

# Highlands Newspaper

FREE Every Thursday

Volume 17, Number 14 Real-Time News, Weather & WebCams: HighlandsInfo.com Thursday, April 2, 2020

## More measures against virus in effect

At a special emergency Town Board meeting Tuesday night, frustrated commissioners worked to hash out ways to further protect the community from the spread of COVID-19.

The town amended its previous state-of-emergency proclamation to include all aspects of Governor Roy Cooper's state-of-emergency proclamation (see page 15.)

Protecting Highlands currently is a combination of state, county and town state-of-emergency orders including the shelter-at-home order that went into effect Monday

• See MEASURES page 21

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## Triage tents to go up at area hospitals

Mission Health will be installing tents at its hospitals in the to create additional capacity for triaging patients outside of emergency departments, should it become necessary as the COVID-19 outbreak evolves.

"All Mission Health facilities have well-established protocols in place to care for patients with infectious diseases, and our emergency planning efforts related to COVID-19 began weeks ago," said Greg Lowe, President of the North Carolina Division of HCA Healthcare. "While Mission Health has the bed capacity, staffing, supplies and equipment we need at this time, we continue to plan by accessing the resources, support and best practices across HCA Healthcare to help ensure

• See TRIAGE page 22



Traffic stops at Highlands inroads encourage daytrippers to return home and advise second-home owners of the 14-day quarantine rule. – Photo by Kim Lewicki

## State, county and town step up COVID-19 precautions

*An elderly Macon County resident has tested positive for COVID-19*

By Brittney Lofthouse

Macon County Public Health received notice on April 1 that the first Macon County resident has tested positive for COVID – 19. An elderly individual was tested on Thursday, March 26, and was admitted to and is in isolation at an area hospital.

Macon County Public Health is working to identify close contacts. The CDC defines close contact as being within approximately 6 feet of a person with an infection with COVID-19 case for a prolonged period of time of 10 minutes or longer. Based on information provided by the

individual's family, county health officials will assess risks of exposure, determine which if any additional measures are needed such as temperature and symptom checks, quarantine and/or testing.

COVID19 cases across the country continue to rise, with ex-

• See COVID-19 page 18

## Food banks seeing more with COVID-19 job loss

By Brittney Lofthouse

In the midst of the COVID19 pandemic, unemployment in North Carolina has skyrocketed – the state went from receiving 3,000 unemployment cases a week to seeing a surge of more than 200,000 during a 10-day period. With so many out of work, food pantries across the state are going into overdrive to provide food to families in need.

Food banks such as the Highlands Food Pantry and the Highlands Emergency Council are finding creative solutions to meet an increase in need for their services, while keeping everyone as safe as possible to avoid transmission of COVID19.

• See FOOD BANKS page 14

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# • THE PLATEAU'S POSITION •

## • MAYOR ON DUTY •

### Dealing with our new reality – COVID-19



Highlands Mayor  
Patrick Taylor

ercise and to purchase essential supplies is permissible. Dinner parties and socialization as usual are not. While outside, everyone should set an example and maintain a 6-foot social distance.

I am frustrated. Other surrounding states, Georgia, Florida, and Tennessee have failed or been slow to take action to stop the spread of COVID19. There has been an exodus of residents from these states to Western Carolina. Here on the Highlands

Plateau with the influx from these states an intensified spread of COVID19 is possible. An increase in population to the levels seen during the July 4 holiday could exponentially increase the probability of becoming an infection hotspot like as in Albany, Georgia.

Albany/Doughtery County has a population of about 160,000 residents. They have had a serious outbreak, and Phoebe Putney Hospital has struggled to increase their ICU capacity which is critical to ventilating COVID 19 victims. If the Highlands Cashiers Hospital has a surge of coronavirus patients, medical staff could be challenged to meet the demand. Victims requiring extended ICU support would have to be transported to a larger HCA facility.

Our hospital and Mission HCA are offering a virtual clinic by visiting the Highlands Cashiers website. At the top of the homepage there is a red bar that reads Coronavirus 2019 . . . Click on it and updated information on the coronavirus will appear. Scroll down to Mission Virtual Clinic. There is a connecting link to an online doctor visit. This virtual clinic option is a great way for established patients to access basic medical services without actually going to the hospital.

I have been very concerned that we have vulnerable residents that need community support. The Highlands Chamber of Commerce has created the Neighbors Helping Neighbors program. Twenty volunteers have already signed up to provide help to those who will need assistance in basic needs like obtaining food and picking up prescriptions. For some elderly folks living alone, just a routine phone call to make sure they are ok will be important. The chamber will coordinate with other nonprofits and churches to insure delivery of this support. If you need help, or want to volunteer, please call the chamber at 526-2112, or visit their website

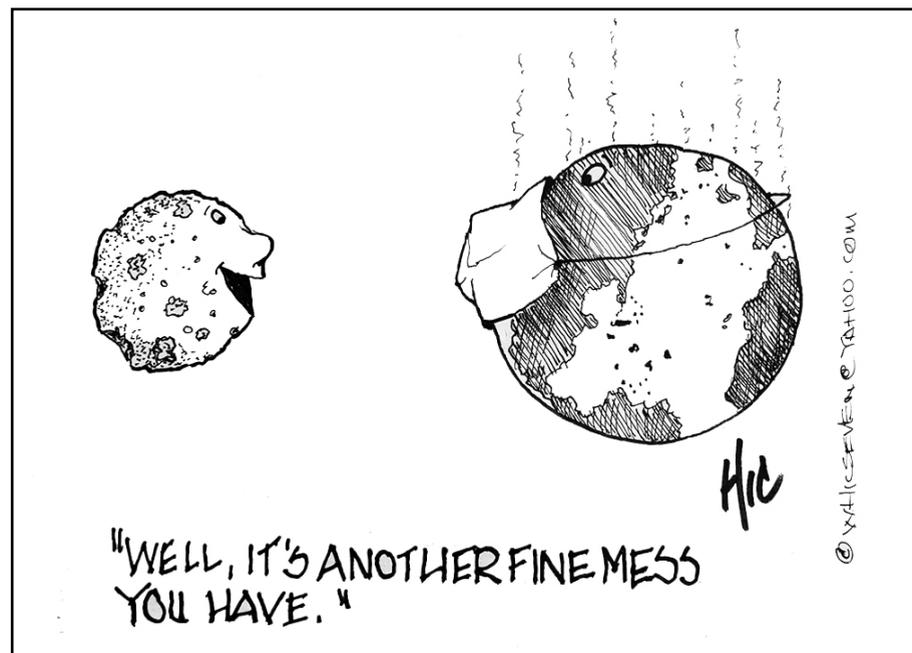
where all the specific information is available.

While I am very concerned about what lies ahead, I am also uplifted by the commu-

nity organizations and volunteers that have and will continue to meet this challenge. One group that are heroes already are the

• See MAYOR page 10

## • HIC'S VIEW •



## • WEATHER •

Thu, 2-Apr	Fri, 3-Apr	Sat, 4-Apr	Sun, 5-Apr
62°F 35°F	68°F 40°F	66°F 44°F	69°F 45°F
Mostly sunny	Partly sunny and nice	Intervals of clouds and sun	Some sun with a thunderstorm
RealFeel® High: 69° Low: 33°	RealFeel® High: 76° Low: 38°	RealFeel® High: 74° Low: 47°	RealFeel® High: 77° Low: 49°

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### Highlands Newspaper

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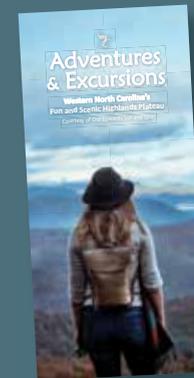
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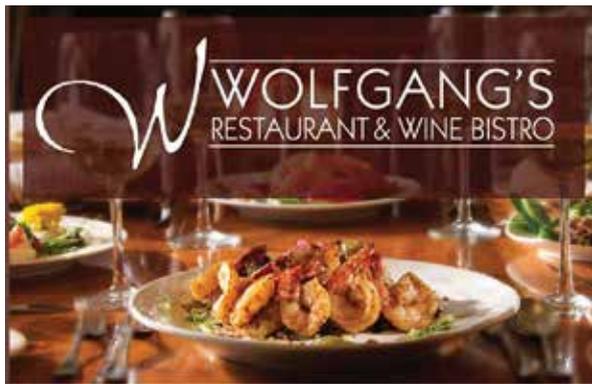
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# • OBITUARIES •

## Wolfgang Plate

Wolfgang Plate passed away peacefully March 25, 2020.

Born April 9, 1938 in Monchengladbach, Germany to Johanna & August Plate. With a career in textile machinery Wolfgang came to Spartanburg, SC in 1974 to work with Zima and Kusters Corporation. He met and married Nancy Filler Larkins in 1975 and decided to make Simpsonville, SC home. He subsequently worked and traveled the world for Theiler Corporation and Greenville Machinery prior to retiring in 2002. His travels took him to almost all continents of the world and Nancy was the first one on the plane when his destination was Portugal. He and Nancy spent 17 years in the Holly Tree Community in Simpsonville, SC, nine years in Asheville followed by three years in Highlands prior to their final move in 2002 to Heatherstone at Ford Mt. Lakes in Rabun County. Wolfgang enjoyed golf and was a hobby cook remembered by many for his wonderful dinner parties serving delicious German dishes learned from his Mother's kitchen in the homeland.

He was the youngest of four siblings and preceded in death by sister Ursula, brothers, Guenther and Dr. Hans Otto Plate, all residing in Germany. In addition to Nancy, his wife of 44 years, he is survived by his daughter Petra Siewart, of Osnabruk, Germany, Son Scott Larkins of Fountain Inn, SC and grandchildren Zoey, Alyx, Alyia and Skylar. He will be missed by his dog Buddy. Much appreciation is given to North East GA Hospice and staff and Angel and Jackie for their exceptional caring attention and good work.

Beck Funeral Home, in Clayton, GA, is in charge of the arrangements. If there are any questions, please call 706-782-9599. An online Memorial Register Book is available at [www.beckfuneralhome.com](http://www.beckfuneralhome.com).

## Mary L. 'Pixie' Dearing O'Brien

Mary L. "Pixie" Dearing O'Brien, a treasured member of the Highlands community, passed away peacefully at her home on March 25, 2020, with her high school sweetheart, Charlie Berg, by her side. She was seventy-three.

Pixie was born to Malvina and Gust Dearing in

Jamestown, NY on February 13, 1947. She grew up in Jamestown, and graduated with Jamestown High School's class of 1965. To know Pixie was to love her, and she was a wonderful friend to many. Pixie loved life, and was a real and beautiful spirit. She owned and operated Professionally by Pixie Wallpaper Installation, and loved her work. She also loved to garden, and to paint.

Pixie was preceded in death by both of her parents, and by a sister, Patricia Lee.

She is survived by her partner, Charlie; and her brother-in-law, Raymond Lee; nephew David Lee and his spouse Amanda; great-nephews Brandon, Austin and Steven and great-niece Elizabeth, all of Virginia Beach, VA; and a wonderful, caring extended family. Pixie was truly an animal lover, and loved her rescued dog, Cory. It is of great comfort to know that when we love people that they will always be with us in our hearts.

A Celebration of Pixie's Life will be held at a later date. In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to Cashiers-Highlands Humane Society (200 Gable Drive, Saphire, NC).

Enjoy your journey, Pixie. . . 'til we meet again



## Ann Marie Jacob

Ann Marie Jacob, 87, of Atlanta, died peacefully at home, of congestive heart failure, Wednesday, March 25, 2020.

Ann was born in New York, NY, a city with which she

shared a fresh exuberance, on July 15, 1932. An independent woman, she was already living and working on her own in Manhattan by the early '50s. No one has yet successfully imitated her native accent. Eventually she met and married a young expat Berliner named Ernst Manfred Jacob. Together they nourished a love of fine art and German race cars, and brought two daughters Yvonne and Yvette into the world.

Moving to Atlanta in the early '60s, the couple developed a coterie of similarly arty friends with whom to share their passions. Fred, who worked for the German lens manufacturer, Zeiss, died tragically in his thirties, leaving Ann widowed with two daughters to bring up on her own. A person of pluck and determination, Ann started in her living room what became one of the South's first and longest-operating art galleries and female-owned busi-





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# • WORD MATTER •

## Thank You

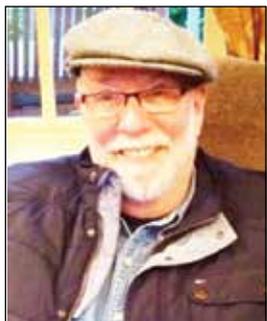
I know I'm going to leave things out of this missive from the edge of the Nantahala National Forest, but I want to take a shot, in the midst of this bizarre episode, at expressing some gratitude. I also know that many folks aren't feeling abundant and are struggling. Our lives have been upended attempting to stay home, stop the spread, and save lives. Still, I feel blessed for a variety of reasons. As is my practice when discussing or writing about evil, mean, nasty, and ugly people and things, I'll try to avoid naming that which has disrupted our typically idyllic existence.

First, we're most thankful no one in our household is sick. We cloistered relatively early. We got only what groceries we needed for two weeks, and we like one another. We're catego-

rized as "vulnerable" so we're socially distancing seriously and being as smart and sensitive as possible about our activities. We speak to our families often and, so far, they're all healthy and working.

Second, we are thankful to live in Highlands. Our neighbors are also being sensible with their activities. The weather is terrific, and we can get outside and keep our distance, without putting ourselves or others in harm's way.

Third, thankfully, we have dependable utilities, enabling us to remain comfortable inside our home. Our energy, water, connectivity and available entertainment options allow us to pass



**Bud Katz**

time without socializing with others in person, putting anyone's health in jeopardy. We miss our volunteer activities, church community, and creative outlets, but we know those will return.

Fourth, we're grateful nature hasn't been affected by this ugly thing. Our birds still sing, even without being fed. Our squirrels and chipmunks still elbow the birds out of the way when we put food out for them. So far, bears have kept their distance, but deer, big cats, and hordes of rabbits provide distractions and smiles. Our Bradford Pear Tree is in bloom, portending a lush and healthy canopy very soon.

Fifth, I seldom express gratitude to people in government these days, but I want to thank Highlands Mayor Pat Taylor for his calming presence and professional demeanor. I know his proclamations have caused pain for many in our business community. Most have been understanding, but these are literally unique times. I won't delve into how this event differs from every other annual flu season; if you don't know the difference yet, nothing I say will matter. Mayor Taylor has been a source of thoughtful, principled leadership, making tough calls when they're required. And, thanks to WHLC-FM (104.5) for providing Mayor Taylor the platform to keep us informed. While I'm at it, kudos to the Highlands Newspaper for pushing out as much clarity of content on this matter as is available from a free,

weekly publication.

Sixth, thanks to Highlands area restaurants offering curbside pickup for people who want or need it. While we who are vulnerable are doing everything possible not to mix it up with other humans, using this service helps keep these businesses afloat and keep some of their team members working. Thanks to those who are supporting these businesses. Find out which restaurants are participating at the Current Restaurant Services Listing at [www.highlandschamber.org](http://www.highlandschamber.org).

Seventh, thanks again to the Highlands Chamber for mobilizing Neighbors Helping Neighbors, which is just what its name suggests, a group of local folks gearing up to provide assistance to those in need. Assistance will include grocery and food pantry pickup and delivery, pharmacy pickup and prescription delivery

• See KATZ page 10

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— FROM —

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- 2) If you are sick and need New prescriptions, please ask your Doctor to fax, call or electronically send them in. Please ask doctor to provide your date of birth and phone number. We will call you when they are ready.
- 3) During this difficult time, we are trying our very best to provide you with the best pharmaceutical care. Be patient with us. Our hours will continue to be 10 AM - 5:30 PM Monday - Friday and 10 AM - 2 PM on Saturday.



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# • INVESTING AT 4,118 FT. •

## Do not lose confidence in this market; it is still strong and we care

Will Rogers once said "In time of crisis people want to know that you care, more than they care what you know."

As little as we all really "know" about the COVID 19 crisis, we appreciate that our leaders care about the health and well-being of the local residents, second-homeowners and tourists and small businesses.

North Carolina Governor Roy Cooper, local Mayor Pat Taylor and county mandates are not shuttering second-homeowners and tourists out as an unwelcome guests, but simply protecting the long-term viability of our wonderful community. Enforcing these measures will have the corollary effect of protecting the real estate investments of all property owners on the Plateau in the future.

It is heartbreaking to see the local streets and highways empty and our beloved restaurants, stores and cultural institutions closed. We will never complain about not getting a parking place in Highlands or Cashiers ever again! We local business owners appreciate and love our clients and part-tim-

ers! Our community is able to absorb the activity of a healthy group of active participants in the summer enjoying all the activities our Plateau has to offer.

However, just as the Hamptons is experiencing the exodus of "hotspot New Yorkers" overwhelming their small community buying up all of the inventory of the small, local grocery stores, our small piece of paradise has a limited and finite ability to accommodate the health needs and resources for a population who would like to join us in this crisis.

But, as either a Seller or Buyer, do not lose confidence in this market. Any uneasiness or concern over the long-term strength and appeal of our area should be put to rest by the following facts:

1. Sales volume is still up 41 % and unit sales are up 26% over this time last year;

2. Buyers are committed to performing on contracts. When COVID 19 was first recognized as a bona-fide crisis, I had six prop-



Jody Lovell  
Highlands Sotheby's  
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erties under contract. Two have closed, two went from due-diligence to pending and the other two are on track to close in April;

3. Mortgage rates are still at all-time lows;

4. Investors are starting to look at real estate as a more stable investment than equities right now;

5. Inventory is tighter than it has been in the last 10 years.

After 9/11, home sales skyrocketed in this real estate market as thoughtful persons sought a safer, calmer environment to have as a refuge for their whole family. Based on all of the video conferences shared in the real estate world this past week, experts are predicting that the same trend will occur after this crisis passes: a major exit from cities to smaller towns.

Despite the "shelter in home" order in place, real estate is considered "an essential business." Every real estate office that I know is asking their employees and agents

to work from home for their protection and for the protection of their clients. However, the real estate community is working behind the scenes to continue to promote and market properties on-line as well as staying in touch with clients. I believe that I can speak for all of us in real estate by saying "we are in this together" and are willing to help out our community, our colleagues, our clients and our fellow business owners any way we can.

Be assured that this unique and precious spot on Earth will continue to be popular and appealing long after this crisis passes. Stay calm, stay home, practice social distancing and carry on. Our prayers are for you and your family's safety.

• Jody and Wood Lovell own Highlands Sotheby's International Realty celebrating its 20th year on the Highlands/Cashiers/Lake Toxaway Plateau. At a time like this, they realize more than ever how blessed they have been to meet so many wonderful clients who are now friends, colleagues who are like family and wonderful new tourists that visit every year. Thank you all for your friendship and support!

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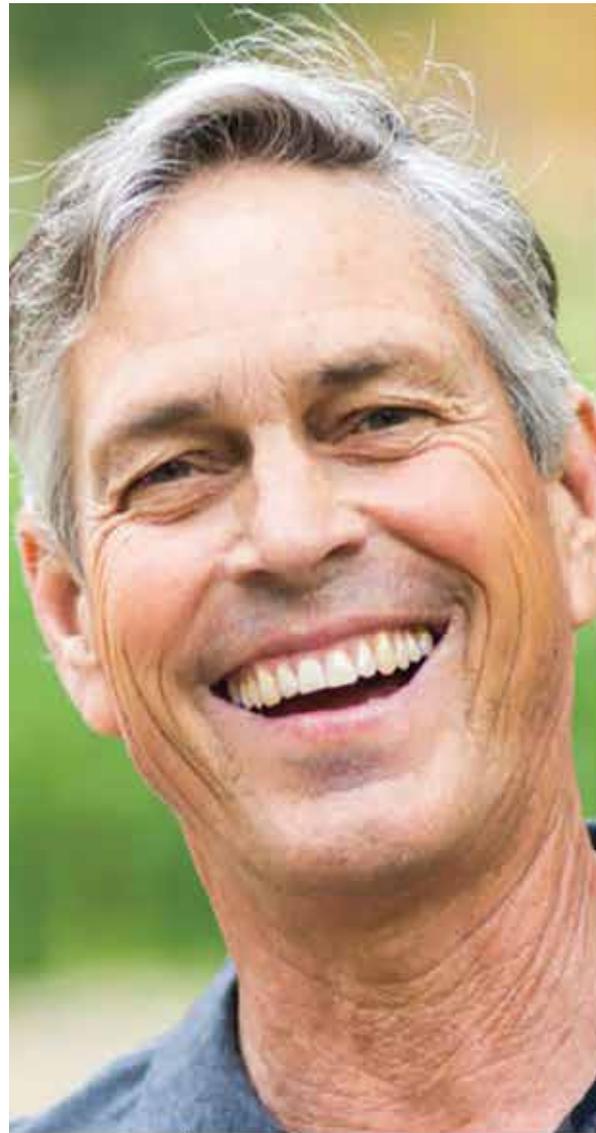
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*A Coronavirus Story.*

# This is Steve.

Steve got **infected** yesterday, but he won't know until nearly **2 weeks later.**

---

Steve thinks he's **healthy**, but is infecting **10 people per day.**

---

These people **think they are ok.** They go out and infect **100 persons.**

---

These 100 persons think they're healthy and **infect 1000 persons.**

---

**Infected people look like you and have no symptoms.**

Protect your neighbors and stop the spread.

# Stay home.



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Health Foundation

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#staysafe  
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## ... OBITUARIES continued from page 5

nesses. In its near 50-year run, Ann Jacob Gallery became a fixture first of Peachtree Center, then Phipps Plaza, in Atlanta, and other locations including New York, Palm Beach, and finally, her much beloved Highlands, NC, a second home she shared for many years with Dave Schoenfeld.

On any given day, virtually seven days a week, Ann could be found holding forth at the gallery, dressed to the nines in designer clothes, capes, and heels. Yvonne and Yvette were brought up playing at the gallery, soaking it up, until they were old enough to work in the business, too. Ann made her reputation first with large sculpture shows, and her stable of artists' works still grace some iconic locations, such as Steffen Thomas's sculpture in the fountain near Fourteenth Street and Peachtree, or Arnaldo Pomodoro's Il Grande Disco in Bank of America Plaza, Charlotte.

Her many customers and friends will smile to recall her fascinating stories, the way she could bring any work to life for the viewer with expression, and the broad range of her offerings. Like her own imagination, the last gallery in Highlands was chockablock with a vivid array of art, objects, bibelots, crafts, and antiques. You left dizzily enchanted. If you stayed longer than ten minutes, whether you purchased or not, and especially if you were a child, you departed with a unique gift from Ann-- pads, knickknacks, jewelry, or more often than not, a small painting. Most of all you left with the conviction that art is enriching and essential to life.

## ... KATZ continued from page 6

(Highlands Pharmacy is also providing curbside pickup and/or free delivery within five miles of town), Post Office mail pickup and drop-off, simple home repairs and auto assistance, simple remote computer help, and more. To volunteer, reach out to the Highlands Chamber at 828-526-5841 for more information.

Eighth, thanks to the USPS, UPS, FedEx and local shopping and delivery services, especially the drivers and shoppers, risking their own health to get us the things we need while we're hunkered down.

## ... MAYOR continued from page 2

medical professionals throughout the nation who are treating victims. About a month ago I put on my schedule a luncheon honoring doctors on National Doctors Day which as this past Monday. Of course, the luncheon was cancelled. The town proclamation that I planned reading at the luncheon is still on my desk. Nevertheless, let me proclaim

Ann was generous to a fault, and she gave extravagantly and joyfully to artists, to many friends in need, animals, to relatives, and especially to her dear daughters, granddaughters, and in-laws. Her friend Patricia described Ann as "brilliant, funny, spicy and sweet," and remembered she worked with a trainer till age 80. We her family mourn the loss of a truly remarkable and generous woman. Because of her, our life together has become a work of art: beautiful, full of emotion and challenge, and ever charged with bright energy, laughter, and love. Adieu for now. Ann Marie Jacob, Requiescat in pace.

Ann is preceded in death by her mother Marina Schroeder Fernandez, father Raul Fernandez, sister Lolita Fernandez Schadt, and brothers Raul Fernandez and Leopold Fernandez, and by husbands Ernst Manfred Jacob and David Lindsay Schoenfeld.

She is survived by her daughters Yvonne Spiotta (Robert) of Atlanta, and Yvette Schorsch (David) of Woodbury, CT, and three granddaughters, Marguerite, Marianna, and Lizzie.

A celebration of life will be held at a future date after easing of COVID-19 restrictions. In lieu of flowers, the family requests memorials be sent to a charity of your choice or to Atlanta Youth Academy at: <https://www.atlantayouthacademy.com/giving/donate-online>

In Ann's memory, reach out and joyfully encourage the creative endeavors of young people in your life.

Ninth and finally, THANKS SO, SO MUCH to police, fire, EMS and health-care workers in town and on the plateau. We appreciate you all the time but especially right now, when the need is greatest. You're our heroes.

I'm sure there are others. Finding time for both thanks and kindness during these stressful, scary times is something we all need to consider and share.

See? I did it without mentioning ... that which will not be named!

on behalf of the Town of Highlands, our gratitude and appreciation for the doctors that serve so faithfully, as well as the nurses, CNAs and medical support staff.

Also, let me thank WHLC Radio. Please listen to my daily updates for the latest COVID information.

# Neighbors Helping Neighbors

The generous spirit and care for the individuals that make up our community never ceases to make our hearts joyful!

Many have expressed concern for our elderly, parents with children at home, those who's health is compromised and the security of our local merchants.

We are in this together and can make a difference by being socially responsible, informed and generous to our neighbors. Please use and share the following resources to make a difference in a life today.

*Covid-19 Resources for Residents and Businesses*  
<https://www.highlandschamber.org/>

### *Get Help or Become a Helper*

<https://www.highlandschamber.org/neighbors-helping-neighbors>  
Hotline 818-482-8290 Email [highlandsdn@gmail.com](mailto:highlandsdn@gmail.com)

### *Assist Highlands Merchants*

Residents and Future Visitors please purchase Gift Cards now, make reservations for future dining experiences and accommodations. Think of these purchases as loyalty to the businesses that serve you year after year.

If we fight reality we will lose 100% of the time.  
Find the harmony of our human family by caring enough to experience Highlands from Home.

Thank you!

# Daily 'dealings' during t

## The Dos and Don'ts



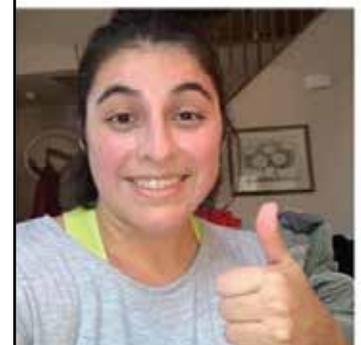
Braylee Williams, age 5, having fun doing "sticker math" and scavenger hunts while sheltering at home.



Highlands School students, Hudson Tilley, 3rd grade, Ian Kitrell, 2nd grade and Walker Kitrell, 3rd grade practising social distancing at Buck Creek Park while doing PE Coach Paige's daily workout routine. Here the boys are attempting 40 air squats. – Photo by Kim Lewicki



Mom's teaching fractions.



**Keep Smiling!**



Tori Fielding and followers doing her "Dance 2Fit" workout class on Zoom book for workout tips and videos.



Highlands School teachers ride along on a food and class materials delivery on Thursday to let the students know how much they are missed. From left are teachers Cindy Reed, Francie Jetter, Kristin Huneycutt, Margie Potts, and the boss behind the wheel is Melanie Miller. From March 19-23, MCS has served 7,120 breakfasts and 7,120 lunches for a total of 14,240 meals to students in Macon County, including over 800 meals in the Highlands area as of March 25. – Photo and cutline by Brian O'Shea, Plateau Daily News

# the COVID-19 Pandemic

## of quarantine living



By Erin Moorman and Rachel Lewicki

**Do:** Get outside if you can for some sunshine - vitamin D is essential to maintaining a healthy immunity.

**Do:** Try to stick to a rough schedule if you have young kids at home, the routine will help everyone's anxiety but don't beat yourself up if you get off track either. Flexibility is key.

**Do:** Take time to put away the day's items (toys, craft supplies, work papers, dishes, etc.) in your living space every day. You don't want to

wake up to a junky mess tomorrow. Things are going to get tight in the house no matter what. Putting extra things away will keep you from wanting to burn the place down a little longer.

**Do:** Shower. Maybe daily.

**Do:** Love your spouse/partner/kid/parent/sibling/pet more, you're not the only one going through this.

**Do:** Try Zoom or other group apps to keep you connected. Even diehard social media avoiders are enjoying using these to connect to family and friends.

**Do:** Order wine. Lots of it.

**Do:** Check out the live music streaming options being offered by numerous musicians. You may be a click away from an in-home concert by one of your favorite artists, or someone completely new.

**Do:** Take this time for that book you have been meaning to read.

**Do:** Tackle that project that you have been waiting for extra time to complete.

**Do:** Start Spring Cleaning early!

**Do:** Make learning fun! Teach some life skills, like how to pick up sticks and burn brush, or open a bottle of wine. Life skills.

**Do:** Cook with your kids. Get them involved!

**Don't:** Take yourself too seriously right now. If you don't want to put on makeup or wear a bra, don't! This is the beauty of a quarantine.

**Don't:** Use a unicorn head as a personal protective mask in public.

**Don't:** Start every day with a quarantini. (Save that for the weekends.)

**Don't:** Try to cut your own bangs. Ever.

**Don't:** Spend your day sucked into Facebook or Instagram fights or rants. Life really is too short.

**Don't:** Reach out to your ex-lover because you are bored.

**Don't:** Pick up that old habit that took you a while to quit.

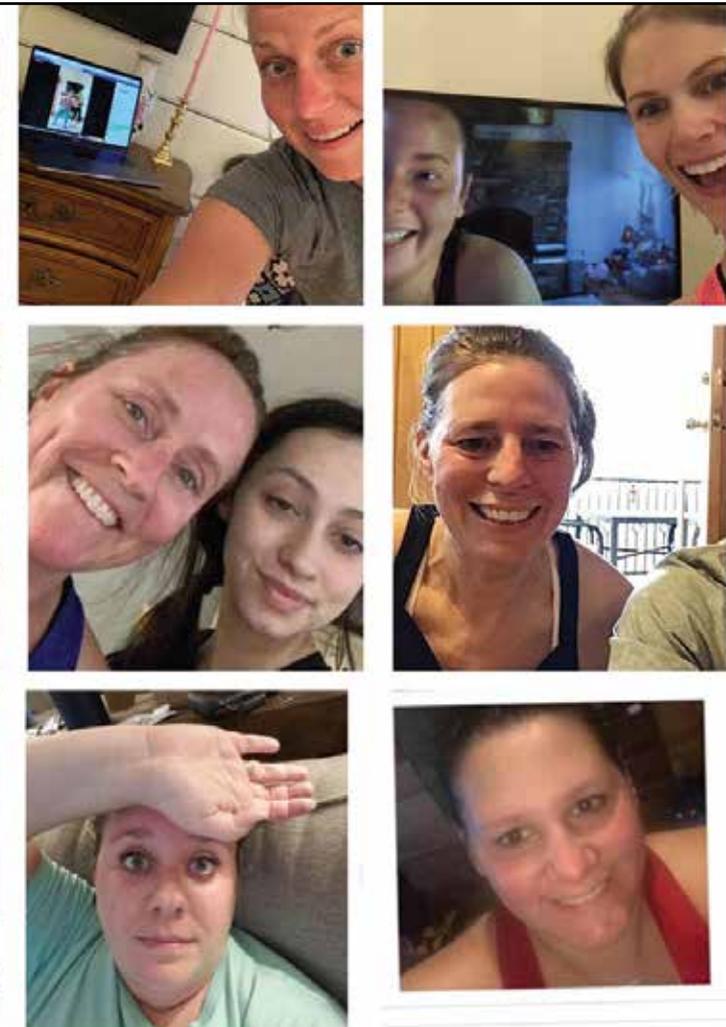
**Don't:** Dye your own hair.



Aria, 8, keeping spirits high with Rabun Gap online on MisMatch Monday.



Highlands School students Chase Kenter - 5th grade and Blake Kenter - 2nd grade, doing their homework outside.



every Monday and Wednesday at 5:30 p.m. You can also follow her on Face-

## ... FOOD BANKS continued from page 1

On average, the Highlands Food Pantry, which is on the bottom floor of the Highlands United Methodist Church, provides food and personal hygienic products for 75 families, or 200 individuals per week. The Highlands Food Pantry is a service of the International Friendship Center and works to provide food security to those in need in the community. The food pantry expects the number of people served to increase substan-

tially and quickly as a result of the pandemic and are adjusting their weekly operations to be able to meet those demands.

"We are receiving more phone calls about our service hours, so we expect to serve more families in the coming weeks," said Marty Rosenfield, Director of the Pantry. "We are concerned about how our patrons will be impacted by the police checkpoints as they come into town to visit the

Food Pantry; if they lack a North Carolina driver's license, will they stay away, or be turned away? Immigrant families may become intimidated by the police checkpoints."

While juggling an increase in need, Rosenfield said the pantry is also taking measures to ensure the safety of volunteers as well as clients.

"We have implemented curbside distribution of boxed food,

rather than having our patrons come inside to shop in the pantry, in order to maintain physical distancing," said Rosenfield. "We have also adopted a new food handling policy, which will help protect our food supplies, patrons and volunteers. We practice physical distancing across our processes."

As the need increases in the area, Rosenfield, along with David Moore, the Chair of the International Friendship Foundation, said that help from the public will be vital.

The Highlands Food Pantry relies on funding year-round from area churches, foundations, civic groups and individuals for funding.

"We are so grateful for their consistent support," said Moore. "In the past week, we applied for three emergency grants from regional foundations to help us purchase larger quantities of food in order to prepare for a dramatic increase in need. We have already received award notices from two foundations – the Community Foundation of Western North Carolina and the WNC Bridge Foundation; these will be very helpful."

"We appreciate the interest shown by area residents who have volunteered to help," they said. "We are unable to accept food donations at this time given the challenges of ensuring a safe food supply. Area residents can volunteer using the Highlands Chamber of Commerce Neighbors Helping Neighbors volunteer portal (insert link here). They can also mail a check to our office: The Highlands Food Pantry, 348 South Fifth Street, Highlands, NC 28741."

The Highlands Emergency Council, an outreach of the MANNA food bank, is also seeing an increase in the number of people it serves.

Volunteer Marie Johnson who is there daily said in the last two weeks they have seen an increase of 15 people in need of

food.

"We normally serve 120 per week, so now it's 135 and we expect that to increase," she said.

Unlike the Food Pantry where in pre-COVID-19 times recipients could shop the shelves, the Emergency Council has always dispersed pre-filled boxes of food with a variety of options.

Since recipients don't "shop" the shelves like at the Food Pantry the new restrictions haven't been too difficult for them to navigate.

"When people come to the door, we take down their name – that's all – and then we put a box of food on the ground outside the bay for them to pick up. This way we are social distancing while still serving them," said Johnson.

Pre-filled boxes contain a variety of mostly canned and bagged items, though sometimes fresh options are available – soup, rice, macaroni, raisins, tomato sauce, pasta, peanut butter, applesauce, peaches, canned meat and fish options – whatever is available.

Johnson said they are taking donations, as well, and urges people to come by during the business hours of Monday through Friday, 10a to 2p and to leave items by the door.

She said due to the increased demand, they have been opening on some Saturdays, too, from 9a to 1p. But Johnson said to call ahead on Saturdays.

All donations are wiped down and sanitized before they are packed into boxes for disbursement and there is no "human" contact with donors or recipients.

She said they are in need of canned meals and meats like pork and bean, Vienna Sausages, hams, chili and beef stew; not just vegetable and soup options.

For more information on the Highlands Emergency Council, call (828) 526-4357. It is located at 71 Poplar Street in Highlands. Their services are open to anyone.



## Memo

**Wednesday, March 25, 2020**

**To:** All Town of Highlands Residents and Business Owners

**From:** Rebecca R. Shuler, Finance Director

**Subject:** Order Suspending Utility Disconnection for Non-Payment, Allowing Reconnection and Waiving Certain Fees

Effective immediately with the State of North Carolina Utilities Commission Order Suspending Utility Disconnections for Non-Payment, Allowing Reconnection, and Waiving Certain Fees the Town of Highlands will not be disconnecting utilities due to non-payment, except where necessary as a matter of safety and waive the application of late fees incurred during the State of Emergency until further notice in correlation to COVID-19.

At the end of the State of Emergency, customers having arrearages accrued during the State of Emergency shall be provided the opportunity to make a reasonable payment arrangement over no less than a six-month period and shall not be charged any late fees for payment for arrearages accrued during the State of Emergency. No provision in this Memo by Order shall be construed as relieving a customer of their obligation to pay bills of receipt of any utility service covered by this Memo by Order.

Online Electronic Payment fees are being waived as an incentive to pay online to limit citizen outside exposure to COVID-19.

Town Hall is closed to the public until further notices as well. Please use the two drop off boxes located at Town Hall, 210 N. 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Highlands, NC 28741 or at the United States Post Office, 43 Dillard Road, Highlands, NC 28741, make electronic payments or mail utility payments to: PO Box 460, Highlands, NC

28741. If anyone has any questions, concerns or comments on this memo or other procedures during this volatile time, please feel free to call Town Hall (828)526.2118 Monday through Friday 8am until 4:30pm or visit our website at [www.highlandsc.org](http://www.highlandsc.org).

210 N. 4<sup>th</sup> St., Highlands, NC 28741

T: (828)526.2118 ext. 1100 W: [www.highlandsc.org](http://www.highlandsc.org)



# Amended Supplemental Municipal Proclamation

WHEREAS, based on public health guidance from the World Health Organization, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the United States Department of Health and Human Services and the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, the Town of Highlands declared a Municipal State of Emergency on March 17, 2020, in an effort to promote social distancing to slow the spread of COVID-19.

WHEREAS, in just over the past week, the State of North Carolina, through the Governor, Roy Cooper, has issued Executive Order No. 116 titled "Declaration of a State of Emergency to Coordinate Response and Proactive Actions to Prevent the Spread of COVID-19; Executive Order No. 117 prohibiting mass gatherings and directing the statewide closure of K-12 public schools to limit the spread of COVID-19; Executive Order No. 118 "Limiting Operations of Restaurants and Bars and Broadening Unemployment Insurance Benefits in Response to COVID-19"; Executive Order No. 119 waiving restrictions on child care and elder care and providing DMV flexibilities; Executive Order No. 120 temporary closure of certain businesses in which members of the public may be in close contact with each other and extension of statewide closure of K-12 public schools in Response to COVID-19".

WHEREAS, the emergency response orders in place in the State of North Carolina currently prohibits mass gatherings that bring together more than fifty (50) persons in a single room or single space at a time, such as an auditorium, stadium, arena, large conference room, meeting hall, theater or any other confined indoor or outdoor space. The prohibition does not extend to other defined spaces and establishments.

WHEREAS, the latest Executive Order is a critical step in minimizing close contact between members of the community. Close contact for COVID-19 is currently defined as contact within six feet for a duration of at least ten minutes. Social Distancing is a specific strategy, proven by data to severely lessen the impact of high consequence pathogens by minimizing the opportunity for close contact encounters.

WHEREAS, per federal guidelines and guidance from the California Department of Public Health, as well as state governments, including Wisconsin and Virginia, gatherings of ten people or more are prohibited.

WHEREAS, given its specific knowledge of the Town of Highlands and to further safeguard its residents and community via Social Distancing, the Board of Commissioners of the Town of Highlands have determined that an imminent hazard exists and has issued guidance recommending the temporary closure of business related to non-essential travel of non-resident individuals in the Town of Highlands to slow the spread of COVID-19.

NOW, THEREFORE, pursuant to the authority vested in me by the Board of Commissioners of the Town of Highlands under Article 8 of Chapter 160A-174 and 166A-19.22 of the North Carolina General Statutes I hereby declare:

Section 1. All Terms and conditions of The Proclamation of a Municipal State of Emergency dated March 17, 2020, shall remain in force and effect.

Section 2. No gatherings of ten persons or more shall take place in the Town of Highlands, during the term of this Declaration of Municipal State of Emergency. Restaurants and retail stores are allowed to provide curbside pickup or delivery only. For the avoidance of doubt consistent with Executive Orders 117, 118 and 120, grocery stores, pharmacies, convenience stores and gas stations, to the extent they sell or distribute prepared food, are exempt from the provisions of this Proclamation. Also, a gathering of persons does not "include normal operations at airports, bus and train stations, medical facilities, shopping malls and centers. It also does not include office environments, factories and child care centers." [Libraries are omitted from this listing of exemptions to the Executive Orders because Macon County Libraries are currently closed]. Further, food banks and hardware operations in which the public are not generally in close contact with other patrons are exempt from this Proclamation.

Section 3. Pursuant to Executive Order 120, all bingo parlors, bowling alleys, ice skating rinks, indoor exercise facilities (e.g. gyms, yoga studios and martial arts facilities), health clubs, indoor pools, live performance venues, movie theaters, roller skating rinks, spas, sweepstakes lounges, video game arcades personal care and grooming businesses, including but not limited to the following: barber shops, beauty salons, hair salons, manicure/pedicure providers, massage parlors, nail salons, tattoo parlors shall close for business.

Section 4. All Lodging Facilities for example, hotels, motels, resorts, inns, guest houses, bed and breakfasts, campgrounds, RV Parks, vacation cabins, home rentals and any and all rentals or leases by Air-BNB, Homeaway, VRBO and other rental programs shall be closed in the Town of Highlands, EXCEPT exemptions as hereinafter set forth.

a. **Work-Related Exemptions:** This closure does not apply if a lease or extended overnight accommodation is due to work in the Town of Highlands for business, medical, construction, emergency services or other related services. In this situation, the employee staying at the lodging facility should have their employer provide their work-related identification badge or a letter from the employer stating the purpose of the work to be performed in the Town of Highlands and the expected duration of the stay.

b. **Homeless Shelter:** This closure does not apply to lodging facilities housing authorized individuals through HERE in the Town of Highlands or as needed to house the homeless in an emergency related to the COVID-19 Response.

c. **Emergency Facility:** This closure does not apply to a lodging facility if used as an emergency facility to assist with the COVID-19 Response.

Section 5. To prevent the spread of COVID-19, travel to the Town of Highlands is strongly discouraged. Anyone traveling to the Town of Highlands to reside overnight from an outside area shall be required to self-quarantine for fourteen days upon arrival. The fourteen-day self-quarantine includes any other occupants of the household.

Section 6. This supplemental proclamation shall become effective immediately, and shall remain in effect until modified or rescinded.

Any person who violates any provision of the Proclamation of a Municipal State of Emergency dated March 17, 2020, or this Supplemental Municipal Proclamation shall be guilty of a Class 2 misdemeanor in accordance with Chapter 166A-19.31 and 14-288.20A of the North Carolina General Statutes.

Amended and Proclaimed this the 31st day of March, 2020 at 5:00pm.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of The Town of Highlands, North Carolina to be affixed this 31st day of March, 2020.

Patrick Taylor, Mayor

Gilberta B. Shaheen, Town Clerk



Pastor David Stearns  
lay member of  
Wayfarers Unity Chapel, Dillard, GA

## Spiritual Psychology

What is spiritual psychology? Spiritual psychology says that by believing in a higher power and trying to be a good person, following the golden rule, and taking care of yourself, you will have a happier, more fulfilling life.

Where did spiritual psychology come from? "Is there no hope for me at all, Doctor?"

This was a question from a man who had relapsed into another round of drinking after many attempts to stop. The doctor was Carl Jung, a psychologist practicing in Switzerland in the early 1930s. The patient was Roland Hazard, who Dr. Jung referred to the Oxford Group, a Christian self-help organization, and their six-step program.

Roland H. followed the teachings of the Oxford Group, became sober, and helped several other men become sober. Two of these other men, Dr. Robert Smith and Bill Wilson, went on to found Alcoholics Anonymous and their 12-step program. The 12-step recovery program has been applied to many forms of addiction successfully all over the world. (Unity Magazine, July, 1992)

Spiritual psychology is rooted in the belief that by turning your life over to a higher power, God, Universal Spirit, or whatever you perceive to be the cause behind life and the universe, that you will be able to face life's challenges and prevail.

This does not mean you have to quit your job, leave your spouse, and join a monastery or a convent. On a practical level this means that you acknowledge a higher power, try to follow the Golden Rule, and take care of yourself.

Everyone has a different spiritual practice. For some it is prayer, for some meditation, for some it is good works, for some it is nature, for some it may be a combination of these, or something different.

For me it is to respect Life or God, respect others, and to respect myself. When the Pharisees asked Jesus, "What is the law?" He replied simply, "Love God, and love your neighbor as yourself."

Spiritual psychology can be a powerful tool to help you weather life's ups and downs. God bless you all.

## Open Letter to the Highlands Community from the Highlands Clergy

To Our Family in Christ,  
Greetings and blessings from your ministers and priests serving the Highlands community.

"Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me.  
--John 14:1

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

We wish to let you know that you are in our prayers at these uncertain times. Due to the Corona virus/Covid19, and the subsequent mandates in our area, there will not be our usual gatherings during Holy Week. Our Community Stations of the Cross on Good Friday is canceled, as is the Easter Sunrise Service at the cemetery.

We urge you to participate in whatever your clergy are offering in the way of online resources. There are live streaming services, podcasts and other things available, so check with your place of worship and your email for further details.

All the clergy are staying in touch with you as we are able, by print, phone, email and social media. We wish you to know that though we cannot gather as community, we are working to meet the spiritual and physical needs of all. If you have an emergency, don't hesitate to call on us.

Many of us are planning "Post Corona-Virus" Easter services when the restrictions on gatherings are lifted, whenever that may be.

Since we are all "Easter people" at all times, it will be just as meaningful even when we celebrate at a later date. We pray for you daily and remind you to be safe and take care of each other.

"And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."  
--Matthew 28:20b

Your Highlands Community Clergy

## Coping with social distancing and a change in routine



By Micah Krempasky, MD  
Psychiatrist, Mission Hospital Behavioral Health

I pride myself on routine. I wake in the wee hours of the mornings. My coffee is set to brew precisely 2 minutes before my alarm chimes. While I sip my hot brew, I turn on a single lamp, sit in in the corner spot on the couch and read my morning emails. A few minutes later, I don my pre-chosen workout clothes and head to the gym where I am greeted by my always present, somewhat obsessive 6 am crew. Afterwards, it's back to the house to start the rest of my day. This is my routine. I do it every day. In this order. I don't veer from it—and when I do, everything feels off.

Despite my best efforts to avoid it, my life has changed. My routine has been totally disrupted. My beloved coffee creamer is out of stock, my favorite couch is strewn with homeschooling materials and my gym is closed. This list goes on and on...

Routines keep us grounded and disruption in routines can cause significant stress. On top of that, the current pandemic has our minds riddle with fear: Am I going to get sick? Can I pay the bills? What if I lose my house? When will I see my friends? How will this affect my parents? My children? My neighbors? Additionally, we don't have access to many of the things we use for coping. Parks-closed. Theaters-closed. Social gatherings-cancelled.

So, what do we do?

There isn't a one-size-fits-all answer nor is there a well-defined algorithm for how to behave in this ever-changing situation. However, gratitude is something we can easily incorporate into our lives and it is a very effective coping strategy. Despite all the interruptions, threats and fears, we still need to find reasons to be thankful.

So, take a moment.

Take a moment to appreciate the sounds of laughter outside as kids enjoy their days in less structured ways. Enjoy the smell of the freshly cut grass that you finally had time to mow. Savor the pleasure of a previously elusive afternoon nap.

Take a moment to organize your junk drawer. Write a letter to a friend. Make a soufflé.

Take a moment to watch these videos. We hope they

**Looking for a church home?**  
Wayfarers Unity Chapel is a non denominational, inclusive church located at 182 Wayfarer Lane, off Highway 246 in Dillard, GA, just 1.7 miles from Highway 441  
Social time begins at 9:30 and services begin at 10 a.m. on Sundays  
Visit our website [www.wayfarersunity.org](http://www.wayfarersunity.org) for more information, or call 706-746-3303

# • SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING •

## 'Who Trusts in the Lord'



Whiteside Presbyterian Church,  
Cashiers  
Pastor Sam Forrester

*"Who among you fears the Lord? Who obeys the voice of His Servant? Who walks in the darkness and has no light? Let him trust in the name of the Lord and rely upon his God." Isaiah 50:10*

In this time of such uncertainty we need to stop and remember the basics of our faith. Let me share with you some words of help.

Even as believers we tend to give an undue importance to the articles that bring comfort and give place to feelings and when they vanish all comfort seems to be removed from our hearts. In other words, we have the tendency to trust in emotions that are always changing.

The true Christian knows that grace is the true strength of our faith. Yes! Grace is at times held at bay by our sins but it never really leaves the true believer.

It is true at times even the true believer may find their faith clouded but the principles of faith are never removed from our hearts. Consider your Lord as He hung upon the cross. Has there ever been another that suffered as he suffered? Has there ever been sorrow like His sorrow? Has another ever been deserted like He was?

There were no springs of consolation for Him to go to. All joy was withdrawn from his soul. It was like His human soul underwent an eclipse. Yet, His faith hung upon God and you can hear that in His exclamation "My God! My God!" He was declaring that his hope rested in the strong one, His strong one.

He was caught in the storm but he declares his anchor to be His heavenly Father. He had no consolation, no comfort. He faced a darkness unbelievably filled with horror, producing the greatest sorrow man could ever imagine. Yet, in the face of all of this terror He stayed His soul on God.

As we face this pandemic and the unknown terrors that it harbors we but need remember who created this world and thus this virus. Hold to Jesus and all He did for you. Let your comfort come from His words of hope that all who look to Him will be safe when it comes to the last day. No pandemic, no battle, no war can come between you and your Lord. We of all people know that at the darkest hour, at the coldest moment we have a hope no man can thwart. We have a comfort won on Calvary's cross. We have a joy perfected in His resurrection. We have a hope that will be secured in His return. Take note of all of these things and stand in faith before the cruelties of this world and you will be filled with love, joy and hope.

## Proverbs 3:5

## • PLACES TO WORSHIP •

John 3:16

### BLUE VALLEY BAPTIST CHURCH

Rev. Oliver Rice, Pastor (706) 782-3965  
Sundays: School: 10 a.m., Worship: 11  
Sunday night services every 2nd & 4th Sunday at 7  
Wednesdays: Mid-week prayer meeting: 7 p.m.

### BUCK CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH

828-269-3546 • Rev. Jamie Passmore, Pastor  
Sundays: School: 10 a.m.; Worship: 11

### CASHIERS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Rev. Wes Sharpe, Pastor 828-743-5298  
Sundays: School at 9:30 Worship 10:30  
Wednesday night Dinner and Service 5:30

### CHAPEL OF THE SKY

Sky Valley, GA • 706-746-2999  
Sundays: 10 a.m.; Worship  
Holy Communion 1st & 3rd Sundays

### CHRIST ANGLICAN CHURCH

Rector: Jim Murphy, 252-671-4011  
464 US Hwy 64 east, Cashiers  
9:30a Sunday School; 10:30a Worship Service; Mon. 6p Bible  
Study & Supper in homes

### CHRIST CHURCH OF THE VALLEY, CASHIERS

Pastor Brent Metcalf • 743-5470  
Sun. 10:45am, S.S. 9:30am. Wed. 6pm supper and teaching.  
Tues. Guys study 8am, Gals 10am.

### CLEAR CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH

Pastor Jim Kinard  
Sundays: School: 10 a.m.; Worship: 11 a.m.  
1st & 3rd Sunday night Service: 7 p.m.  
Wednesdays - Supper at 6 p.m.

### COMMUNITY BIBLE CHURCH

www.cbchighlands.com • 526-4685  
3645 Cashiers Rd, Highlands, NC  
Sr. Pastor Gary Hewins  
Sun.: 9:30am: Sunday School 10:30am: Middle & High School;

10:45am: Child. Program, 10:45am: Worship  
Wed.: 5pm Dinner (\$7 adult, \$2 child), 6pm CBC U.

### COMMUNITY BIBLE CHURCH OF SKY VALLEY

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

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Sundays: Worship: 11

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Wednesday: Prayer Service, 6:30 p.

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Wed: Bible Study and Youth Mtg.: 7 p.m.

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Rev. Marty Kilby

Sundays: School - 10 a.m.; Worship - 11 a.m. & 7

Wednesdays: Prayer Mtg.: 7 p.m.

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290 Buck Knob Road; Pastor Donald G. Bates • 526-3212  
Sun.: School: 10 a.m.; Worship: 10:45 a.m.; Worship: 6 p.m.

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Pastor Rev. Andy Cloer  
Sundays: School: 10 a.m.; Worship: 11 a.m.  
Wednesdays: Prayer & Bible Study: 6 p.m.

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### WHITESIDE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Rev. Sam Forrester/Cashiers  
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## ... COVID-19 continued from page 1

perts predicting the United States still being two-three weeks away from the peak of the virus. North Carolina Department of Health and Human services daily updates the reported number of cases which reached 1,498 as of Tuesday morning.

There have been eight deaths in

North Carolina since the first case was reported on March 2. There are currently 158 people hospitalized across North Carolina as a result of the virus.

Cases in Western North Carolina are beginning to tick up, with Cherokee County reporting the highest number of cases west

of Asheville with 7 cases. The case of a New York resident isolating in Highlands, was the only COVID-19 case in the county until Wednesday, when the first case originating in the county was reported.

As of Monday at 5 p.m., Macon County had tested 64 individuals through the Macon County Health Department and received 43 negative test results. The remaining 21 tests were pending. The Macon County Health Department utilizes Labcorp for the majority of COVID-19 tests and results average a 7-10 day turn-around before suspected individuals are notified of results.

The town of Highlands was ahead of the curve having directed the closure of all lodging facilities including AirBnB and VRBO, requiring all second-home owners from out of state who want to stay to self-quarantine for 14 days, limiting groups to 10 people, and conducting traffic stops at all inroads suggesting all day-trippers and motorcyclists to turn around or drive through without stopping in town.

Subsequently, Macon County Commissioners approved a supplemental State of Emergency last Thursday that directed the closure of all lodging facilities in Macon County. While there are exemptions, such as individuals needing lodging for work-related reasons, lodging facilities were directed to close for those seeking vacation or a place to wait out COVID-19.

The decision to close lodging facilities was not unanimous from commissioners – Macon County Commissioner Paul Higdon voted against the measure, citing a need to weigh the health risks against the potential economic risks.

Commissioner Higdon also commented on the traffic checking stations being manned by Highlands Police Department.

“That is crushing the construction industry,” said Higdon. According to Higdon,

most construction jobs employ around 50 percent of illegal immigrants as workers and because those workers are illegal, they will not subject themselves to the checking stations, therefore the checking stations are harmful to the construction industry.

The day after Macon County Commissioners ordered all lodging facilities to close and announced additional screenings for travelers using the Macon County Airport, as well as a 14-day quarantine recommendation for anyone returning to Macon County, Governor Roy Cooper issued a stay-at-home order for the entire state. The order, which went into effect on Monday at 5 p.m. does not include a curfew, one common misconception associated with the order.

The order does, however, mandate that all residents should remain at home and not leave their residence unless it is absolutely necessary.

The Order directs people to stay at home except to visit essential businesses, to exercise outdoors or to help a family member. Specifically, the order bans gatherings of more than 10 people and directs everyone to physically stay at least six feet apart from others.

“I know this order may lead to even more hardship and heartache. Although we are physically apart, we must take this step together in spirit,” Governor Cooper said.

Violating the stay-at-home order is a class two misdemeanor, which means a maximum of 60 days in jail and a \$1,000 fine, according to the North Carolina General Assembly. However, Cooper said it is up to local law enforcement officers and district attorneys to determine how to enforce the order.

In Highlands, disobeying the state of emergency order is a class 2 misdemeanor and come with a \$100 fine.

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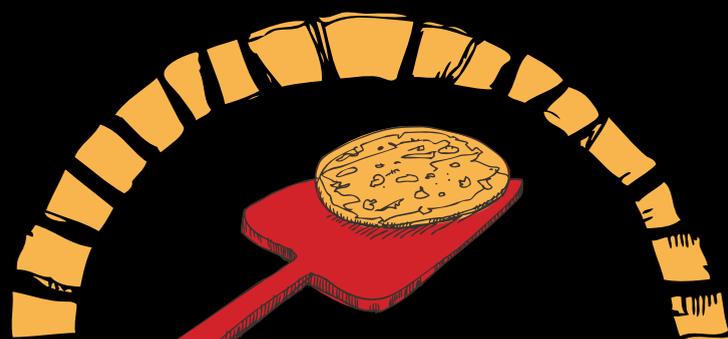
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## District Attorney says 'Wheels of Justice' continue to turn

District Attorney Ashley Hornsby Welch said Tuesday the judicial system remains open for business with measures in place to counter the coronavirus pandemic.

"The health and well-being of employees and community members we serve is a top priority," said Welch, who oversees the 43rd Prosecutorial District, made up of the state's seven westernmost counties.

"Our office is working with others in the court system, including judges, clerks of court, defense attorneys and local law enforcement, to strike a balance between the needs of public health and public safety, while providing constitutional due-process rights as guaranteed under the constitution."

Law enforcement officers continue to arrest offenders, including domestic-violence suspects, people who drive while impaired and others who commit criminal misdeeds. The District Attorney's Office continues to process these cases.

Welch emphasized anyone who violates Gov. Roy Cooper's stay-at-home order or who ignores locally enacted ordinances could face criminal charges.

"If law enforcement takes action, my office will prosecute to the fullest extent of the law," she said. "People need to understand these regulations are in place for the good of all, to try to prevent the spread of COVID-19."

Earlier this month, N.C. Supreme Court Chief Justice Cheri Beasley issued a set of emergency directives. Her orders to the judicial system included postponing most cases in Superior and District courts. She also instructed local officials to limit the risk of coronavirus exposure in courthouses.

Welch said members of the District Attorney's Office are deemed essential employees. To limit the potential for coronavirus exposure, administrative staff members are working different shifts districtwide. This both provides protection and allows all seven county offices to stay open, with a staff member in each office available during business hours.

Otherwise, to the extent possible, she and her 31-member staff are working remotely from their homes.

District Attorney Welch also said:

- Though still operational, the District Attorney's Office is closed to members of the public.

- Don't worry about speeding tickets or other citations if you have a court date. These infractions are being continued to future dates. If you have an attorney, contact them. If you want to know the continued date, then call the Clerk of Court's office in your county.

- Victims of crimes who have questions about open cases can call the District Attorney's office in their respective county and leave a message. These messages will be returned as promptly as possible.

- [www.nccourts.gov/services](http://www.nccourts.gov/services) is available for handling some court business, including citation services, paying your ticket, court payments, signing up for court-date notifications and reminders and eFiling court documents for certain courts and case types.

## ... COPING continued from page 16

will inspire you to practice good self-care and to focus your energy in a positive way. And, if you recognize that you or someone you know is really struggling, the videos include resources to help you access needed care.

In the end, uncertainty remains. However, taking care of our emotional

health—in addition to our physical health—will allow us to be far more effective in navigating this uncertainty.

Contact Dr. Krempasky at Mission Behavioral Health, 828-213-4696.

Questions about COVID-19? To keep up to date and learn more, visit [missionhealth.org/covid-19](http://missionhealth.org/covid-19).

## • POLICE & FIRE REPORTS •

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

### Feb. 1

- At 4 p.m., officers received a report of a larceny at a home on Cullasaja Drive where numerous household items were taken, including a washer and dryer, furniture, linens and pillows from 5 beds and more.

### March 19

- At 5:10 p.m., officers received a report of larceny at Highlands Express Mart where a cell phone was taken,

### March 21

- At 9:09 a.m., offices received a report of theft from a vehicle at Cullasaja Drive. March 23

- At 3:45 p.m., officers received a report of a breaking and entering of a motor vehicle at a residence on Sherwood Forest Road.

### March 24

- At 8:17 a.m., Houston Marshall, 33, of Franklin, was arrested for and served a warrant for offenses committed in another jurisdiction. He was issued a \$500 secured bond.

- At 8 p.m., officers received a report of a burglary and breaking & entering of a home on Memorial Park Drive.

**The Highlands Fire & Rescue log from March 23**

### March 23

- 1:02 p.m., the dept. assisted Highlands PD at the site of a motor vehicle accident on N. 4th Street.

- At 7:24 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Highlands Mountain Club Drive.

### March 24

- At 1:25 p.m., the dept. responded to a motor vehicle accident on US 64 west.

### March 25

- At 4:07 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Bonnie Drive.

### March 26

- At 2:52 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Big Bear Pen Road.

### March 29

- At 10:07 a.m., the dept. provided public assistance at a residence on N. 4th Street.

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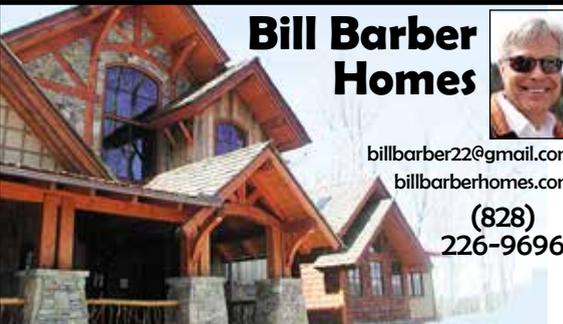
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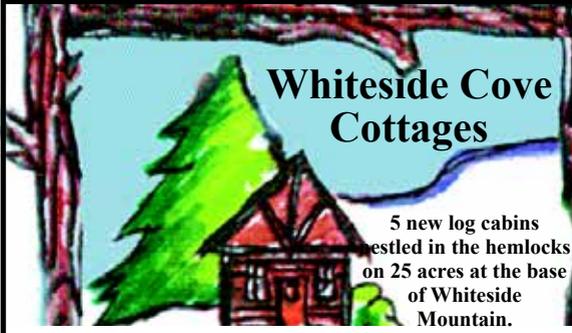


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**... MEASURES from page 1**

at 5 p.m., the closing of the town's Civic Center/Rec Park facilities, the closing of K-12 schools through May 15, the closing of all lodging facilities, the closing of dine-in restaurant options, the closing of walk-in retail and service establishments, the closing of playgrounds, social distancing, limiting the gathering of people to 10, and more.

In addition, the USFS has closed numerous trails, waterfalls and campgrounds including Cliffside Lake, Whiteside and Dry Falls because people have been coming from other states to spend the day outside without social distancing.

Commissioners agreed to further curtail possible contamination by closing the town's three public bathrooms – the one in K-H Founders Park, Town Square on Main Street and at the ballpark.

"We decided to shut down our public bathrooms because we couldn't keep them virus free and we are running low on cleaning supplies," said Mayor Pat Taylor.

Rather than closing all town properties, however, commissioners agreed to just cordon off the playground and pavilions at the Rec Park and in the Dog Park, the dugout at the ball field as well as the picnic tables at K-H Founders Park – places people could gather without social distancing six feet apart.

"Those aspects promote congregating and we don't

want people to leave anything behind. The virus can live on surfaces for 72 hours," said Commissioner Amy Patterson.

Signs will also be erected in all park areas reminding people to practice social distancing.

"I don't want to create insanity with people being locked in a house for days. We have to be sensible," said Commissioner Donnie Calloway.

Most of Tuesday night's discussion revolved around keeping people who don't have homes in Highlands out – mainly daytrippers and renters of vacation rentals, even though such habitation is not allowed at this time.

"How do we stop the madness of people streaming in from Georgia and Florida," said a frustrated mayor. "NBC news emphasized that small towns could become very vulnerable and stressed the important of self-isolation and social distancing."

Stop checks at Highlands inroads that began last week will continue. Daytrippers and motorcyclists will be turned around or told to drive through but to not stop in town. Since everything is basically closed, there is no reason for people to come to Highlands, said commissioners.

At the Public Safety Committee meeting Wednesday morning, Police Chief Bill Harrell said proof of employment is required if people are coming from elsewhere to work in Highlands – a uniform, ID badge, or letterhead.

Drivers of all out-of-state vehicles who intend to reside at a home in Highlands will need to supply their name, Highlands address, phone number and their license tag will be noted, too.

"We will be verifying the information with a "knock and talk" home check," said Chief Harrell.

To man all the inroads – main and side – commissioners agreed to hire members of the Fire & Rescue Dept. to assist with stop checks. They will be paid and where there will only be one police officer at a stop check, if fire department personnel are manning a site, there will be two of them.

"The best we can do with road checks is to educate, increase awareness and to some extent deter," said Mayor Taylor. "There is no magic bullet."

The town is contacting policy makers at VRBO and AirBnB asking them to let people know Highlands is off limits. Commissioners also want residents to notify the town if a vacation rental in their neighborhood is occupied so staff can determine if they are renters or owners using their rental home.

Sanitation workers will be putting flyers on garbage cans of occupied second-homes explaining the need to self-quarantine for 14 days each time the owners come to Highlands – should they go back to their home state and return.

To get a handle on who is here, commissioners are considering a permit system similar to that in effect in Graham County, but details are still being hammered out.

Town Attorney JK Coward said under its state-of-emergency the town can legally do anything to protect its citizens.

"You do have the authority to stop people from coming in," he said. "And, a local ordinance prevails if it is more strict than a state order."

Meanwhile, "Any person who violates any provision of the Proclamation of a Municipal State of Emergency dated March 17, 2020, or the Supplemental Municipal Proclamation shall be guilty of a Class 2 misdemeanor in accordance with Chapter 166A-19.31 and 14-288.20A of the North Carolina General Statutes," reads the proclamation.

– Kim Lewicki

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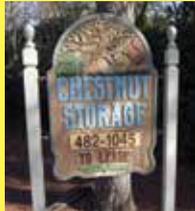
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## REAL ESTATE FOR SALE

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**ATTENTION BUSINESS OWNERS:** Looking for employee housing? We've got several options! Close to town and affordable! Call Christal at White Oak Realty Group. 828-200-9699. (st. 9/19)

**SIX ACRES ON BUCK CREEK ROAD** behind Highlands-Cashiers Hospital. Sign on property. 843-460-8015. (st. 5/30)

**2/2 CLAYTON HOME IN LOWER CLEAR CREEK.** 1+acre, Private. View. 118,000. 706.782.9728 (st. 9/5)

**1.21 ACRES FOR SALE BY OWNER - OTTO, NC** - \$28,000. Lot 12 Quail Haven Road. Otto, NC. Price not firm ... open for negotiation. Please email if interested to [ddmarsh15@aol.com](mailto:ddmarsh15@aol.com) or call/text to 239-980-0531. Please leave a message. (st. 7/20)

## RESIDENTIAL RENTALS

**HOME FOR RENT IN MIRROR LAKE AREA.** 2 BR/2 BA furnished. Screened porch & open deck. Small pets okay. No smoking. Long-term preferred. \$1,700 per month. 404-630-8398. (3/19)

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**LUXURY APARTMENT IN TOWN.** Walk to Main Street. 1BR 1BA. \$3,500 per month. 3 month minimum. Sorry, no pets, no smoking. Adults only. 828-421-1709. (st. 5/10)

## ...TRIAGE continued from page 1

we remain able to meet the needs of the communities we serve as this situation continues to evolve.”

The tents are part of Mission's standard emergency planning protocols and are simply a precaution at this time. Over the coming days, Mission will conduct training exercises and drills in the tents, allowing caregivers to become comfortable in the environment should the tents need to become operational.

“Over the coming days and weeks, you may see our caregivers conducting these exercises within these tents,” Lowe

said. “It's important to know that we have not yet seen widespread transmission of COVID-19 at this point in our community or a surge in our hospitals. This is an ongoing process to ensure we're able to provide safe, compassionate care for those we serve.”

Lowe recognized that residents in local communities are feeling fear and uncertainty during this time.

“While it is impossible to know for certain how this unprecedented outbreak will affect our communities in the coming weeks, we are learning effective strate-

gies from other HCA Healthcare divisions across the country already seeing escalated outbreaks and implementing those for our community. Mission Health and our team of exceptional doctors, nurses – our entire team of caregivers - are here for you,” Lowe said. “Our top priority is protecting the health and safety of our patients and colleagues, and we are working every day to provide the resources we need to provide high-quality care for you and your family during this challenging time.”

Lowe continued, “All of us can take

steps to help slow COVID-19's spread and reduce the number of cases. Mission Health is supportive of Governor Cooper's Stay at Home order as a way everyone can contribute to protecting the safety of our communities and our medical providers.”

Mission will continue to monitor the situation and work closely in partnership with local and state health departments, and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

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