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Highlands' Newspaper

FREE

Volume 2, Number 7

Locally Owned & Operated

Friday, Feb. 20, 2004

The week of Feb. 20-26

• HARD SUITCASES NEEDED –

Please donate old, hard suitcases for use during this year's Bolivia mission trip, March 10. They will be used to transport supplies to Montero. Drop them off at the Highlands United Methodist Church by Feb. 29.

▪ SCOREBOARD SPONSORS –

The HS Booster Club needs sponsors for the Buck Creek Fields scoreboard. Business sponsors are \$500 and logos will be displayed permanently on the board. Call Mary Dotson at 526-5868.

Feb. 21

▪ TAKE A HIKE –

The Nantahala Hiking Club will take an 8-mile strenuous hike from Coweeta Lab up the Ridge Trail to Dyke's Gap and down by the Cunningham Creek road. Call Gail Lehman at 524-5298 for info.

▪ ADELGID WORKSHOP –

9 a.m. til noon at the Highlands Nature Center. For more info, call 526-9227.

Feb. 22

▪ ECUMENICAL SERVICE –

Highlands Community Ecumenical Worship Service is at 10:45 a.m. at the CBC. Rev. Dan Robinson of First Baptist Church will preach and Holy Communion will be celebrated.

Feb. 24

▪ Q & A –

Representatives from Old Edwards Inn & Spa will hold a question and answer forum at the Conference Center at 5:30 p.m.

▪ ART LECTURE –

A free lecture on Landscapes from Art History at Bascom-Louise Gallery. The speaker is Dr. James Thompson an art historian, critic and full art professor WCU.

Feb. 25

• ART WORKSHOPS –

After school art workshops for grades 4-8 are Wednesdays from 3-4 p.m. at the B-L Gallery. It's \$20 for five classes.

Feb. 26

• ARTPLORATION –

is Thursdays from 10:30 – 2:30 at the B-L Gallery. An exciting new exploration in art is introduced each week. The cost is \$5 and all materials are furnished. Call. 526-4949.

Feb. 27

• LUNCH AT REC PARK –

Senior Luncheon at the Rec Park at noon. It's free, donations accepted.

Boards collaborate on area land use plan

By Kim Lewicki

Efforts fizzled over a year ago, but armed with a detailed population study, a smaller group of people, and a strategic outline, an update of the town's land use plan is in sight.

At the Feb. 18 joint meeting between the Town Board and the planning board, Geoffrey Willet with the N.C. League of Municipalities, outlined the purpose of a land-use plan and explained how to implement it.

"The land-use plan is about the big picture," said Willet. "What are the important issues at the heart of the Town of Highlands — the environ-

▪ See LAND USE pg 16

Feb. 13 – last home game for seniors & a big win against Blue Ridge – Boys 68-33, Girls 47-25



Photo by Jim Lewicki

It was a night of "lasts." The last home game of the 2003-2004 basketball season, the last home game for senior b-ball players and cheerleaders and the last high school game to be played in the Highlands School gym. Next year JV and Varsity games will be played in the new gymnasium. The school gym will be reserved for PE and band and drama performances.

Supplement for teachers coming for 2004-2005

By Kim Lewicki

"It's time to take care of our teachers."

That's the overall sentiment of the Macon County Board of Commissioners. And right now, the time is right.

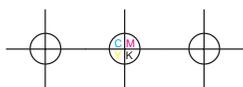
"The fund balance is at a sufficient strength to consider this," said Macon County Manager Sam Greenwood.

Starting the 2004-2005 school year, Macon County teachers will receive a supplement bonus somewhere between 1.5-2 percent of their base salary. "It may not be much, but it's a start and we have to start somewhere," said Macon County Commissioner Allan Bryson.

He said the county's been mulling a teacher supplement around for some time and can finally act on it. "The county's been scrimping and scraping for years and we've been using what we've got to upgrade our school facilities and grounds. Now we have the ability to offer a supplement."

Macon County has joined ranks with 111 school districts across the state who offer supplements. There are still six districts in western coun-

▪ See SUPPLEMENT page 15



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Historical Society fundraiser



The Highlands Historical Society has pewter plates for sale to raise funds to help complete the Highlands Historical Village on Fourth Street. The society hopes to open the Village to the public this year. Paving the driveway and sidewalks will lead to landscaping and final finishing touches. Plates are \$75 and are available by contacting any Highlands Historical Society board member.

Highlands' Newspaper

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• **FORUM** •

Garbage, garbage everywhere

Recent talk about litter in Highlands' business district got me thinking.

Before people start pointing fingers at one area or one entity, take a look at downtown Highlands as a whole.

Walk the town of Highlands — not just up and down Main Street but the perimeter of the business district. You'll see that Highlands has a litter problem that reaches much farther than the construction sites on S. Fourth and Spring streets.

Litter consistently gets tangled in the roadside rhodys along Fifth Street especially from Church to where Fifth becomes Pierson Drive. It's particularly bad right now with construction and renovations taking place on both sides of the street.

South Fourth Street from Spring to where it changes to N.C. 28, the perimeter of the "Rabbit Hole" is pretty bad and has been for a while.

Smallwood Avenue along Harris Lake, though cleaner now than in years past, always has bottles and Styrofoam cups in its ditches. Until recently, the boughs of the Christmas Tree on the corner of Smallwood and Leonard hid scores of beer and wine bottles.

Main from Fifth to Sunset Rocks isn't too clean on either side.

Oak Street from Third to First streets is downright gross, with lots of garbage over the embankment.

From Oak Lane to U.S. 64 west where Oak Street curves by Crane's Barn is perpetually littered with beer and wine bottles. It's likely a "off the beaten path" route

teenagers use to ditch evidence.

The stretch of Fifth Street from Main to the Catholic Church has its share of trash, as well. As does the path off Fifth Street that leads through the woods to the Hudson Library.

So, yes, construction companies who are working in Highlands should absolutely leave the area clean and litter free, with no exceptions, no ifs, ands or buts about it. But Highlands needs to take a good look at its "whole" self and clean up.

Where is all this litter coming from? From careless citizens young and old. From construction workers on their lunch break. Out of the bed of pickup trucks. From dumpster-raiding bears, for sure.

Whomever the culprit, clearly, this is the time of year to do something about the litter. In a few months, roadside foliage will plump up and no one will see the trash for the trees.

There are clean-up groups who have adopted corridors into Highlands, and that's good. But downtown Highlands needs attention, too. Picking up litter is like doing housework. There's no closure. The Girls' Clubhouse does a litter run about once a month, but truthfully, it could be done every week.

Sadly, litter, garbage, and trash is everywhere in Highlands and before people assume it's in one location caused by one group of people, they should get out of their cars and walk around the town. You'll be amazed at what you see and where you see it.

– Kim Lewicki

LETTER-TO-THE-EDITOR POLICY

We welcome letters from our readers. All letters are subject to editing. We reserve the right to reject letters. Anonymous letters will not be accepted. Letters bearing identification and phone numbers can arrive by post or email. Published letters do not necessarily represent opinions of Highlands' Newspaper. Letter deadline: Monday prior to publication.

• OBITUARIES •

Clyde James Vaughn

Clyde James Vaughn, age 86, of Highlands, died Wednesday, February 11, 2004 in the Highlands-Cashiers Hospital. He was a native of Macon County, the son of the late Wesley and Lucie Moss Vaughn.

He was a carpenter, and a member of Buck Creek Baptist Church, where he served as a Deacon and former Sunday School Superintendent.

He is survived by his wife of 59 years, Mildred Mashburn Vaughn of the Buck Creek community; one daughter, Juanita Vaughn of Buck Creek Community; four sons, Randall Vaughn of Grayson, Ga., Glandon Vaughn and Clayton Vaughn both of Buck Creek community and Dellyn Vaughn of Franklin, N.C; one sister, Mattie Cabe of Hendersonville, N.C; seven grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren also survive.

Funeral services were held Saturday, Feb. 14 at 2 p.m. at Buck Creek Baptist Church, with Rev. Bobby Cloer, Rev. Rick Harrell, Rev. Paul Jones, and Rev. William Wooten officiating. Burial was in the church cemetery.

Pallbearers were Denver Vaughn, Darwin Vaughn, Derrick Vaughn, Dwayne Vaughn, Daryl Holland, Wymer Miller, and Larry Mace. Honorary pallbearers will be Bob Calloway, Mike Houston, Algie Bolick, Avery Miller, Harold Ammons and former pastors of Buck Creek Baptist Church.

The family received friends from 6-8 p.m. Friday evening at Bryant Funeral Home.

Memorials may be made to Buck Creek Baptist Church, c/o Geneva Vaughn, 133 Embers Drive, Highlands, NC 28741.

Bryant Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements.

Jessie Louise (Sweeter) Cleaveland

Mrs. Jessie Louise (Sweeter) Cleaveland, age 87, of Highlands, N.C. died Tuesday, February 10, 2004 at the Fidelia Eckerd Living Center. A native of Macon County, she was a daughter of the late James Harworth and Callie Viola Moss Beale. She graduated from Highlands High School and retired from the US Postal Service. Mrs. Cleaveland was of the Methodist faith.

Daughters, Georgia Sanders of Highlands, N.C. and Virginia Bryson of Winston Salem, NC; a son, James Raymond Cleaveland of Sylva, N.C., and a sister, Hazel "Broadie" Potts of Cashiers, N.C., survive her. Seven grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren also survive. Her husband of 40 years, George Elmer Cleaveland; a sister, Reba J. Dalton; and brothers, James O. Beale and John E. Beale, preceded her in death.

Funeral services were Tuesday, February 17, 2004 at 2 p.m. at the Highlands United Methodist Church with the Rev. Alan Hetzel and the Rev. Eddie Ingram officiating. Burial was in Highlands Memorial Park. The family will receive friends from 1-2 p.m., Tuesday one hour prior to the service, at the church.

Pallbearers were Jerry Nix, Jimmy Cleaveland, Clay Bryson, Philip Gates, David Walsh, and Randy Bryson. In lieu of flowers, the family asks that memorials be made to the Fidelia Eckerd Living Center, 100 Hospital Drive, Highlands, N.C., 28741 or to the Highlands-Cashiers Hospice, 190 Hospital Drive, Highlands, N.C., 28741.

Bryant Funeral Home is in charge of the arrangements.

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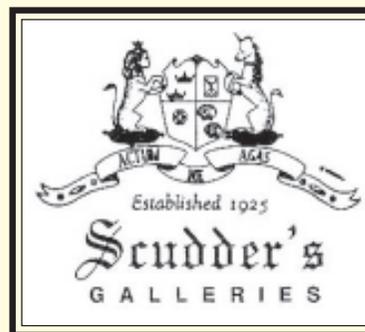
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• **LIFE UNDER CONSTRUCTION** •

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Dr. Maryellen Lipinski

author of *Practical Intuition*, wrote, "It all comes down to what we choose to notice." If we find ourselves seeing only the negative, we can notice that preoccupation and look for the good.

We are constantly seeking answers and most of life could be looked at as a response to questions. "What will I wear today?" "What will I eat for breakfast?" Those are the easy ones. Some of the harder questions are "Why am I here?" "What does it all mean?"

Why write about intuition? Just wondering if you are an active participant in the creation of your reality? I happen to think this is very important. Let me repeat that everything you notice is significant. Just for one day *pretend* that everything you notice is a sign and then look for the meaning.

What makes your life different than mine are the questions we ask ourselves? So, it might stand to reason that what we need to pay attention to are the questions that we ask ourselves. That's about as deep as I am going to get.

Maybe it's the silence of this day watching the snow float effortlessly to the ground that encourages me to stop and think and notice a bit more. Putting it very simply, I guess I am just encouraging you to look for all the answers, so you won't limit your personal power, while at the same time staying open and considering all the questions. Maybe it's right in front of you.

I happen to believe that there are no coincidences. We all notice completely different things. Why do you notice certain things and your friends don't? Things to think about.

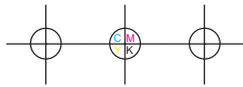
Just remember that you develop your intuition by applying it consciously through practice, not by reading about it. To learn more, pick up Laura's book.

1. Are you open-minded?
2. Nothing is random.
3. Everything is a sign.
4. Every moment-past, present, and future—has a meaning.

I think it is interesting to note that intuition extends the range of your awareness. Laura Day, the

"It's the little questions that make up life." Laura Day

Have you picked up your copy of *Life Under Construction*? Stop by Chapter 2 in Cashiers or Cyrano's Bookshop in Highlands or email melspeaks@aol.com. Dr. Maryellen Lipinski is a psychologist by profession and an international professional speaker by design. Currently, she coaches individuals to obtain their goals in life and works as a Realtor at Village Realty of Sapphire Valley. www.ilovemountainrealestate.com. Her first book, *Random Thoughts and Mine Always Are. Conscious Detours to Creative Power* will make you laugh, cry, and think! www.maryellenlipinski.com



• ASK FRED •

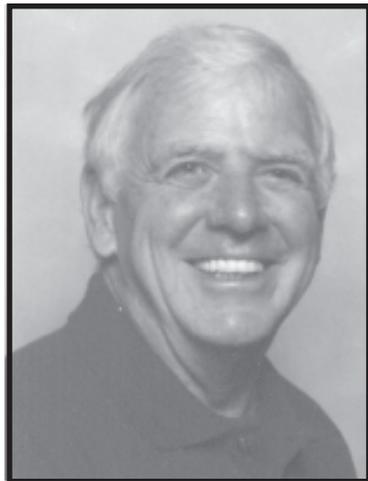
You are a bone-headed weirdo

Dear Fred:

My husband and I play bridge with you and your wife at the Rec Park during the summer. We have gotten to know you both quite well. For that reason, I have gone to great lengths to hide my identity from you, so don't try to find me. Here's my question.

Your wife is such a dignified, cultured and respectful person, I wonder how on earth she ever wound up marrying such a bone-headed, weird person like you?

Signed, very, very undercover



Fred Wooldridge

Hello Janice:

Good to hear from you. How are you and Arnie doing? You must have forgotten that I used to be a gumshoe in my other life. Finding you was so easy. I just traced your bogus email address to a fictitious location in South Africa (Hey, that was clever) and then went to Google.com, who knows everything about everyone and followed the money trail right to your doorstep. You have hidden your identity about as well as you play bridge. Remember, the money trail will always hand you up. (Call me sometime and I will tell you how to do it right.)

Also, I might add, you have a lot of nerve calling me weird when I happen to know that your husband still likes to wear his rubber chicken suit around the house, a leftover from when he worked for Cluckie's Fried Chicken. Rumor has it that he also does interesting things with hard boiled eggs.

Since I am a professional, I will not stoop to your level with insults and unfounded allegations. I will rise above it all and give you a legitimate (ha) answer.

A zillion years ago when the little Missus and I were first married, she would always say to me,

"You are a very scary man." Then, as time passed and we changed, I began to say to her, "You are also a very scary person." The truth is, on the surface, she is a dignified, cultured and respectful person. But underneath all that, my better half is just as zany and scary as I am. As it turns out, we both have only one oar in the water, but as long as we are together in the same boat, we get to where we are going. We feed off each other. Inside the confines of our home, there is always laughter. I am not embarrassed to tell you that we laugh at everything. I am always astounded at some of the wild things she comes up with, for my ears only, of course. It is one of several bonds that glue us together.

So, Miss undercover smarty pants who thought she could pull this off and keep your identity a secret, let me give you a little advice to improve your relationship with Arnie. You should try to be a little more like him and cater more to his needs; like maybe investing in your own rubber chicken outfit to wear around the house. You already have the proper physique to pull it off.

See you at bridge this summer.

Want to have some fun this winter? Our very own Contributor/Columnist Fred Wooldridge is ready to answer your questions about Highlands with tongue in cheek – in ASK FRED. The sky's the limit. All published questions are anonymous and, of course, don't expect a straight answer. E-mail us at askfredanything@aol.com. Put "Dear Fred" in memo line. We reserve the right to edit questions.



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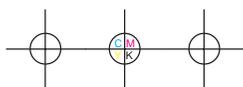
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Brothers Matthew and Justin Rodriguez play a board game with Adriann McCall during "free time" at the VIP After School program.

Quality after school child care offered at Highlands School

By Sally Hanson
 Contributor

The VIP Afterschool Program is an ongoing child care program offered at Highlands School every school day.

Some families don't know about, and though not expensive as child care goes, some families just can't afford it. The cost is \$7.50 per day or \$125 for one month.

Open from 3-6 p.m., the program offers many activities for students in grades kindergarten through fifth grade.

The program is set up in the school cafeteria, but students don't spend the entire three hours in one place.

Session begin with homework. Site director Brenda Owens and assistant Ronda Wolfrey are on hand to help with any questions. "Parents like this because when they get home they don't have to worry about getting homework done," Owens says. "If your child is behind in a certain area, this gives them time to make up the extra work."

After homework is finished, the children participate in one of several activities the program has to offer. If the weather is good they play outside. They can choose from soccer, football, softball, basketball, croquet, and jumping rope, or use their imaginations to invent other games.

When it's cold or rainy, there are many fun activities to keep the children busy inside. These include board games such as Monopoly, Yahtzee, Battleship, Scrabble or

Connect Four. There also are Legos, Lincoln Logs, Barbies, puzzles and memory games which are a good way to learn from while having fun.

Snacks are also included in the fees for each day. The program is under the watchful eye of several regulators, including the Department of Health and Human Services. Parents can be assured their children are getting nutritional snacks. However, funds aren't always available to provide as much as the kids would like to eat.

"Sometimes there aren't enough snacks for all the children," she says. When this happens, Owens and assistant Wolfrey dip into their own pockets to provide for the kids. Owens has also provided supplies when funds weren't available. "We don't mind. But of course we are limited as to what we can buy ourselves," Owens adds.

Owens has been involved with the program for the past two years, and she also volunteers and has been a substitute teacher for about five years. "I love working with the kids, and most of them know me from being a substitute teacher."

Allie Wilkes, one of the students who comes to the program, says "I like to play with Barbies. I like to do my homework and play with my friends." Matthew Rodriguez said that "They take care of me." Sometimes they have so much fun, they don't want to leave, said Owens.

Owens believes the more kids in the program, the more fun the

■ See AFTER SCHOOL pg 14

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Members of Leadership Highlands Health and Human Services team talking with Teresa Mallonee and Jane Kimsey.

Leadership Highlands class learns about county's needy

by **Ginger Slaughter**
Contributor

On Feb. 4, 16 members of the 2004 Leadership Highlands class learned about the health and human service issues in the community, particularly issues effecting low- and moderate-income families, the elderly, and the Latino.

Jim Graham, H-C Hospital Administrator, and Ken Bolt with Banyan Retirement Services at Chestnut Hill, Teresa Mallonee, executive director of Macon Program for Progress, Jane Kimsey, director of Macon County Department of Social Services and Jill Montana, executive director of the International Friendship Center all spoke and then opened the floor to questions.

Mallonee, with MPP, said the population her agency services has changed greatly in 40 years. From "primarily the working poor, mostly farm families," "to primarily single-female households with one or two children who are trying to survive on \$400-\$500 per month," she said.

She said many are living in cars or in homes that are falling down around them. She said affordable housing is missing in the county so the best the organization can do is offer HUD rental assistance and a weatherization program for urgent repairs.

MPP also supports two federally

funded early childhood education programs - Head Start for children 3-5 years old and Early Head Start of children 6 weeks to three years old.

Currently, 400 children are in the county's Head Start program, and 135 are in the Early Head Start program. Both programs have facilities in Highlands as well as Franklin. Staffing problems force both programs to close at 3 p.m. "We can't adequately pay well-trained and educated child care workers," she said.

Kimsey, with the county's department of social services said there is a need for infant care for children up to two years old. "There is along waiting list," she said.

Overall the Dept. of Social Services administers \$38 million for 30 programs in the county, all aimed at helping people help themselves, she said. Those programs include Medicaid and food stamps.

Montana, with the friendship center, said the organization serves a large number of people each month. A key service is assisting with tax ID cards which is equivalent to a social security card.

The center also helps immigrants translate documents such as birth certificates and helps families find safe, affordable housing. "The housing issue is critical," said Montana. "I've got a long list of people who need housing."



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- Throat swabs for strep
- Lab tests ordered by a doctor

BY APPOINTMENT ONLY:

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- Adult Health Screening
- Drug Testing
- Water samples

**WITHOUT AN
APPOINTMENT:**

- Routine immunizations
- Blood pressures
- Tb Skin Tests
- Blood sugar tests
- Hemoglobin
- Urinalysis
- Pregnancy tests (urine)
- Throat swabs for strep
- Lab tests ordered by a doctor

(Medicare covered tests done in Franklin only)

Instant Theater seeking performers for 'Cabin Fever Variety Show'

If you have a talent you would like to perform for the enjoyment of the community, and to take a chance on winning a \$500 Cash Prize, The Instant Theatre Company wants you!

The ITC is seeking to promote artistic potential in Western North Carolina by presenting The 1st Annual Cabin Fever Variety Show. The performance will one night only on March 20, 7:30 p.m., at the Martin-Lipscomb Performing Arts Center.

All types of performers and entertainers, professionals, amateurs, young and old, are encouraged to call the Instant Theatre office at 828-526-1687 or e-mail info@InstantTheatre.org to sign up for the auditions being held on

March 13 at The Performing Arts Center on Chestnut Street.

Performers wishing to audition for The 1st Annual Cabin Fever Variety Show need to call the ITC office by March 6 to insure reserving an audition time on March 13.

There will be a maximum of 15 acts booked for the performance. There is no charge for performers entering the show. All musical performances must be acoustic.

The winner, voted on by the audience, of The 1st Annual Cabin Fever Variety Show will receive both the \$500 Cash Prize, and a DVD of the winner's performance will be sent to a major talent agency in North Carolina.

• AT RUBY CINEMA •

in Franklin, N.C.

Beginning Friday, Feb. 20

Evening Shows (After 5 p.m.)

Adult - \$6; Child - \$4

Matinee (Before 5 p.m.)

Adult - \$5; Child - \$4

Seniors get \$1 off all regular evening shows

WELCOME TO MOOSEPORT

rated PG-13

7:05 & 9:10 Nightly

4:10 Tuesday & Thursday

2:05 & 4:10 Saturday & Sunday

50 FIRST DATES

rated PG-13

7:15 & 9:15 Nightly

4:15 Tuesday & Thursday

2:15 & 4:15 Saturday & Sunday

MIRACLE

rated PG

7 & 9:30 Nightly

4:30 Tuesday & Thursday

2 & 4:30 Saturday & Sunday

THE BUTTERFLY EFFECT

rated R

7:10 & 9:20 Nightly

4:20 Tuesday & Thursday

2:10 & 4:20 Saturday & Sunday

Starting Wed., Feb. 25

THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST

rated R

- Advance Tickets On Sale -

- Group Rates Available -

7 & 9:30 Nightly

4:30 Tuesday & Thursday

2 & 4:30 Saturday & Sunday

Their 60th!



From left, granddaughter Nichole Miglionico with Hazel and Bill Wilson at their home.

Hazel and Bill Wilson, long-time visitors to the Highlands area, celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on Feb. 14, 2004 in their home in Atlanta, Ga. Their daughters Janet Wilson and Karen Miglionico entertained guests from California, Louisiana, Texas, New Mexico, Arkansas, Mississippi, Florida, Georgia and North Carolina at a dinner party in their honor Saturday evening and again at a brunch Sunday afternoon.

• MOVIE PIX •

Video Guy Presents:

The Lady Vanishes

The 1938, comic mystery, starring Iris Henderson, Michael Redgrave, and Dame May Whitty, and many others. Directed by the incomparable Alfred Hitchcock, screenplay by Sydney Gilliat and Frank Launder.



Stuart Armor

Funny, dark and mysterious, this early Hitchcock classic predates his Hollywood days, already showing of his masterful camera work. Based on the novel "The Wheel Spins" by Ethel Lina White.

Beautiful young Iris Henderson (Lockwood) is just finishing up a continental tour, and is on her way to England to get married.

Leaving a vague and undefined Eastern European country by train, her traveling companions include shady lawyers, sinister doctors, a Countess or two, a well dressed nun, traveling magicians, an eccentric clarinet player (Michael Redgrave), who does multiple duty as amateur sleuth and very amateur love interest. Also along for the ride is the kindly, nondescript Miss Foy (Dame Whitty). Or is she? Miss Henderson has received a knock on the noggin, and when she awakes, not only can she not find Miss Foy, no one else seems to have seen her (the start time of the Manchester Cricket Championship plays an important part here).

There are Bad Guys aplenty, but are there any good guys?

Almost anything MIGHT be a clue, almost anything might be a setup for a joke, almost anything might be a blind lead, try to outguess Hitchcock if you can. If you have seen this one before, do your friends a favor and don't give away the twists. If you have not seen this one, do yourself a favor and don't let anyone tell you much about it.

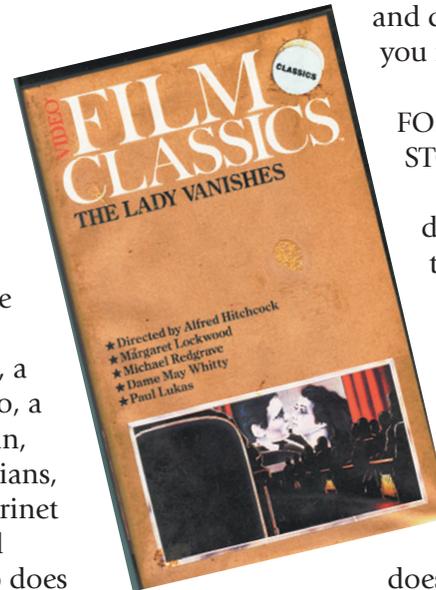
IMPORTANT NOTE FOR POLITE VIDEO STORE CUSTOMERS!

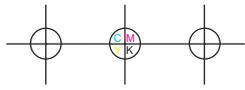
Please do not discuss, especially at the top of your voice, the surprises in a story, let people find out for themselves who or what Rosebud is, who Luke's father is, and what Holmes figures out before Watson

does.

More Hitchcock classics are: Rear Window, Birds, Rope, Murder, Dial M For Murder, 39 Steps, North By Northwest, and Marnie. Some really comic movies that alternately spoof and/or pay homage to Sir Alfred are: The Man Who Knew To Little, Widows Peak, The Man With One Red Shoe, Clue, and Murder By Death.

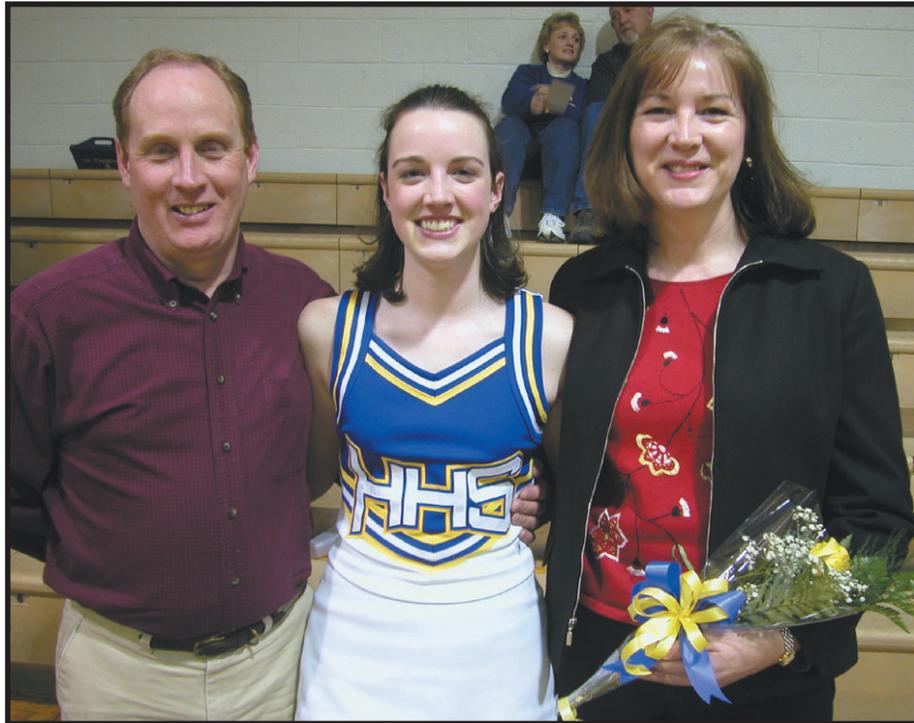
These and about 5,000 other titles on VHS and DVD are available at Movie Stop Video, stop on by and give us a look.



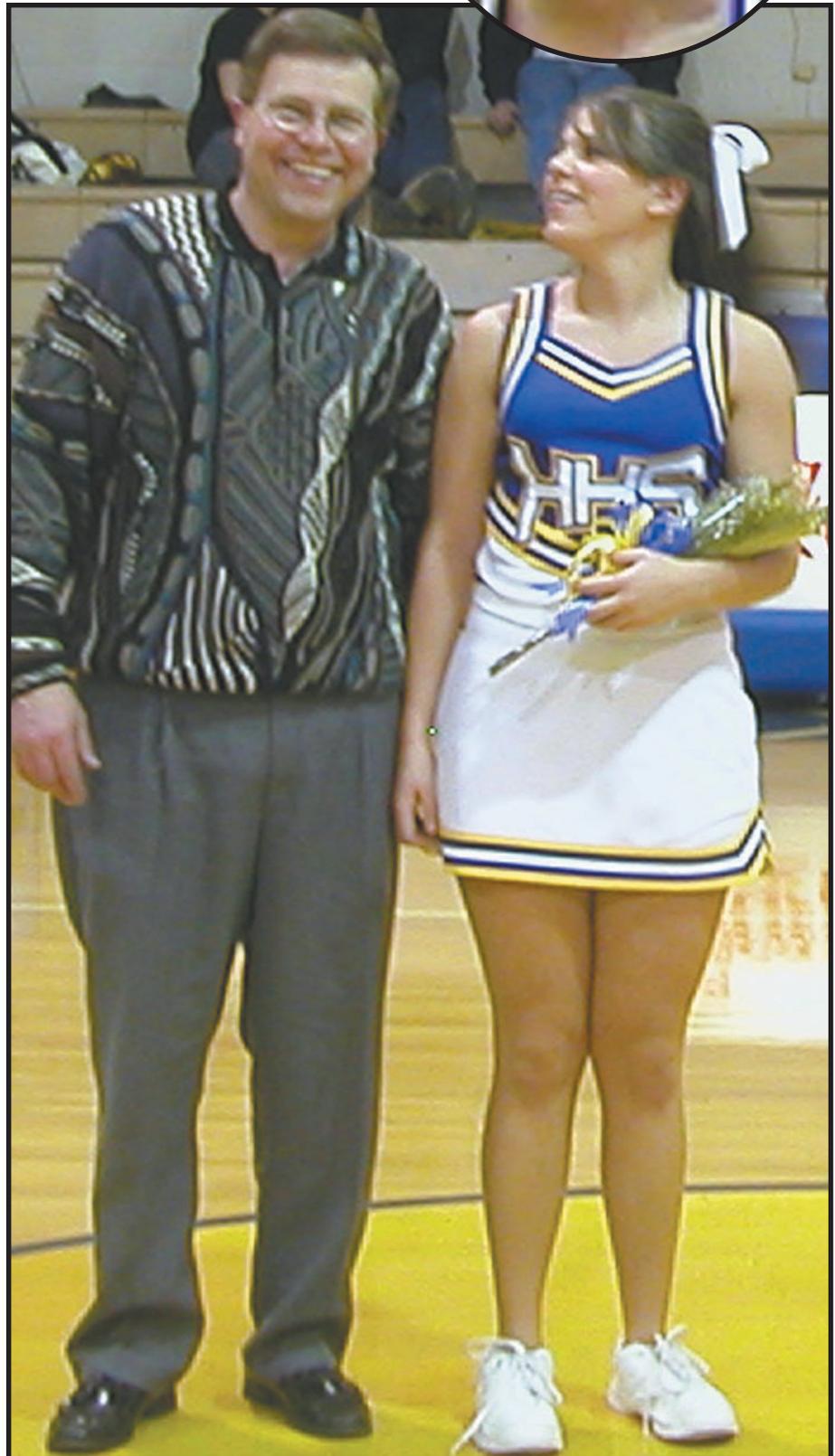


Last home game for senior b-ball players & cheerleaders

Senior Alana Wilson has applied to App State, UNC Charlotte and Western. Senior boy b-ball players are Trent Reese who will be attending Garner-Webb and Nathan Heffington who will attend UNC Chapel Hill. Brittany Potts is the lone senior on the girls b-ball team.



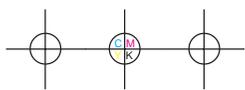
John, Miranda and Mary Dotson. Miranda is attending UNC Chapel Hill in the fall.

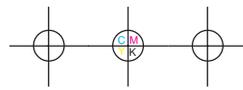


Senior Brittany Shook with her dad, George. Brittany has been accepted to University of Tennessee.



Senior Rachel Lewicki with Junior Catlin Huitt. Rachel has applied to App State, UNC Wilmington and UNC Charlotte





• **SPORTS PICKS** •

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4th Street across from Old Edwards Inn
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green & fruit salads, ice cream
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and 10 a.m. - 8 p.m. Th., Fri., Sat. Sun.

Pescado's

526-9313
Fourth Street "on the Hill"
Fresh Mexican
"The fastest food in town"
Lunch 7 days: 11-3; Dinner: Tues.-Sat. 5-8:30

'I hate the Yankees and here's why'

Have you ever known a guy who wasn't particularly attractive, or charming, or personable (and no I am not talking about myself) yet that person had a lot of money? Those guys always seem to have a beautiful woman (or two) on their arm. And whenever the woman discovers that they aren't particularly attractive, charming, etc., they get rid of her and replace her with a younger, more beautiful woman.



Ryan Potts

The Potts Dictionary defines these men as "tools." And folks, I want you to say hello to George Steinbrenner, the biggest tool in sports. Steinbrenner is the blunt object of sports — willing to bludgeon athletes with money, fame and the promise of a World Series in order to get them in pinstripes.

It's little wonder that Steinbrenner is nicknamed "The boss" — mainly because boss spelled backwards stands for sorry SOB.

The boss has one object and one object only, to win at all costs. And it doesn't matter who you are, no one escapes his bully pulpit. Not his star player (Derek Jeter), his Hall of Fame manager (Joe Torre), or one of his more likeable faces, (David Wells).

If you haven't guessed already, I hate the Yankees. Normally, I refuse to even acknowledge their name, but right now I am too mad for silly word games.

I used to respect the Yankees even through my hate-colored glasses. They had tradition, they had winning players brought up through the farm system, they had the heart of a champion. Now, Steinbrenner has replaced that with a corporation full of All-Stars.

Their spending habits and bloated roster make 19th century robberbarons look like Mother Teresa. They spend to gain the high quality players, and they also spend to keep others from signing high quality players. However unfair this may seem, Steinbrenner is right about one thing — it is his job to win,

and he is just doing his job.

So why hate the Yankees even more? Well, if Steinbrenner isn't enough, how about hating them for the sellouts that now adorn their roster.

Maddux and Brown are two aging pitchers looking for a ring no matter what the cost to their baseball reputation.

A-Rod's greed kept him from a winner, but what's more, not only is he still getting paid his ludicrous salary, he gets to play with an all-star roster.

Giambi was lured by the fame and media exposure that the Big Apple could give him.

Sheffield and Vasquez took the money and ran. Their tradition of winning the right way is now gone, replaced by the mentality of winning at all costs, no matter what the harm to the game.

My hatred for the Yankees now runs so deep that I cheered the day Roger Clemens and Andy Pettitte stuck it to Steinbrenner and all of his millions. I hope that we see an Interleague matchup between the Astros and Yankees just so I can see Clemens throw at A-Rod's head. He certainly can afford the medical bills.

So who can stop this purchase juggernaut? The Red Sox beefed up their spending and their pitching, yet still look to be little brothers in the AL East. The As have the power pitching to Marlin the Yanks — yet Mulder, Hudson and Zito have to stay healthy in order to go far in October.

That looks to be about it, despite the improvements made by several AL teams including the Orioles and the Angels. Maybe one day Bud Selig will realize that the National Pastime is being destroyed on his watch, but I doubt it.

All I can say is that I can't wait for the NFL to start back up so we can watch some real sports, instead of simply an auction won by the highest bidder.

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Heaven's Gate



Hunter Coleman
First Presbyterian
Church

Once I had a dream. In the dream an angel came to me and said that the Lord of Hosts had decided to grant me a wish. Any wish.

What would it be, asked the angel. I found myself struggling to make my lips ask for something – something like the Publisher's Clearing House ringing our doorbell, but the words wouldn't come. Finally I spoke from someplace deep inside where wonder and longing reside. I said my wish would be to visit both heaven and hell.

The angel choked a bit, but she managed a smile, none the less. Done, she said and took my hand and said for me to hold fast and never lack courage. So I held fast and closed my eyes. When I opened them again, I was at the very entrance to hell. I felt a cool breeze on my face and opened by eyes.

Welcome to hell, said the angel. I stood amazed. Instead of sulphurous flames and fire, instead of mud and mire, I saw long sweeping green meadows edged around with trees. I saw long wooden tables piled high with food, all kinds of meats, fruit and salads, breads and cheeses, desserts of every description and golden goblets of wine.

Yet, the people who sat at the tables were thin and pale. They devoured the food only with their eyes. "They are hungry," I cried. "Why do they not eat?" As the sound of my voice, the people began to start up a loud wail and gnashing of teeth.

The angel signaled me to step closer to them.

And this is what I saw. The people of hell had broken elbows with splints which prevented them from bending their elbows. And though the tables were piled high with food, the people were starving. There was no way they could bend their arms to lift the food to their mouths.

I wept and closed my eyes and cried, "enough."

The angel grabbed my hand and told me to hold fast and never let go. So I held fast and kept

■ See SPIRITUALLY pg 12

• PLACES OF WORSHIP ON THE PLATEAU •

Blue Valley Baptist Church

Rev. Oliver Rice, Pastor (706) 782-3965
Sundays: School – 10 a.m., Worship – 11 a.m.
Sunday night services every second and fourth Sunday at 7 p.m.
Wednesdays: Mid-week prayer meeting – 7 p.m.

Buck Creek Baptist Church

Sundays: School – 10 a.m.; Worship – 11 a.m.
First Saturday: Singing at 7:30 p.m.

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints

NC 28 N. and Pine Ridge Rd., (828) 369-8329
Rai Cammack, Branch President, (828) 369-1627
Sundays: Worship – 10 a.m.; school & primary classes – 11 a.m.; Women's & Men's Org. – noon
Tues: Women's Org. – 6:30 p.m.; Library – 6-8
Wednesdays: Boy Scouts of America mtg. – 6:30 p.m.; Young women's activities – 6:30 p.m.

Christ Anglican Church

743-3319

"A Bible-based liturgical church"

Services: Tuesdays at 5 p.m. at the Community Bible Church in Highlands
Holy Communion at most services.

Clear Creek Baptist Church

Pastor Everett Wilson, (828) 743-3379
Sundays: School – 10 a.m.; Worship – 11 a.m.; Prayer – 6:30 p.m.
Evening Service – 7 p.m.

Community Bible Church

(Evangelical Presbyterian Church
Steven E. Kerhoulas, Pastor, 526-4685
3645 U.S. 64 east
Sundays: School – 9:30 a.m.; Worship – 10:45 a.m.
Tuesdays: Women's Bible Study – 9:45 a.m.
Wed: Supper – 5:30 p.m.; Bible Study – 6:30
Thursdays: Guys Sr. High Discipleship – 6 p.m.

Episcopal Church of the Incarnation

Interim Priest: Stephen Hines, 526-2968
Sundays: Choir – 9 a.m.; Bible Study & Book Study classes – 9:15 a.m.; Holy Eucharist – 10:30 a.m.; Children's – 10:30 a.m.
Mondays: Search Committee – 11 a.m.; Women's Cursillo Group (Library) – 4 p.m.;
Tuesdays: Men's Cursillo in Jones Hall – 8 a.m.; Pastoral Care – 9:30 a.m.; Outreach – 4 p.m.
Wednesdays: Vestry Mtg – 4 p.m.; Supper and Program in Jones Hall – 6 p.m.
Thursdays: Holy Eucharist – 10 a.m.
The Sunday Service is telecast on cable channel 14

First Baptist Church

Dr. Daniel D. Robinson, 526-4153
Sundays: Worship – 8:15 a.m., 10:45 a.m., 6:30 p.m.; School – 9:30 a.m.; Youth – 6:30 p.m.; Choir – 7:15
Wednesdays: Dinner – 5:30 p.m.; Team Kids – 6 p.m.; Prayer – 6:15 p.m., Choir – 7:30

First Presbyterian Church

Rev. J. Hunter Coleman, Pastor, 526-3175
Sundays: Worship – 11 a.m. (child care at 11 a.m.); School – 9:30 & 9:45.
Wednesdays: Children's Devotions – 9:30 a.m.; Supper – 6 p.m.; Choir – 7 p.m.
Thursdays: Bible Study – 10 a.m.

Sat: Adventistas del Septimo Dia – 10 a.m. & 5

Highlands Assembly of God

Rev. Scott Holland, 524-6026, Sixth Street
Sundays: School – 10 a.m.; Worship – 11 a.m.
Wednesdays: Prayer & Bible Study – 7 p.m.

Highlands Seventh-Day Adventist Church

Wednesday evening prayer & Bible Study
Call Lloyd Kidder at 526-9474

Highlands United Methodist Church

Pastors Eddie & Kim Ingram, 526-3376
Sundays: School – 9:30 & 9:45 a.m.; Worship – 11
Wednesdays: Supper – 5:30 p.m.; Bible Study & activities – 6 p.m.

Lutheran Church of the Holy Family – ELCA

Rev. Pam Mitcham, Pastor,
2152 Dillard Road – 526-9741
Sundays: Worship/Communion – 10:30 a.m.

Macedonia Baptist Church

8 miles south of Highlands on N.C. 28 S in Satolah
Pastor Rusty Wolfrey, (706) 782-8130
Sundays: School – 10 a.m.; Worship – 11 a.m.; Choir – 6 p.m.
Wed: Bible Study and Youth Mtg. – 7 p.m.

Mountain Synagogue

St. Cyprian's Episcopal Church, Franklin 369-6871
Friday: Sept. 12 Sabbath Eve Services at 7 p.m.
For more information, call (706)-745-1842.

Our Lady of the Mountains Catholic Church

Rev. William M Evans, Priest
Parish office, 526-2418
Wednesdays & Fridays: Mass – 12 noon
Sundays: Mass – 11 a.m.

Scaly Mountain Baptist Church

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

Scaly Mountain Church of God

290 Buck Knob Road; Pastor Alfred Sizemore
Sundays: School – 10 a.m.; Worship – 10:45 a.m.; Evening Worship – 6 p.m.
Wed: Adult Bible Study & Youth – 7 p.m.
For more information call 526-3212.

Shortoff Baptist Church

Pastor Rev. Baker Crane
Sundays: School – 10 a.m.; Worship – 11 a.m.
Wednesdays: Prayer & Bible Study – 7 p.m.

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Franklin

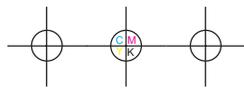
526-9769
Rev. Maureen Killoran (part-time)
Sundays: Worship – 11 a.m.

Westside Baptist Church

Interim Pastor, Terry Dixon
Services in the basement of the Peggy Crosby
Sundays: Fellowship & Worship – 11 a.m.;

Whiteside Presbyterian Church in America

Cashiers, Rev. Sam Forrester, 743-2122
Sundays: School – 10 a.m.; Worship – 11 a.m.



... SPIRITUALLY continued from page 11

my eyes closed until at last I felt a warm breeze on my face. I opened my eyes. I was at the entrance to heaven. Welcome to heaven, the angel said.

I stood absolutely amazed. Instead of clouds and choirs, instead of harps and rainbows, I saw long sweeping green meadows edged around with trees. I saw long

wooden tables piled high with food – all kinds of meats, fruit and salads, breads and cheeses, desserts of every description and golden goblets of wine.

Like the people in hell, the people in heaven also had broken elbows with splints that prevented them from bending them so they couldn't feed themselves. Yet to my

surprise, the people of heaven were well fed. They laughed and talked and sang praises to their host.

I don't understand, I said. It is the same as hell, yet it is not the same. What is the difference? The angel grabbed my hand and moved me closer so I could see. "Hold fast" and "never lack courage," she said. And this is what I saw.

Each person reached out with splint straight arms to take a piece of bread and a goblet of wine so they

could feed their neighbor.

We paused for one last look before heading home. I glanced back over my shoulder at the feast and noticed for the first time, words inscribed on the sides of the long tables, words chiseled in golden letters, letters spelling a familiar message. "This do in remembrance of me." The angel took my hand and we prepared to fly back home. "Hold fast," she said, "and never lack courage."

• BUILDERS & ARCHITECTS •

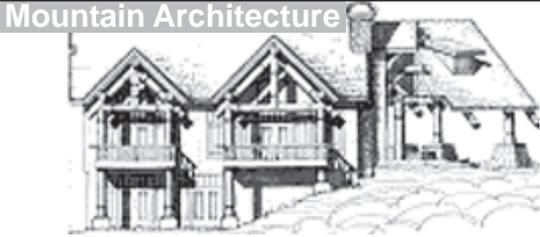
New Breed of Home Yields Mountain Appeal with Spaciousness & Lower Construction Cost

Rand Soellner's home designs feature beautiful Mountain timber elevations with wide, open plans with tall ceilings and the most value-engineered systems available. "I am just completing a knoll top design for a client in Glenville, NC that has 5 bedrooms, 5 bathrooms, Great Room-Kitchen-Dining, Family Room, Loft-Study, and attached 2-car garage with driveway and sitework. The builder has quoted a price of \$275,000. This is about half to one-third of normal prices for nice mountain homes on the Highlands-Cashiers-Toxaway Plateau," said Soellner.



The key to this kind of success is in designing a plan that meets the client's needs and orients to mountain views, keeping foundation costs low, using/creating value-oriented systems that are solid, then working with local Realtors and appraisers to have the look and features that will appreciate in value when people want to resell

RAND SOELLNER ARCHITECT Mountain Architecture



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Rand Soellner Architect shares office space in Wright Square, in Downtown Highlands, next to Nantahala Realty. Rand works with many of the builders, Realtors, private land owners and speculative developers in the Highlands-Scaly Mountain-Cashiers, Toxaway and Brevard area. Rand Soellner's homes are under construction all over Western North Carolina.

SCC Gearing Up for REAL Retreat

At 4,118' a handful of people will spend a weekend reaching for their ultimate goal-to become an entrepreneur. Some will walk away with a business plan in hand, and others will walk away breathing a sigh of relief that they did not take the risk.

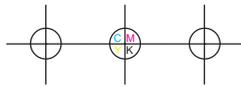
For seven years, SCC has hosted a weekend REAL (Rural Entrepreneurship through Action Learning) retreat. For one weekend, prospective entrepreneurs and existing business owners explore reasons businesses succeed and fail. Professionals with business counseling experience and market knowledge help these prospective business owners to understand the risks involved in starting their own business.

"This is no cakewalk-it's an intense weekend," said Keith Corbeil, SCC's business and industry training coordinator. "We help students think through every aspect of starting their business, from concept to writing the business plan. Some students realize that their concept is not a good fit for the region, while others find the confidence to chase their dream."

Following the three-day weekend retreat, students meet twice a week for four weeks to finalize business plans and keep each other motivated.

This year's REAL retreat will be held at The Mountain Retreat and Learning Center in Highlands, Feb. 26-28. Limited seating is available. There is \$60 registration fee and a \$20 hospitality fee. For more information, contact Corbeil at (828) 349-1278.





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For Lease. Retail space on Main Street in Town Square. 800 sq. ft. Available March 1. Call Harry

Bears at 828-526-4777 (day) or (828) 526-2616 (night).

Log cabin, new, reassembled on your site, 31'x26', 1-1/2 story, hand-hewn white pine logs and timberframe, half-dovetail notches, covered front porch. Asking \$49,500. 828-526-1301 or 526-5834.

For Sale. 1996 Nissan Pathfinder LE, 4WD automatic, leather, power sun-roof, accent stripes, bug shield, fog lamps, rear defrost, towing hitch. Excellent condition. 77,600 miles. \$9,200. Call 526-8111.

• HELP WANTED •

R.N.s – Highlands-Cashiers Hospital (EOE)
Three positions open for nights; 36 hours per week. Prefer ACLS, TNCC, ENPC, or PALS with E.R. and cardiac background. Full-time R.N. in the O.R. Hospice Nurse. Competitive pay and an excellent benefit package included. Pre-employment substance screening. For details call: Mary Osmar, Human Resources, 828-526-1301.

New LPN salary scale! Do what you love, and love what you do. We are looking for excellent nurses to work 7 p.m. – 7 a.m., full time, great benefits. Candidates must be compassionate, dependable, and possess above-average supervisory skills. Apply now, Fidelia Eckerd Living Center at Highlands-Cashiers Hospital, an EOE. Pre-employment sub-

stance screening. For details call: Mary Osmar, Human Resources, 828-526-1301.

Highlands-Cashiers Hospital (EOE): Staff Physical Therapist; MLT in Lab; temporary Housekeeper, Dietary Aide. Competitive pay. Excellent benefit package for full-time positions. Pre-employment substance screening. For details call: Mary Osmar, Human Resources, 828-526-1301.

Medical Records Manager at Highlands-Cashiers Hospital (EOE): Graduate of health information technology program or equivalent education/experience preferred. Previous management experience desired. Coding skills, use of computer, transcription, and medical terminology are essential. Competitive pay and an excellent benefit pack-

age. Pre-employment substance screening. For details call: Mary Osmar, Human Resources, 828-526-1301.

Executive Director needed for the Jackson-Macon Conservation Alliance, a nonprofit organization based in Highlands. Part time \$1,000/month. Apply by March 1 to Cynthia Strain, Chair, JMCA, 348 S. Fifth St., Highlands, NC 28741; 828-526-9227 or JMCA@dnet.net for more info.

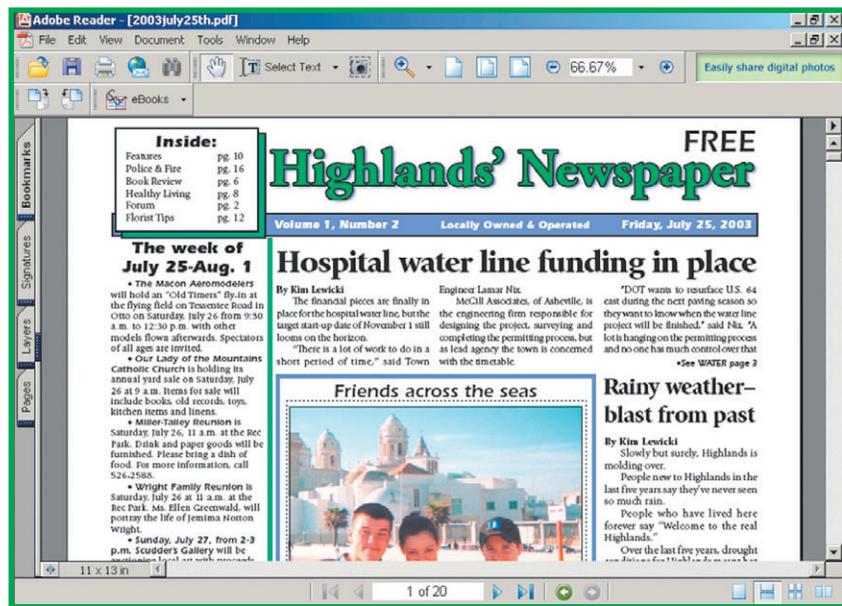
Hilltop Grill looking for two people. Kitchen & counter positions available. Busy restaurant. Must be dependable and energetic. Call 526-5916 or come by. Corner of Fourth & Spring streets in Highlands.



Highlands' Newspaper

Online PDF version at
www.highlandsinfo.com

It's the way to keep up with what's happening in Highlands wherever you are – and people are doing just that.



ADVERTISERS:

When you advertise in Highlands' Newspaper, not only is your advertising dollar far-reaching, it's long-lasting.

Viewers are reading the newspaper on-line each week from all over the country.

What's more, statistics prove viewers are reading PAST issues July through January in their entirety – ads and all – RIGHT NOW.

Advertising in Highlands' Newspaper is a sound way to spend your advertising dollars.

Highlands' Newspaper is posted on a directory that consistently gets traffic.

- In 2003, more than 1/4-million visitors averaging 5 minutes per view visited the directory
- In 2003, more than 5,000 foreign viewers visited Highlands' Newspaper Internet Directory at www.highlandsinfo.com

It has everything you want to know about news, dining, lodging, shopping, events, hiking, waterfalls and real estate in Highlands.

To advertise in Highlands' Newspaper

call: 526-0782 or email at:
highlandseditor@aol.com

Earthlink statistics are posted on the directory for verification.

... AFTER SCHOOL continued from page 6

children have. Currently, there are only six or seven kids who come daily. "We started out with 16, but parents just can't afford it in the winter," Owens said.

Supervisors and assistants in the VIP after school program are required to be proficient in several skills. They have to be certified in First Aid and CPR, and have to complete a specified number of hours in training to ensure they are qualified to care for children. "We have to be licensed. It's just like being a day care center," Owens adds. They also have fire drills every week.

The VIP program also provides excellent supervision. When a parent comes to pick up his or her child, a signature is required before the child is allowed to leave with the parent. Each child has a folder with a strict list of who is authorized to pick up the child. No one is allowed to leave with anyone who is not on this list.

Parents can take a tax deduction for the amount they spend on the VIP after school program. Each time a payment is made, parents also get a receipt for their records. Periodically, they are sent an account statement

verifying the total amount they have paid. This also includes the program's tax number.

The VIP After-School Program is ideal for children whose parents work. Many parents may not know about the program or feel comfortable about leaving their children. Others simply can't afford it. The Department of Social Services offers some help, said Owens, but once the quota for the year is used up there are no more funds. "I feel like lots of other programs get sponsored, and these children deserve a little help too," Owens says

Sponsors are needed for four families headed by single moms who each have a child. They would like to use the program, but they don't have the money.

If you would like to sponsor a student, call Jan Peak, the VIP Coordinator at 524-5028. Be sure to specify that you want to help the Highlands branch of the program.

If you would like to enroll your child in the program, you can pick up a form in the office at the school.

Director Armor in her element

The Highlands Community Players (HCP) current production in rehearsal, "The Importance of Being Earnest" is being directed by veteran director, Tanji Armor.

Tanji and her husband, Stuart, moved to Highlands in 1993. She appeared in the second play of HCP's first season, "Dearly Departed." Since then she has been an integral part of HCP. Tanji not only has directed eight plays, she also serves as the secretary for the board of directors of HCP and has acted in four plays.

Ms. Armor has directed some of the all time favorite plays seen here: "Moon Over Buffalo," "The Odd Couple," "I Hate Hamlet," "Blythe Spirit," "A Talent for Murder" "Murder is a Game," and "Dirty Works at the Crossroads."

"Tanji loves to direct period pieces...she loves the costumes. You can always count on lavish costumes from Tanji's plays," said Mary Adair Leslie, assistant director for "Importance of Being Earnest." Directing requires strict attention to detail. A director is responsible for the blocking (the movement by the actors

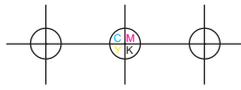
on stage), the costumes, and working closely with the sound and lighting designers; and working with the actors to develop the individual characters.

"After having appeared in "Dearly Departed" I was hooked and have real love for the theater and HCP," Tanji says. She has also appeared in "Harvey," and "Octette Bridge Club," but her favorite role was Lucille, in "The Cemetery Club" last year.

Tanji and Stuart Armor own Brick Oven Pizza and the Movie Stop in the Mountain Brook Center, Highlands.

"The Importance of Being Earnest" will be performed at the Martin Lipscomb Performing Arts Center beginning Thursday, March 4 through Sunday, March 7.

Performances on Thursday (opening night reception follows the performance) Friday, and Saturday will be at 8 p.m. and on Sunday for a matinee at 2:30 p.m. Please call the box office to reserve your tickets beginning February 23 & 24 for season subscribers and February 25 for the general public at (828) 526-8084.



• POLICE & FIRE REPORT •

The following are the Highlands Police Department log entries for the week of Feb.10-18. The only names are of public officials and/or people who were arrested.

Feb. 10

- At 8 a.m., a Rhode Island police dept. asked Highlands police to investigate an alleged Internet fraud case from a home on N.C. 106 concerning a vacuum cleaner that was bought on line. The residence is outside the town limits. The dept. turned the case over to the Sheriff's Dept.

- At 2 p.m., Charles Allen Cope, of Sylva, was arrested and charged with breaking and entering a house in Mirror Lake. He allegedly admitted to eating and sleeping in the house while hiding from Highlands police.

Feb. 11

- At 2 p.m., officers responded to an alarm at a residence on Split Rail Row. All was secure.

Feb. 12

- At 7:30 p.m., officers responded to an accident at Fourth and Oak streets. There were no injuries.

- At 1:30 p.m., officers were called to Zermatt Circle where a truck was parked in the road. The driver moved it.

Feb. 13

- At 10:30 p.m., officers were called to Highlands School where four people were in an argument behind the gym.

Feb. 14

- At 1 p.m., officers were called to a residence on U.S. 64 west to investigate a breaking and entering.

Feb. 15

- At 9 a.m., assisted a woman who was being harassed on the phone at her workplace by her ex-husband.

Feb. 16

- At 1:30 p.m., officers were called to Macon Bank to investigate credit card fraud.

- At 6:30 p.m., officers assisted a motorist at Highlands Plaza.

Feb. 17

- A little past midnight, officer responded to an alarm at a business on Main Street. All was secure.

- At 8:45 a.m., officers responded to an accident at N.C. 106 and Arnold Road. There were no injuries.

The following are the Highlands Fire & Rescue Department log entries for the week of Feb. 11-18.

Feb. 11

- The dept. was first responders to assist EMS with a medical call at a residence on Mel Keener Road. The victim was transported to the hospital.

Feb. 12

- The dept. responded to an accident at Fourth and Oak streets. There were no injuries.

Feb. 16

- The dept. was first-responders to assist EMS with a medical call at a residence on Williamsburg Court.

Feb. 17

- The dept. responded to an accident at N.C. 106 and Arnold Road. There were no injuries.

Director of "The Importance of Being Earnest," Tanji Armor and set designer, Thomas Craig go over the drawings for the set. The show is at PAC, March 4-7. Tickets are \$10. Call 526-8084 for information and reservations.



... SUPPLEMENT continued from page 1

ties of the state that don't offer them.

Counties over the border in Georgia and South Carolina have given supplements for years - about 10.1 percent in Oconee County, S.C. and six percent in Rabun County, Ga.

The bottom line is, teachers can drive across the border to Clayton or Walhalla and make a lot more money per year.

For the 2003-2004 school year, a bachelor's degreed teacher in Oconee County with no experience earns a base salary of \$27,907. Add the 10.1 percent supplement bonus and that goes up another \$2,818.

In Rabun County, a bachelor degreed teacher with no experience starts at \$29,259 with an added bonus of \$1,800.

In Macon County, bachelor degreed teachers with no experience start out at \$25,250. At 2003-2004 standards, a two percent supplement would mean an extra \$500 per year.

"Beginning with a 1.5 or 2 percent supplement is great compared to some North Carolina counties that offer only \$100 extra to their teachers," said Macon County Schools Superintendent Dr. Rodney Shotwell. "It's a boost to our recruitment efforts."

Shotwell said the county is facing a large retirement pool over the next five years and offering a supplement gives the school district something extra to offer teachers interested in working in Macon County.

"I have been to job fairs where there are signing bonuses, large supplements, dental and other benefits," said Shotwell. "We are pleased that we now have something to offer when a prospective teacher comes by our recruitment table."

Highlander Rick Rawlins, a 17-year veteran teacher who commutes to Rabun County High School each day, said providing the teachers of Macon County with a local supplement to their relatively low state salary is a step in the right direction.

"North Carolina needs to wake up to the fact that not everyone who lives here is retired without school-age children, and that teachers are no longer just housewives or husbands without better job offers," said Rawlins. "With the demands being placed on teachers growing each year combined with the added strain of having to meet possibly unrealistic accountability standards, I am afraid many teachers are going to leave what they love doing if they are not at the very least compensated for their efforts."

Rawlins earns more than \$8,000 more per year in Georgia than he would in North Carolina.

Some good news about NC salaries. Shotwell said the state department of education is likely to increase the base salary by five percent for the 2004-2005 school year.

"Beginning teachers are looking for the best place to teach and how much they will bring home," said Shotwell. "We are right now the only school system in the far west that offers a supplement and that will make us competitive this summer when we are recruiting new teachers. When we lose experienced teachers to retirement, we want to find teachers of high quality to fill their positions. Offering a supplement will aid in that search," he said.

Greenwood and Shotwell are meeting to firm up the percentage rate and the dollar amount for next year's teachers.

Old Edwards Inn & Spa to host 'Community Hard Hat Tours' Feb. 29

The management of the Old Edwards Inn and Spa invites the Highlands community to preview the new property Sunday, February 29, from 2-4 p.m. Guests will be shown the renovations, in progress, to the historic inn and the new world-class, European-style spa.

Staff members will conduct the "hard hat" tours and be available for questions and comments from resi-

dents. Refreshments will be served.

The Old Edwards Hospitality Group, LLC, founded in 2003, includes the Old Edwards Inn and Spa, Madison's Restaurant, The Farm special events facility, Acorns retail shop, Kelsey & Hutchinson Lodge, and the Highlands Diner.

For more information, call 828-526-8008 or toll free at 866-526-8008.



● UPCOMING EVENTS ●

On-Going

- The Green's dog Bingo has undergone an operation for paralysis and the family needs help paying the vet bills. If you can help, please send checks to the Highlands-Cashiers Humane Society, Bingo Fund, P.O. Box 638, Cashiers, N.C. 28717,

- Hard suitcases needed. Please donate old, hard suitcases for use during this year's Bolivia mission trip, March 10. They will be used to transport supplies to Montero. Drop them off at the Highlands United Methodist Church by Feb. 29.

- Daisys, Brownies and Junior Girl Scouts meet 6:30 p.m. every Tuesday at Highlands United Methodist Church. Come join them.

- Every Friday and Saturday night, Cy Timmons sings and plays his guitar at Highlands Wine & Cheese from 7-11 p.m. It's free.

- Every Saturday night there is live music at Buck's Coffee Cafe on Main Street.

- The Mountain View group of Alcoholics Anonymous now meets in the remodeled basement meeting room of the First Presbyterian Church sanctuary, in Highlands. Meeting times remain the same: Mondays at 8 p.m.; Tuesdays at 5:30 p.m. (women only); Wednesdays and Fridays at noon. For more info, call (800) 524-0465.

Feb. 20

- Mountain Top Rotary breakfast meetings at 7:30 a.m. in the back of the

Baptist Church. Ann Greenlee head of the laboratory at the Highlands-Cashiers Hospital will talk about relevant local clinical capacity and issues.

Feb. 21

- The Nantahala Hiking Club will take an 8-mile strenuous hike from Coweeta Lab up the Ridge Trail to Dyke's Gap and down by the Cunningham Creek road. Meet at Westgate Plaza in Franklin (opposite Burger King) at 10 a.m. Call Gail Lehman, 524-5298, for reservations, information, or weather info.

- 9 a.m. til noon - Hemlock Woolly Adelgid monitoring workshop at the Highlands Nature Center. This project, sponsored by JMCA, is for any citizen who wants to learn how to identify and report infestations of the adelgid in order to help efforts to control this pest. Call 526-9227 for more info.

Feb. 22

- Highlands Community Ecumenical Worship Service is at 10:45 a.m. at the Community Bible Church on the Cashiers Road. Rev. Dan Robinson of First Baptist Church will be preaching and Holy Communion will be celebrated.

- The Nantahala Hiking Club will take an easy 1.5-mile loop hike to Patton Springs on woods trails with a couple of short, steep climbs. Meet at 2 p.m. in Franklin at Westgate Plaza opposite Burger King. Call leader Kay Coriell, 369-6820, for information.

Feb. 24

- Representatives from Old Edwards Inn & Spa will hold a question and answer forum at the Conference Center at 5:30.

- The gallery will be hosting a free lecture on Landscapes from Art History. Our guest speaker will be Dr. James Thompson. James Thompson is an art historian and critic who is a full professor in the Department of Art, Western Carolina University. He has taught previously at Trinity College, Dublin, and the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill (where he received his PhD). He has published a prize winning book on the painter writer Eugène Fromentin, two book length catalogues on French painting, and numerous articles. He edited for publication the Impressionism lectures of the late Meyer Schapiro, arguably America's greatest art historian, and is in charge of a prize-winning series of monographs on outstanding faculty and students from the legendary Black Mountain College.

Feb. 26

- The Bolivia Mission Trips's annual Taco Dinner is at 5:30 at Highlands United Methodist Church. It's \$5 per person. All proceeds will benefit this year's mission trip to Bolivia.

- Artploration continues on Thursdays from 10:30 - 2:30. An exciting new exploration in art is introduced each week. The cost is \$5 and all materials are furnished. Contact the gallery for more information 526-4949 or bascomlouise@earthlink.net.

Feb. 27

- Senior Luncheon at the Rec Park at noon. It's free but donations are accepted.

- Mountain Top Rotary breakfast meetings at 7:30 a.m. in the back of the Baptist Church. Robin King Austin will represent the Rotary Foundation for a local presentation.

Feb. 28

- The Nantahala Hiking Club will take a 5-mile, easy-to-moderate, hike from Park Creek to the Park Ridge Trail, in the Standing Indian area. Meet at Westgate Plaza in Franklin (opposite Burger King) at 9:30 a.m. Call hike leader Bud Colcord, 524-9952, for reservations, information, or weather info.

Feb. 29

- Community Hard Hat Tour of Old Edwards Inn & Spa set for 2-4 p.m.. Call 526-8008 make reservations. Refreshments will be served.

March 4-7

- The Highlands Community Players presents "The Importance of Being Earnest" at the Martin-Lipscomb Performing Arts Center 8 p.m. nightly and 2:30 p.m. on Sunday. Tickets are \$10. Call 526-8084 for reservations and information.

March 6

- Hot Dog Benefit for Bessie and Lynn Zachary at Highlands Rec Park at 5 p.m. Hot Dog Plate includes hot dog, baked beans, chili, cole slaw, chips, drink and dessert. There will be a raffle and a cake auction.

... LAND USE continued from page 1

ment, a vibrant downtown?" He said those issues are the meat of the plan around which the Town Board will set policy.

"The planning board has no power," he said. "The power rests with the elected body and ownership of the land-use plan is the Town Board's. He said it's the commissioners' job, not the planning board's job, to consider the politics of a land-use plan and to implement the plan when it sees fit.

"A land-use plan must be a strategic plan because a town only has so much money, staff and time. It just can't do everything," he said. "The commissioners have to figure out what is most important. When you update the current plan, concentrate on the central issues that need work and discard the objectives that have been met or no longer apply."

The current land-use plan, which went on the books in 1989 and has been updated about every five years or so, is basically a sound plan, said Willet.

"We are leading the state in land-use planning and zoning," said Mayor Buck Trott. "I think the plan we have has served us well over the years."

Planning board member John Cleaveland agreed. "The plan we have has to be brought up to date from the last 10 years, but we don't have to start from ground zero."

Willet said the planning board can start by deleting the things in the plan that had to be done 10 years ago and substitute them for new activities pertinent to Highlands today.

The commissioners and the planning board agreed that the mission of the 1989 land-use plan still stands.

"To preserve, protect and enhance those gifts of nature which make up the unique quality of our town and its environs."

The word "environs" concerned some folks. "Do we want to get larger or just smarter," asked Mayor Buck Trott. "Maybe annexation, but we're expanding the wastewater treatment plant to serve the people in town who have been paying taxes for years - to get people off septic systems and onto the sewer."

All agreed that "environs" means the Highlands Township and not just the town of Highlands. "It's clear that what happens on property outside the town limits impacts the town," said Commissioner Dennis DeWolf.

The mayor said population studies indicate that future growth will be in areas outside the town limits and the town has to pay attention to that.

Speaking as a citizen and not a Macon County Commissioner, Ricky Bryson said communication is key.

"If you are considering annexation, you have to educate people every step along the way," he said. "I've seen the town limits grow a great deal over the years and you can't just come out and say 'We're taking over your land.' You get a lot of hard feelings when people aren't informed about what's going on."

Willet said annexation laws have been amended to require informational meetings and public hearings. "There's a lot more discussion now than years ago," he said.

Willet will meet with the planning board the last week in March to kick off the update process with an organizational meeting where topics important over the next five years will be defined.