heart and nervous system 20-30 years after the first infection. By providing safe housing, this dreaded illness can be prevented. The mission has built 14 houses in several communities over the years.

We noticed immediately another problem: young abandoned boys were roaming the streets trying to earn a few Bolivianos helping people park their cars and other tasks.

Abandoned girls went to orphanages, but the boys were left to fend for themselves, often becoming drug addicts or alcoholics. Coca leaves are legal in Bolivia and small bottles of alcohol can be bought for only one Boliviano, about 14 cents.

We opened our foster home four years after the mission began and welcomed five boys. One of those boys came to the United States and is now in business and one other boy is still in the Hogar, as the foster home is called here.

Education and hard work are the main focus of the home and all the boys are polite and well-mannered and all do their chores without having to be told twice. There are now 23 children in the home and it is a loving place to learn what an ideal family is all about, so these children, when they grow up and become parents, won’t abandon their offspring.

The first group of volunteers to use the home will arrive in November and work in a clinic doing cataract and other eye operations. Part of the Rotary Grant is educating the boys in the home to run the Guest House as a business, doing the accounting, with oversight, marketing and housekeeping. They will earn a salary just like a regular business. The experience gained from this work will help them throughout their lives.

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A few of the boys working on the landscaping of the Mama Joanna Guest house
Ever since the scandal surrounding the atrocious behavior of comedian Bill Cosby became public, we’ve all become more aware of the pervasive nature of sexual assault in our culture. In truth, it’s been around forever, but for a variety of reasons we, the American people, only now have finally seen wealthy, powerful men (and a few women) called to account for their behavior.

We’ve witnessed, with stunning clarity, the evolution of the #metoo movement following revelations about Cosby, film mogul Harvey Weinstein, news personalities Charlie Rose and Matt Lauer, network executive Les Moonves, etc., etc. We’ve seen charges of sexual and physical abuse in government, on both sides of the aisle, in entertainment, in sports, and in headlines of newspapers involving non-celebrities throughout America. One highly visible case is, as I write this, playing out in the U.S. Senate involving federal appellate judge Brett Kavanaugh, President Donald Trump’s nominee to replace Justice Anthony Kennedy on the U.S. Supreme Court.

Why, one must ask, are we men not more evolved when it comes to how we relate to and treat women? Where is the simple notion of respect between individuals regardless of sex? Don’t get me wrong; not every man is a caveman and not every woman is a victim. But still, it seems there’s a lot of this stuff going on.

This notion of some men believing themselves entitled to do as they wish with women is pervasive. It crosses racial, ethnic and socio-economic lines. At it’s most funda-mental, it may have to do with the simple fact that men are, in large part, bigger and stronger than women, and are therefore see themselves as able to exert physical dominance over the once so-called “weaker sex.”

Pardon me, but what a bunch of garbage!

Sexual assault, which constitutes a broad array of activities, boils down to a single legal principle: unwanted sexual contact by one individual on the person of another. The key word is unwanted. Simple assault, along with other levels of both sexual and non-sexual assault, all the way up to forcible rape, has been illegal for a long time. Surprisingly though, only relatively recently has sexual assault within the confines of marriage been considered a crime. Thanks in no small part to biblical scripture and antiquated aspects of English common law, it’s only been since 1993 that marital rape and so-called partner rape became illegal in all 50 states.

I know it’s hard to fathom, but there it is.

I’m not entirely sure where my own sense of propriety regarding this aspect of social interaction comes from, unless it has to do with the fact that from the moment I could recognize the distinction I held my own mother in higher regard than I did my father. She was a better person and as such, provided a more positive role model for me.

I have come to believe this small piece of the “nature versus nurture” aspect of human development resides in all of us and shapes at least some of our attitudes and behaviors. For example, boys growing up, seeing their fathers and other male role models verbally, physically or sexually abusing women certainly can come away holding the notion that such behavior is both common and acceptable. Sadly, some girls in growing up in similar circumstances also can end up believing this behavior simply is the way things are.

It’s not.

I know it’s touchy stuff and I don’t mean to cause anyone any discomfort by dredging up this aspect of our complex human condition. But, we are inundated with information about this subject, likely because of its salacious and violent features. Some small element of it, either in our thoughts or our deeds, is a part of our existence.

All that having been said there isn’t any place in modern America, or anyplace else for that matter, for men to engage in, or exercise unwanted physical or sexual contact with women. It shouldn’t happen in the home, in the workplace, anywhere.

Individual, mutual respect between individuals, male and female, seems like a good place to start the process of eliminating this unnecessary, unattractive aspect of life in our world today.

...BOLIVIA

continued from 14

their adult years and the fees earned from the business will help sustain the home for many years to come.

The Bolivian Mission is beginning to recruit volunteers to come in the March or April of 2019 or the fall. The cost of the trip including lodging and transport is about $2,000 for 10 days. Students of high school age are always welcome as are youth groups and individuals.

Contact, me, John Baunrucker at 526-3603 for more information.

Donations for the landscaping and general upkeep of the foster home are always appreciated. These can be mailed to P. O. Box 295, Scaly Mountain, NC 28775.

All donations are tax deductible as the Highlands Bolivian Mission is a 501C3 charity, ID number 20-4811983.
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**Dogspeak**

**Reflections from Lord Banjo**

I need a Royal Railcar

Blame it on Mum. She read me an article about private railcars, and I’m all a dither. Did you know anyone can own one? And hire it to an Amtrak train for trips? Wouldn’t that be the perfect mode of transportation for a Royal Pooch? Well, of course, it would.

I know Mum could tastefully decorate one pour moi. Not for me the horse-drawn carriage my French ancestors had; an iron horse will draw my carriage. When the Victorians came up with the term iron horse for a steam locomotive, I wonder whether they imagined a prancing black horse tossing its mane. That’s what I see, though, I, of course, know a modern locomotive will pull my railcar.

Picture my railcar bedecked in purple velvet as befits my royal status. Imagine a bit of ermine trim and gold braid and lots of polished brass. I don’t require a throne, but I must have an elevated platform with a tufted cushion large enough for me to stretch out in the royal belly rub position.

The windows will stretch to the floor so I can view the scenery as we ride. Were we to travel west, I might see herds of deer and antelope. Wasn’t there an old song about the deer and the antelope playing? Why I might see herds of wild horses and “amber waves of grain [and] purple mountain majesties above the fruited plain!”

I’ll build a comfy bedroom for the Royal Mum and Dad, as I will need attendants—um, I mean parents—to provide food and treats and to keep the riff-raff away. I’m happy to entertain adoring fans, but I don’t want any hobos sneaking aboard when we stop for my promenades.

Rut-ro, while my imagination is running wild, Mum is chuckling and saying my allowance won’t stretch that far. According to Mum, these special railcars are quite pricey, especially when fitted out for royalty. “Son,” she cautions in her best Mum tone, “You’ll have to make do with the Royal Red SUV I bought you.”

All that aside, my brain is brimming with reasons the shiny new SUV won’t do. It’s not as though Mum will drive it cross-country so I can see herds of wild animals, nor is it spacious enough for the Royal family’s lodging needs. Yes, it’s larger than her old car, but a railcar it isn’t.

I think if the Royal Parents would manage their pennies properly, they could swing a Royal Railcar. I can tell I need a business plan to convince Mum of the wisdom of my idea. Stopping in towns across America for book signings and parties hosted by my fans will offset the up-front costs, don’t you think?

Oh for goodness sake; Mum keeps coming up with more obstacles. “Now Banjo, you’re not listening. Not only is a railcar pricey, but Amtrak also charges mileage fees and exorbitant storage fees.” Heck, I can tell Mum is not thinking clearly. We can store it in our wooded backyard. Properly landscaped, it will be a huge hit. I can see it now—my private railcar as the Royal Guest House. We can rent it out for soirees and charge for tours. I’m going to enlist Aunt Pam, the family accountant, to run the numbers for me. With my creative brain and her numbers know-how, I’ll have a Royal Railcar in no time.

Lord Banjo is a Georgia resident. Find similar stories in his book, *Lord Banjo the Royal Pooch*, available locally at Mountain Paws in Highlands, Books Unlimited in Franklin, and on Amazon. Contact him at inkpenn119@gmail.com.
Highlands-Cashiers Hospital encourages women to take charge of their health

Celebrates 30+-Year Legacy of Dr. Patti Wheeler, Moderator of October’s Evening With the Docs

Last month we were pleased to share the announcement of the much-anticipated agreement between Mission Health and HCA Healthcare (HCA), which is now with the North Carolina Attorney General for review.

As part of this process, I would like to begin this column by acknowledging and expressing my tremendous gratitude to our Highlands-Cashiers Board of Trustees. Their leadership, support and recent collaboration to address questions and concerns reflect our shared purpose - to ensure access to high-quality healthcare for our community members well into the future.

An important aspect of healthcare is remembering that October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month, and it’s about so much more than pink ribbons. Highlands-Cashiers Hospital (HCH) is invested in empowering women to take responsibility for their wellbeing. Education about self-care – like annual physical exams and mammograms – and a good relationship with a primary care provider are keys to a woman’s ability to take charge of her own health.

Since our thoughts turn to breast cancer prevention this month, you should know that our primary care providers – who are truly patient partners – regularly discuss self-care practices with their patients, like routine physical activity and the importance of learning about their family health histories. Our providers also make important health recommendations to our patients, which are constantly being updated. For example, did you know that the recommendations regarding routine breast exams have changed over the last several years, including that screening mammograms should start between 40 and 44 years of age? Women are also advised to gain familiarity with what “normal” is for their breasts – their appearance, and how they feel.

Should a woman in our community find herself to be one of the 1-in-8 women who does receive a breast cancer diagnosis, she can rest assured that she will have the broad array of cutting edge treatments and survivorship support that Mission Health offers. And, through our anticipated partnership with HCA Healthcare, our communities of western North Carolina will have increased access to the very latest in cancer research through top tier programs, like HCA’s renowned Sarah Cannon Cancer Center.

Our October Evening With the Docs will be hosted by Dr. Patti Wheeler, a talented and invested physician whose 30 years of community service we recently celebrated.

We’re fortunate that this connected caregiver, who knows our community so well, will be on hand to dispense practical information on how women can take responsibility for their breast health, and what to expect if they receive a breast cancer diagnosis.

We’ll also offer an opportunity that night, for women to receive their mammography screenings.

The evening promises to be a fun way to get an important health screening checked off your list, while enjoying chair massages and a surprise giveaway.

The event will take place on Thursday, October 18th, from 5:30-7pm in the Jane Woodruff Room, Suite 103 at HCH. We encourage those who wish to attend to reserve their seat by calling Brittany Dryman at 828-526-1345.

HCH will continue to provide some of the very best healthcare, and clinicians, in the nation – for all patients. The combination of our new partnership with HCA and the service of devoted, seasoned providers like Dr. Wheeler, mean that the patient wins, and the Plateau is poised to become even stronger and healthier.
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- Men’s Night Out at Jannie Bean Custom Jewelry on south 2nd Street from 5-8 p.m. Great food, beverages and door prizes.

Fri., Oct. 19
- Join your friends at Highlands-Cashiers Land Trust for a rare opportunity to hike a Cashiers landmark- Rock Mountain! This will be a challenging trek and space is limited. For details and to reserve your spot contact the land trust at 828-526-1111 or info.hitrust@earthlink.net.

Sat., Oct. 20
- The Highlands Plateau Greenway will conduct its monthly work day on the Greenway Trail from 9a-noon, Saturday. If you are interested in participating, please email highlandsgreenway@ncvt.com or leave a message at 828-482-2346. We’ll meet at the large upper parking lot behind the Recreation Center at 9 a.m. for a brief orientation session, and you will be furnished with the necessary tools and safety equipment.

Sat. & Sun., Oct 20-21
- Fine Jewelry Trunk at The Gallery of Gems, 2724 Georgia Road, Franklin, 11a to 6p. Enjoy a glass of wine, while you peruse through our spectacular collection of one of a kind pieces in 14K & 18K gold with natural gemstones in fine jewelry. Come celebrate the color change in the Smoky Mountains with us. Come enjoy our beautiful jewelry extravaganza is exclusively at the “The Gallery of Gems” For information call 828-342-3135, 828-524-8931 or 828-342-7340.

Sat.-Sun., Oct. 20-21
- Fall Colors Fine Art Show indoor exhibition & sale at the Highlands Civic Center on N. 4th Street, 10a to 5p.

Sat., Oct. 20
- At PAC, Saint-Saens’ Samson et Dalila, Live via Satellite featuring the Metropolitan Opera (NYC) at 12:55 with a pre-opera discussion 30 minutes prior. Tickets are available online: www.highlandspac.org, at the door or by calling 828.526.9047. Highlands Performing Arts Center, 507 Chestnut Street, Highlands.

- HCP presents Mauritius by Theresa Re-

...EVENTS continued from page 19

$795,000 • HCMLS# 97556
A beautiful contemporary home on 46 acres of property surrounded on three sides by National Forest. The home has two wings. Part of the house can be used as an in-law suite with its own kitchen, bedrooms, and living area. Approximately 20 minutes from Western Carolina University and 10 minutes from the Bear Lake boat ramp. There is an additional 19.7-acre parcel available for purchase near the listed property Co-listed with Jody Lovell.

$995,000 • MLS# 89133A
This is a beautifully situated traditional home in HFCC on North Big Bearpen Mountain Road with views of Whiteside Mountain, Shortoff Mountain, Chimney Top Mountain in Cashiers, and distant Mount Toxaway. The waterfall on HFCC golf hole #15 is visible from the home’s front deck. Open floor plan. Stone fireplace is focal point in the living room and dining area. Two master bedrooms on one end and two bedrooms on the other. Finished lower level with full bath and a deck.

$599,000 • MLS# 89218
At the end of HFCC golf hole #5 with a commanding view of the green and down the fairway, this home offers excellent views to be enjoyed from the main floor deck and the lower level area. The main floor features two bedrooms and two baths with a large great room which opens to the expansive covered wraparound deck. The attractive stone fireplace is a focal point in the living room area. The terrace level has another living area with a second stone fireplace plus a kitchenette.

$429,000 • MLS# 88084
A beautifully maintained home with updated finishes backing up to the Highlands falls County Golf course on hole number 4. From the front entrance, you can see HFCC golf hole number 5. This well-designed home has an open living space and one level living with the master bedroom on one end and the other two bedrooms on the other end of the home. The stone fireplace provides an inviting focal point for the living room, dining, and kitchen area.
Intown Luxury Living at its finest on Harris Lake! Rustically detailed & elegantly finished, 
this lower unit was thoughtfully planned with 2 generously sized guest bedrooms with full 
baths separated from the oversized master suite. Hardwood floors lead from the bedrooms 
to the open living area that features a stone fireplace, beamed tray ceiling & ample dining 
room, breakfast room & granite & stainless kitchen. The enclosed, all-weather porch is 
perfect for gazing over the serene setting, OVERLOOKING THE LAKE.  Offered for 
$1,195,000.  MLS 88149.

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Schmitt, master on main. An elevator carries you up to the office/den and 2 massive suites, 
and carries you down to a great room with fireplace and private bedroom suite. Many ex-
tras by owner! Lovely landscaping and fire pit on community stone patio. Luxury lock and 
leave! Offered beautifully furnished for $1,450,000.  MLS 89046.
Early Voting continues in Highlands at the Civic Center/Rec Park and in Franklin at the courthouse until 1 p.m., Nov. 3. The polls are open on Election Day Nov. 6, 6:30a to 7:30p.

Thinking of Buying an Investment Property? ... Should You Set Up a LLC?

While the overall answer to this question should be determined between you and your attorney, this article just covers a few points for consideration.

Owning a rental property in your name has the possibility of putting your personal assets into jeopardy. A typical response might be, but my insurance will cover me. That is normally the case but there are gaps in some coverages that could lead to major expenses that are potentially more than your equity in a recently purchased property.

While those events that fall into the gaps of insurance coverage may be few and far between, is it really worth the risk? How many of us read all of the finer print in our insurance policies?

To use an example quoted in the January/February issue of Realtor Magazine; State Farm Insurance doesn’t cover bites by ‘rottweilers, chows and about a dozen other breeds’.

What if your tenant’s normally docile rottweiler bites someone on your property and you have State Farm insurance?

That one incident, depending on the severity, could put your personal assets at risk if you are not handling your rental business through a LLC or other entity that separates your rental business.
from your personal monies and properties.

Forming an entity company is a comparatively small investment and can be handled through your local attorney.

The purpose of this article is to in no way discourage investing in rental property.

In fact, I’ve covered the topic in these articles before and our Highlands Cashiers Plateau is a fantastic area for income property investment as we see more and more demand for good vacation rental properties.

This is just to encourage our clients to be smart investors and to understand some of the ways to make your investment even more secure and worry free.

Wanda Klodosky is the Broker in Charge of Landmark Realty Group’s Highlands office. Landmark Realty Group covers the Plateau with offices in Highlands, Cashiers & Burlingame/Lake Toxaway and is the area’s leader in sales as a firm. Landmark has recently partnered with Leverage Global Partners to extend our marketing reach globally. Visit www.landmarkrg.com or call 828-526-4663 to contact our friendly and professional Realtors.

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**Fall Colors Fine Art Show**

*Saturday, Oct 20 & Sunday, Oct 21 2018 - 10 to 5*

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**Highlands Civic Center**

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**Fall Colors Fine Art Show**

*Saturday, Oct 20 & Sunday, Oct 21 2018 - 10 to 5*

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**Indoor Exhibition & Sale 828-526-8429**

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**Great country club living at Wildcat Cliffs Country Club**

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**Fall Colors Fine Art Show**

*Saturday, Oct 20 & Sunday, Oct 21 2018 - 10 to 5*

---

**Indoor Exhibition & Sale 828-526-8429**

**Highlands Civic Center**

**ALHC**

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The work has been done! All that's needed is your decorating touch. LIKE NEW! This sweet cottage has been rebuilt. Completely new roof and gutters. New insulation in ceiling and floors. New duct work for heat and air. All new wood floors and wood ceilings throughout. Kitchen with new cabinets, granite counter tops, and double sink. All fixtures, ceiling fans, built in book cases are new. Freshly painted and stained inside and out. Enjoy viewing sunsets from the large back deck. Offered for $359,900. mls #88782

Located close to town on Mirrormont. This 3 bedroom 2 bath is all on one level and is cute as a button. Easy living split floorplan and has both a porch and deck that over-looks a small yard. Needs HVAC and your personal touches! Offered at $349,000 mls #88789

Holt Knob. This easy living ranch has been lovingly maintained but needs a facelift and is ready for a new owner. 3 bedrooms, 3 baths with a garage and family room. Open plan with a porch and a deck that delivers a spectacular view! Offered at $559,000. mls#89126

This beautiful home in Heatherstone is located near the Sky Valley Country Club with a public golf course. There is a view of the fishing and canoeing lake. This well maintained home has 4 bedrooms and 4 baths, stone fireplace and great open kitchen. This is a great home for the money. On the Atlanta side of the mountain. Offered at $375,000. mls #88352

BIG VIEWS. IN TOWN. 3 bedroom 4 bath. Living room with great views as well as same in dining room. Open and covered decks with outdoor kitchen. Chefs kitchen. Two fireplaces. Intimate den or office. Large master suite. Large basement. Garden water feature. Offered at $699,000. mls #89030

Sagee Mountain. Mid century with Fabulous Mountain views. 3 bedrooms, 3 baths, spectacular covered porch! Perfect for entertaining and picture perfect grounds with gardens galore. Sagee is a highly desirable enclave of private homes in the city limits and 5 minutes from downtown. Offered at $1,550,000. mls #89977

Great post and beam design with designer finishes sits at the end of Black Bear Trace and borders USFS Lands, a gurgling Brook is on the lower property line that makes for a relaxing setting. 4 bedrooms 4 1/2 baths, ample room sizes and soaring ceilings. Smart wiring, chandelier lowers for easy cleaning and no ladder bulb replacement. Loft area is great for kids or an office. Huge screened and covered porches. Offered at $835,000. mls #88447

VILLAGE WALK. Old Highlands charm with this spacious 2 bedroom, 2 bath. Brand new kitchen and decks, recent spa bath. Office or small bedroom. 2 car garage. Offered at $650,000. mls #89448

2 Bedroom, 2 bath home. Open floor plan. Large master bedroom with large bath and walk in closet. New wood floors, heat & air, fireplace, water filtration system. Offered at $169,000. mls #88995

Located on a charming lane less than 3 miles from town, this 2 bedroom 2 bath has a circular concrete drive. high ceilings in the living room and open kitchen plan. Offered at $250,000. mls #88866

3 bedrooms, 3.5 baths that has been updated and overlooks a beautiful pond. Heart of pine floors and loads of glass. Offered at $674,000. mls #88946
I know there is not a single person who call themselves a believer that have not felt the pain David describes in this verse. Deadness, dullness, a lack of spiritual joy, failure in duties and shadows that hide privileges are known to all believers. These things enshroud your soul where it should be filled with life, fervency and love. They bring you down when you ought to be lifted up. Causing you to crawl in the dust when you ought to be flying high. They cause you to hold to earthly things when you should be encompassing heavenly things. In all of this you find your affections low, your feelings depressed and your spirit darkened. These cause questions in your heart that ask about the very existence of God and life with him in your spirit.

Yet, as a believer, even in this darkness you find there is something joyful, hopeful and encouraging. David shows it clearly in his word “I am laid low in the dust; preserve my life according to your work.” What he finds is the promise of his Lord that he will be preserved and revived. This is what marks those who believe as children of God. What we hear from David is a living man who dares to complain about the deadness he feels. He desires heaven but cannot see it through the darkness of this world that has overwhelmed him. David pictures a believer mourning over his flesh and its effects on him and praying he can be more spiritual. He knows his low estate but refuses to accept it. He yearns for more of his God.

“I am laid low in the dust; preserve my life according to your work.”

This is a very familiar phrase to believers. There is always in the heart of the true believer a desire to move past such a statement. The Christian is called to put on his armor. He is ever engaged in this great conflict. He is always working to rise out of the dust of this world. He is seeking with all his heart to soar to higher heights. He cannot do this on his own. There is only one way he can overcome the darkness of this world and that is through Jesus Christ. Jesus came to do for men what they could never do for themselves.

Preservation

“I am laid low in the dust; preserve my life according to your work” (Psalm 119:25).

...
...SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING  
continued from page 28

themselves. He came and lived the perfect life the Scripture says is required to come into the presence of God. He died the atoning death on Calvary’s cross to pay the price for the sins of his people they could never pay for themselves. He won the resurrection victory in order to prepare the way for believers to pass through death into eternal life.

David knew he could never overcome the darkness of this world on his own. He knew he needed the work of God to be revived and to persevere. You can have this same confidence when you place your hope and trust in Jesus Christ and in him alone.

---

Highlands Historic Village
Admittance is free!
Open June – October
Thurs.-Sat. 11a to 3 p

Highlands Performing Arts Center will screen Live via Satellite the MET Opera’s production of Samson et Dalila on Saturday, October 20 at 12:55pm. Saint-Saëns’s biblical epic stars mezzo-soprano Elina Garanča and tenor Roberto Alagna in the title roles; Live in HD audiences last saw the pair together in the acclaimed 2010 transmission of Bizet’s Carmen. The Tony Award–winning director of A Gentleman’s Guide to Love & Murder, makes his debut directing the first new Met production of the opera in 20 years. Sir Mark Elder conducts. There will be a pre-opera discussion beginning at 12:30pm. Tickets are available online: highlandsac.org, at the door or by calling 828.526.9047. Highlands Performing Arts Center, 507 Chestnut Street, Highlands NC 28741

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Not using your home as much as you’d planned?

Thinking of purchasing a getaway home?

Turn weeks of vacancy into income!

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18 years of rental management in Highlands-Cashiers

Leading the Plateau in sales the last five years.

*information provided by HCMLS - based on HCMLS data.

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Highlands Historic Village

Mauritius by Theresa Rebeck, an intriguing drama of suspense directed by Michael Lanzilotta, opens Thursday, October 18, at the Highlands Performing Arts Center. Two half-sisters, Mary and Jackie, inherit a valuable stamp collection, but bitterly disagree about who it should have control of it. Two of the most valuable stamps in the world (this is really true) were printed in 1847 on the small island of Mauritius in the Indian Ocean and are contained in the collection that Mary’s grandfather assembled. She wants to keep it, Jackie wants to sell it, and in her attempt to do so happens to alert some shady dealer/collectors who will stop at nothing to get hold of it.

The sisters are played by Jamie Thomas (a talented newcomer to HCP) and Virginia Talbot, a veteran actor of many HCP plays. The three guys attempting to get hold of the stamps are played by HCP’s well-known actors, Lance Trudel, Craig Eister, and David Spivey.

Mauritius plays Thursdays through Sundays, October 18-21, 25-28. Weekday evening performances begin at 7:30, Sunday matinees at 2:30. For tickets, call the HCP box office, 526-8084, or go on line, highlandscashiersplayers.org.

**Mountain Findings**

**Year-End Closing Sale**

**EVERYTHING is 1/2 OFF**

**Begins Sat., Oct. 20-Nov. 3**

**Mon.-Sat. • 10a-4p**

(cash or check only)

432 Spruce Street Highlands • 526-9929
The board wants the majority of Dogwood members to be independent of Mission/HCA and include representation from the 18-counties it serves and all terms should be publicly accessible.

Furthermore, The Town Board wants the AG office to oversee the allocation of the $15 million Mission has promised to the HC Hospital Foundation and it should retain oversight of the activities of the Dogwood Health Trust.

Though the Town Board made it clear it approves of the sale, as the citizens’ advocate, it hopes the AG’s decision will have safeguards to ensure healthcare access to all people in this region, especially Medicaid and Medicare recipients where hospital access is critical.

“Because many of the communities currently served by Mission are 50 to 80 miles or more away from full service medical facilities, further loss or reduction of local facilities will also be detrimental to the economic development and quality of life in these underserved areas, as well as to property values. We hope your approval decision of the sale will ensure essential healthcare access for the entire region,” concluded Taylor.

The AG has 60 days to advise. He has requested additional information. The clock starts once he receives it.

— Kim Lewicki

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**Come trick-or-treat at the Nature Center**

Celebrate Halloween the natural way with our Halloween Enchanted Forest on Tues., Oct. 30 from 6-7:30 p.m. Guided tours of our Botanical Garden will lead you trick-or-treating around the trail to meet some native animal characters offering candy and facts about themselves. Beware the forest in the last half hour as it will turn from enchanted to haunted and the animals will definitely be more “trick” than “treat.” When you are done trick-or-treating, join us in the Nature Center for fun activities and check out our bone collection.

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...NC AG continued from page 9

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...WASHINGTON continued from page 8

before running for Congress, I know firsthand how every job and every dollar matters.

“Another priority is serving and supporting veterans and law enforcement. I always want to make sure we go above and beyond for those who lay it all on the line to protect our freedoms—that includes supporting pro-veteran and pro-law enforcement legislation or personally helping any of these groups who may be experiencing issues with federal benefits.

“Lastly, it’s a priority for our office to provide top rate constituent services to the people of Western North Carolina. I’m very honored by the fact that my district team has been recognized as one of the best in the nation in serving constituents, be it with disability benefits or other issues. If you’re experiencing any issues with federal agencies, we are here to help you.”

Congressman Meadows noted that he is thankful for the three terms he has served thus far and looks forward to another term.

“I want to thank North Carolina’s eleventh district for giving me the opportunity to serve them for three terms. Every day is an honor,” said Meadows. “As I’ve often said before: my voting card may have my picture on it, but it belongs to the people of Western North Carolina, and I will continue to listen to your voice regardless of the consequences.”
...MC BOC continued from page 12

should be there for them.”

Haven:
“We need to send a package of what we can offer to potential companies. Especially companies up north that are drowning in regulations,

Job development skills need to be taught in early college. We also need to offer things to make our county attractive to potential companies and services. Also, more events to enhance tourism.”

Shields:
“We are in a workforce dilemma. I have seen the recent unemployment stats at 4%. That data to me means our workforce is maxed out. Having the opportunity to serve on the Business Advisory Board, I hear from the CEOs the same issue, “the need for a qualified labor force.” The question that lingers with me is how do we ensure job growth” without a workforce? Yes, we are doing career and technical strategies at Franklin High School and the other high schools but trying to create a job cadre of young people with a work ethic seems to be a challenge. Listening to employers talk about how societal ills has captured and hinders employers from finding long-term employees makes leadership nervous. I think with the Career Technical Education programs taught in our high schools and the recent STEM initiative, indicates the schools, with help from the state, are going in the right direction but mental health and societal ills are a hindrance to “Economic Development.”

Wallace:
“Macon County has fallen into a downward economic spiral as a number of large industries closed and as a succession of storefronts were boarded up; and unfortunately we are now, for the fifth year in a row, ranked in the lowest level (Tier I) for “economic distress,” a ranking by the NC Department of Commerce that businesses and industries look at when deciding whether to locate their enterprises in our county.

We must acknowledge this economic distress for what it is, including the actual interrelated factors (29% poverty level, pervasive underemployment, 58% of our children living in low-income households, etc.) that have resulted in our distressed level, rather than pretending that our Mayberry fantasy is serving our 34,000 citizens well.

As for our lack of economic growth, we have concentrated on development of Main Street Franklin, the Macon Airport, and recreational facilities, rather than devising and carrying out a long-term plan for development of the by-pass and major arteries leading into Franklin, namely the Sylva Road and Georgia Road, and to a lesser extent the Highlands and Bryson City roads.

The county has spent a lot of time and money doing numerous studies but has rarely followed through on any of them except in bits and pieces. As a result, the corridors have “grown like Topsy” with no rhyme nor reason, and they are not an inviting sight. Furthermore, the ETJ (extra-territorial jurisdiction) and annexation practices engaged in by the Town of Franklin have contributed to the problem, especially in regard to ad hoc water and sewer line construction, haphazard permitting of alcohol and business licensure, and convoluted taxation that affects the entire county.

Courting tourism and construction to the exclusion of other kinds of development is obviously not sustainable, but that is the sum total of what we continue to do. We should develop clear and honest industrial recruitment presentations and aggressively contact a wide range of businesses and industries to try to entice divisions or even headquarters to locate here, creating good jobs with benefits that would support families. We should offer tax incentives and negotiated leases, but quit deeding away plots of our prime commercial property to private companies that thrive for a while, then sell the property and move elsewhere.

Our poverty rate (29%), median income ($39,000), needy and declining schools, children in low-income households (58%), a growing homeless population, reduced medical and health care facilities, lack of affordable housing, lack of broadband internet access, and growing crime statistics related to drug trafficking also need serious attention, since those are the main factors that prospective businesses and industries look at beyond a potential workforce.

Potential employers considering such data are not impressed with our long-time lack of support for education, our “welfare queen” numbers, our crime statistics, and our “dollar store” economy. We can make excuses, and often do, but the actual numbers tell a far more complete story than does constant repetition of our Mayberry fantasy that cannot hold up under even superficial scrutiny. Reactive and piecemeal governance, which is commonplace here, hinders us from making long-range improvements.”

Lastly, is there an issue that you think is pressing in Macon County that was not addressed above? If so, what is it and what is your opinion and viewpoint on the matter. What are your plans to approach it?

Haven:
“Keep away from the regulation ride and focus more on helping people be successful. I am for a new senior center, a bigger law enforcement center, more drug counseling, and address issues

DATE: October 20th, 2018
TIME: 11am-5pm

JOIN US ON SATURDAY, OCTOBER 20TH FOR A MAUI JIM TRUNK SHOW!
RECEIVE A PERSONALIZED FITTING BY THE LOCAL REPRESENTATIVE AND ASK ABOUT OUR MAHALO GIFTS!

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...MC BOC continued from page 32

with the high school.”

Shields:

“Future of health services for Macon County: I have had the opportunity to attend updates regarding the merger of Mission Hospital with HCA. The opinion jury is still out but the Mission updates are beneficial and provides degrees of hope. Karen Gorby, Angel Medical Center CEO, has been excellent in keeping the county and community groups informed.

The Broadband and Internet Services committee, which I am the county liaison, are struggling but not for lack of trying but due to provider profits in our geographical area. The committee understands the lack of Broadband and Internet services makes our citizens, businesses and industries vulnerable to our economic wellbeing.”

Wallace:

“We should set priorities for the entire county and continually review them. We should put money into our schools (both facilities and operation) and services for the growing population of retirees, rather than continuing to expand recreation, entertainment, and the airport; and every large project should be decided by public referendum, by a direct vote of the people, fully participatory and fully transparent.

Our greatest need at this time is resources for families with children, with employment that can support them. We should renovate and expand the detention center and quit sending, at great expense, our inmate overflow to Cherokee and Clay counties. We should create more accurate and more streamlined flow of information from our local government to the public, and most of all, build trust by being transparent with the problems of law enforcement and the court system at all levels.

We need more rehabilitation programs for non-violent offenders, and a separate “drug court” to relieve our overloaded court system. We should also work to change our laws regarding marijuana use that is clogging our law enforcement and court systems and preventing our citizens from obtaining the benefits of medical marijuana.

We should consider creating and investing in a “permanent fund” that will return dividends to the citizens over the long haul rather than putting ourselves on the back for our “borrowing power” that allows us to engage in ongoing indebtedness. We should support and encourage home and property ownership, rather than overburdening home and property owners with unnecessary local regulations. We should support and enforce the state environ-mental laws, including erosion control, but scrap the locally proposed “grading license requirement” for property owners who do their own work, a prime example of governmental overreach.

County permitting and inspections for all aspects of construction should be continuously reviewed to ensure coordination with state laws and regulations. We should consider merging major aspects of our county government with our municipal governments to eliminate overlapping responsibilities and unnecessary duplication, to avoid confusion about who does what and where the buck stops, to create a streamlined governmental structure that people can understand and know whom to contact for needed information, to create more financial efficiency and accountability to our taxpayers and other citizens, and to provide equitable representation for individual citizens no matter where they live.

A major point for us to consider locally is that only a few hundred people vote in Franklin elections, but thousands vote in Macon County elections, while the services and responsibilities are inexorably intertwined with many decisions made by the small Town of Franklin that affect the entire county, i.e. the tail wagging the dog. The same intertwining applies to the relationship between Highlands and Macon County to a lesser degree, but the Franklin/Macon overlap is far more convoluted because of proximity and Franklin being our county seat. Additionally, the unincorporated community of Nantahala is routinely overlooked and receives far fewer basic services than do communities elsewhere in the county, primarily communications technology, law enforcement, and healthcare. Further complicating matters is that so many people live one place (town or county), but they vote according to the location of their residence. As a result, many people who live out in the county but have businesses in town (which might be the majority of business owners) do not have any representation or vote regarding their businesses. Thus, our local county government should work toward transparency, efficient use of resources, reordering of priorities, equitable representation of citizenry, increased public safety, improved education, affordable housing, improved communications technology, adequate medical and healthcare, more employment opportunities, adjusting to a changing population both in type and location, and bottom-up rather than top-down governance. In prior decades, Macon County was the brightest star west of Asheville, and if we work together we can rise to that level once again.”
**Police & Fire Reports**

Highlands Police entries from Oct. 1. Only the names of persons arrested, issued a Class-3 misdemeanor or public officials have been used.

**Oct. 1**
- At 8 a.m., a larceny from a building at the Highlands Biological Station was reported where an undisclosed amount of money was stolen. At 11:18 a.m., officers responded to a two-vehicle accident on US 64 near 3rd Street.

**Oct. 4**
- At 2:30 a.m., officers were called to a residence concerning disorderly conduct involving a man and woman.
- At 3 p.m., the larceny of a phone was reported from a location on Main Street.

**Oct. 5**
- At 12:18 p.m., officers responded to a two-vehicle accident on US 64 near Trillium Circle.
- At 1:48 p.m., officers responded to a two-vehicle accident on US 64/Main Street.
- At 4:04 p.m., officers responded to a two-vehicle accident in Highlands Plaza.

**Oct. 8**
- At 8:07 a.m., officers responded to a one-vehicle accident on US 64 east near Cullasaja Drive.
- At 9:28 a.m., Nicholas Lewis Webb, 49, of Franklin, was arrested for possession of methamphetamine. He was issued a $5,000 secured bond. His trial date is Oct. 23.

The Highlands Fire & Rescue log from Oct. 3.

**Oct. 3**
- At noon, the dept. provided public assistance at a residence on Sassafrass Court.

**Oct. 4**
- At 3:23 & 4:53 p.m., the dept. was first-respond-

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**Sample Ballot**

**Macon County, North Carolina**

**November 6, 2018**

**Board of Commissioners**
- District 1 (You may vote for one)
  - Jim Tate
    - Republican

**Board of Commissioners**
- District 11 (You may vote for one)
  - Ron Haven
    - Republican

**Board of Commissioners**
- District 1 (You may vote for one)
  - Ashley H. Welch
    - Republican

**U.S. House of Representatives**
- District 11 (You may vote for one)
  - Clifton B. Ingram, Jr.
    - Republican

**State Offices**
- District 50 (You may vote for one)
  - Bobby Kuppers
    - Democrat

**U.S. House of Representatives**
- District 120 (You may vote for one)
  - Aaron Martin
    - Democrat

**Prosecutorial Offices**
- District 43 (You may vote for one)
  - Ashley H. Welch
    - Republican

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**Ballot Marking Instructions:**
- A. With the marking device provided or a black ball point pen, completely fill in the oval to the left of each candidate or selection of your choice as shown.
- B. Where authorized, you may write in a candidate by filling in the oval and writing the name on the Write-in line.
- C. If you tear, deface or wrongly mark this ballot, return it to request a replacement.

**Judicial Offices**
- NC Supreme Court
  - Associate Justice Seat 1 (You may vote for one)
    - Barbara Jackson
      - Republican

**North Carolina**

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**Early Voting continues in Highlands at the Civic Center/Rec Park and in Franklin at the courthouse until 1 p.m., Nov. 3.**
Police & Fire Reports

**Oct. 3**
- At 5:30 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Naiad Terrance.

**Oct. 5**
- At 10:13 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Happoldt Drive.
  - At 6:25 p.m., the dept. standby at Zachary Field for the MAMA helicopter.

**Oct. 7**
- At 7:02 a.m., the dept. responded to a motor vehicle accident on US 64 east at Ravenel Lake Dr.
  - At 5:01 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at the Hospital.
  - At 9:02 p.m. the dept. responded to a Co2 alarm at a residence on Sequoyah Point Way.

**Oct. 8**
- At 8:36 a.m., the dept. responded to a motor vehicle accident on Mirror Lake Road.
  - At 3:57 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Upper Brushy Face Road.

**Oct. 9**
- At 10:42 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Brookside Lane.
  - At 9:39 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Harbison Orchard Rd.

**Oct. 10**
- At 12:58 p.m., the dept. provided public assistance to a residence on Rich Gap Road.
  - At 6:34 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm on Satulah Road.

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**Election Day**

The polls are open on Election Day Nov. 6, 6:30a to 7:30p.
GARAGE SALE
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 20, 9a-3p. Bedroom furniture, Dishes, Kitchen Items, Tools, Glassware & more. Rain or Shine. 590 Pierson Drive, Highlands. Across from Highlands School

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See CLASSIFIEDS page 38

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