

Highlands Newspaper

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PRIMARY 2020 Q & A: PART 6

Five of 11 Republicans up for Meadows seat join Primary 2020 Q&A

By Brittney Lofthouse
The constitution does not require candidates for Congress to live in the district they want to represent, so when Rep. Meadows announced he wouldn't be seeking office, Republicans from

across the state filed for office — the furthest from District 11 being Albert Wiley Jr, who lives on the coast.

Chuck Archerd

Chuck Archerd refers to himself as a committed Christian, who

accepted Christ as his Savior over 40 years ago. As he has followed Him, he has taught Sunday school, lead community and Sunday school groups, served as an Elder and Deacon and shared his faith

• See PRIMARY 2020 page 8

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SINCE THE HCA/MISSION MERGER: PART 3

NC AG Josh Stein wants answers from HCA

On Feb. 25, Attorney General Josh Stein penned a letter to the president of the NC division of HCA Healthcare, Greg Lowe about concerns raised during Independent Monitor's recent community forums as well as the cessation of Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) staffing at Angel Hospital which Highlands Newspaper brought to light in Part 2 of it's "Since the HCA/Mission Merger."

Dear Mr. Lowe:

We appreciate the continued dialogue between our office and HCA concerning Mission Health. We write today to express our concern about four issues:

- A surge in complaints about quality of care.
- The lack of a Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner at Angel

• See HCA page 11

Highlands PD remembers first Canine Officer Ruby

By Brittney Lofthouse

Over the weekend, the law enforcement community bid farewell to one of their own – its first K9 Officer Ruby – who was laid to rest. She was 15 years old.

Serving the Highlands Police Department for an entire decade, Ruby first joined Highlands PD in October 2007 and her last official tour of duty was October 2017.

In fact, Halloween 2007 during the town's annual trick-or-treating, citizens met Canine Officer Ruby for the first time. On Thursday, Oct. 26, 2017 she officially retired with fanfare.

"To say that Ruby was a pioneer for a new policing method in Highlands for Highlands PD would be an understatement,"

• See RUBY page 14

Highlands girls varsity basketball team beats BREC in LSMC championship



Highlands girls varsity basketball team hosted Blue Ridge Early College for the Little Smoky Mountain Conference championship last Wednesday and won 67-44. Highlands played against Bessemer at home in the first round of the state playoffs on Tuesday and won 67-38. The Lady Highlanders play tonight, Thursday, at 6 p.m. in round 2. See HS Sports on page 6.

– Brian O'Shea, Plateau Daily News

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• THE PLATEAU'S POSITION •

• MAYOR ON DUTY •

HCA services are under a microscope

Houston, no I mean, "Mission we have a problem." It is not simply at the Highlands Cashiers Hospital, nor just at Angel Medical Center, it is the entire system that HCA now owns and operates Western Carolina. The problem does not bode well for Western Carolina citizens.



Highlands Mayor
Patrick Taylor

It's not just me, a little voice in the mountain wilderness, that is expressing concerns. At the recent round of meetings held by Gibbins Monitors, a letter of concerns about Mission HCA was signed and presented by a number of state representatives and county commissioners. The mayor of Asheville also signed the letter.

Their concerns centered about HCA aggressive costs cuts, a diminution of services, loss of staffing including reduction of CNAs and custodial workers, increases in nurse-to-patient ratios, and hidden fees and erroneous billing. There is now a Facebook page called Mission Maladies with over 2,000 followers.

My concern is that what happens with

HCA in Asheville will impact the entire system including Highlands Cashiers Hospital. Our residents have been told for a number of years that while services like surgery can't be sustained locally, those services would be available by way of transport to the larger units in the system. There will be a ripple effect throughout the system if the larger units decline in service and operation.

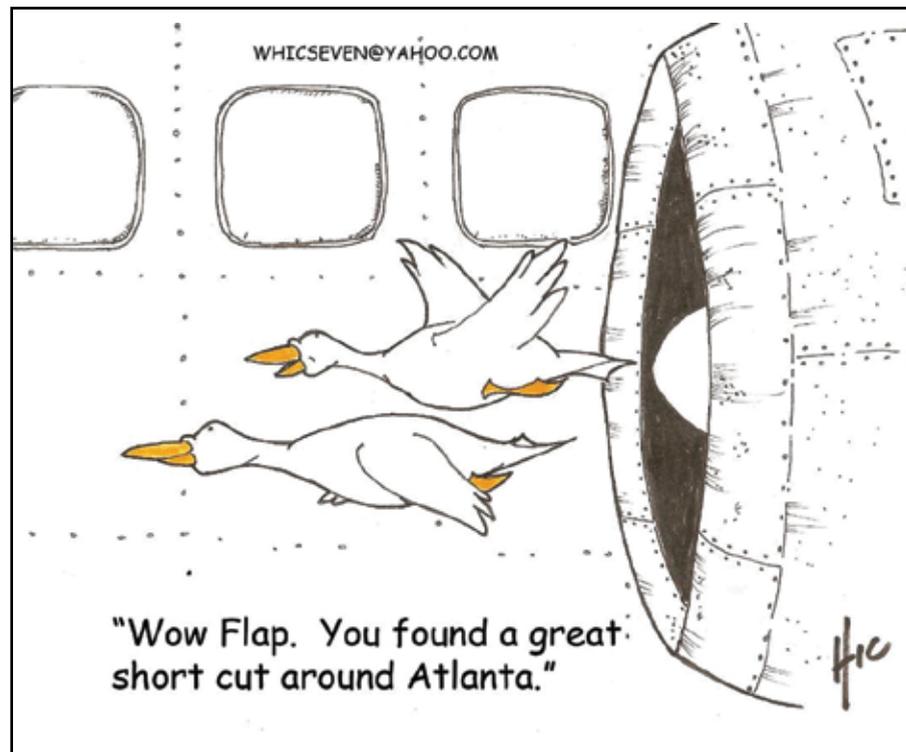
The people of Asheville, and for that matter the entire region, have always had confidence in the quality and achievements of their hospital system. Before the sale to HCA, folks were assured that Mission was in the top tier of national healthcare systems. With recent monitor meetings and community feedback, people are worried that may no longer be the case.

I stated at the Highlands monitor meeting held last month that I envision community partnerships with our HCA hospital that can advance area healthcare access. I am still committed, but there also needs to be a frank and honest assessment of the situation.

A recent article in Highlands Newspaper had the headline, "Rape victims struggle to get services at HCA." I have looked into the situation as it pertains to our hospital, Angel and Macon County. The Highlands Police Department has up to date Sexual Abuse Evidence Kits. They are used in collecting evidence in sexual abuse crimes, including rape. To collect the evidence, a Sexual Abuse Nurse Examiner (SANE) needs to do the procedure using the provided kit. The problem is that we have no SANE nurses assigned to Angel Medical Center or Highlands Cashiers Hospital. A number of years ago that was not the case. We may have one SANE nurse residing in Macon County, but that nurse is assigned to a facility in another county. Therefore, it is very likely a victim of sexual abuse would have to be transported to another facility, probably Asheville, where SANE nurses are available. The situation is totally unacceptable. A victim of such a crime does not need the trauma of long waits and traveling long distances. I am certain HCA will work with law enforcement and the community in resolving this problem, as well as others.

I hope the community will work together with HCA on other initiatives also.

• HIC'S VIEW •



• LETTERS •

From OEI Hospitality Group: #timetochange!

Dear Editor,

I loved Mayor Pat Taylor's column in the Feb. 13 edition entitled, "Balancing Tourism and Quality of Life." This is a super-hot topic among hotels and resorts and many of us are reacting as quickly as possible. Our footprint on the world is huge and we can either ignore it or act on it. Old Edwards Hospitality Group and our hotel association, Relais

• See LETTERS page 16

• WEATHER •

Thu, 27-Feb	Fri, 28-Feb	Sat, 29-Feb	Sun, 1-Mar
 36°F 22°F	 37°F 25°F ***	 37°F 25°F	 52°F 32°F
Sunny	Afternoon snow. up to 1'	Partly sunny and cold	Sunshine and milder
RealFeel® High: 32° Low: 10°	RealFeel® High: 33° Low: 23°	RealFeel® High: 32° Low: 16°	RealFeel® High: 56° Low: 24°

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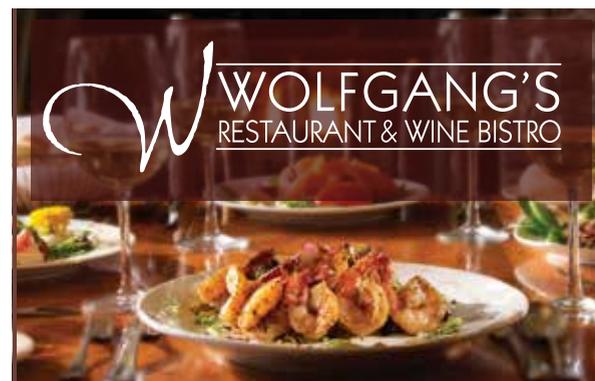
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• OBITUARIES •

Alan E. Marsh

Mr. Alan E. Marsh, Sr. 90, passed away Friday, February 21, 2020 in Highlands, NC after a short illness. He was born September 22, 1929 in St. Petersburg, FL. Alan graduated from the University of Kentucky. When he returned to St. Petersburg he married his "Sweetie" Patty Elliott and they were married for 68 years.



Alan purchased his first home in Highlands in the 1970's. He spent much of his time gardening and was an active member of Highlands United Methodist Church.

Alan is survived by his wife, Patty Marsh; his children, Alan Marsh Jr. and his wife Varsy, Sue Crawford and husband Rick, and Mitchell Marsh and his wife Leslie; 8 grandchildren; and 2 great-grandchildren.

There was a private graveside service on Tuesday, February 25, 2020.

Online condolences can be left at www.bryantgrantfuneralhome.com. Bryant-Grant Funeral Home and Crematory is serving the Marsh family.

Adele Jones

Adele Jones, 72, died Feb. 13. A memorial service is planned at the Presbyterian Church of Highlands March 7 at 2 p.m.

Eugene 'Vic' Wood

Eugene "Vic" Wood, 90, of Highlands went to be with the Lord Thursday, February 20, 2020.



Born in Cashiers, NC, he was the son of the late Eugene C. and Mary Houston Wood. In addition to his parents he was preceded in death by his wife Betty Speed Wood; a son Michael Wood; sisters, Catherine Wood Jennings, and Juanita Wood Burnette and brothers, Ray Wood, Charles Wood and Larry Wood.

Vic was an avid outdoorsman and enjoyed fishing and growing a beautiful garden every summer. He appreciated all nature and its beauty. He was a member of Shortoff Baptist Church in Highlands and served as choir leader for many years, Sunday School Superintendent and was a member of the Board of Trustees. Vic was employed by Alvin C. Crowe Builders for many years and was a co-owner of the company at the time of his retirement. He served on the Board of Trustees for Highlands-Cashiers Hospital from 1977-1981. Vic was a veteran of the Korean Conflict. He attended a Military Academy in Etta Jima, Japan, where he was trained as a specialist in chemical, biological, radiological warfare. He then spent his time in Pusan, Korea. He was a member of American Legion Post 108. Vic was

a loving husband, father and grandfather. He made many friends along life's journey.

He is survived his son, Scott Wood of Scaly Mountain; grandson Quinton Michael Wood of Clayton, GA; sister Jean Wood Taylor of Dillard, GA and several nieces and nephews.

A Memorial Service will be held at 2 pm Saturday, March 7, at Shortoff Baptist Church. Rev. Andy Cloer will officiate.

The family will receive friends from 12:30-2 pm Saturday, prior to the service at the church.

Memorial donations can be made to the Shortoff Baptist Church.

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.

Condolences can be made to the family at www.maconfuneralhome.com

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•WORD MATTER•

A History Lesson Worth Considering

In a 1925 speech to newspaper editors, then U.S. President Calvin Coolidge said, "the chief business of the American people is business." Coolidge, America's 30th President, was a staunch conservative who presided over one of the most explosive periods of economic growth in American history. That period came to be known as "the roaring twenties." It came to a crashing end approximately ten months after he left office when the United States fell into what remains America's worst economic collapse in its relatively short history.

Two decades earlier, a fellow New Englander, the Spanish-born philosopher and Harvard professor George Santayana famously said that "those who fail to learn from history are doomed to repeat it."

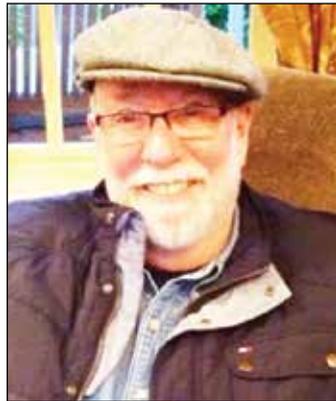
Americans have had a difficult time reconciling these two

truths, which are not necessarily mutually exclusive.

The birth of our nation was more about business than about not wanting to live under the tyranny of the British monarchy. Colonial farmers wanted to market their products freely. The crown had other ideas, and, well, you know the rest.

A healthy and vibrant business sector is essential to economic prosperity in America. Following the 2007/08 economic collapse, brought on by greedy banking and real estate investment practices, recovery from which continues through today, business in America is, for the most part, good.

American consumers, the most important constituency for a successful business of any kind on any level, have wants, needs, and expectations from America's business community. Some are understood; others are not.



Bud Katz

In almost all cases, America's businesses expect to generate a profit and return-on-investment for owners and stockholders. Similarly, American consumers want the best possible products and services for the lowest possible prices. These agendas often conflict with one another.

Looking back, learning from history, I believe America's most prosperous decade was the 1950s. Post WWII, and while we had social challenges which would boil over in the mid- to late-1960s, our stature as the unquestioned leader among nations was, at least militarily and economically, both envied and unquestioned. We had a burgeoning middle class, which got its energy from an educated, well-trained, fairly compensated, broadly unionized labor force in a symbiotic relationship with a

growing and profitable business sector.

It causes me no joy to say this, but I believe this was the last decade in recent American history when our nation fired on all cylinders.

Over time, support for unions eroded. America did away with its draft in the wake of the Vietnam debacle. We began investing less, both per capita and as a percentage of our national treasure, in the education of our young people, and in the care of our veterans and elderly. We began a period, which continues to this very day, of self-induced blindness to the facts that our nation's population was continuing to grow, while our infrastructure wasn't being maintained or replaced so as to keep pace. We allowed, perhaps even encouraged greedy businesses to send previously well-paying unionized jobs offshore. While this was happening, technology was emerging that would further stifle real job and income growth.

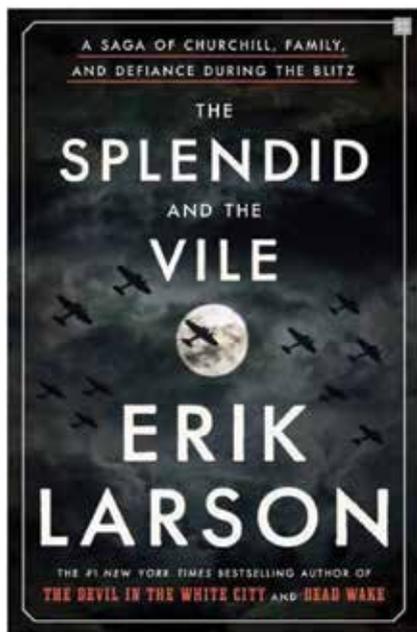
All of these dynamics associated with our capitalist/free enterprise system, unfortunately, occurred in a political environment where any mention of raising taxes in order to support the needs of a growing and aging population constituted a third rail mentality on the part of both

elected officials and candidates. The refrain became, no new taxes, no increases, but we'll cut spending instead. Where, exactly, has spending been cut or will spending be cut?

Americans need a living wage in order to take part in our consumer spending-driven economy. With the degradation of our nation's labor movement came an inability for working people to buy the very goods we were producing. This is why we wear clothing made in China and India, drive cars built with parts from China, Japan, Korea, Canada and Mexico, use consumer electronics produced everywhere but in the United States, and get our oranges from Brazil, our melons from Guatemala, our pineapples from Costa Rica and our tomatoes from Mexico.

Coolidge was correct; a healthy, vibrant and profitable business sector is essential in our economic system. So was Santayana. We must use our ingenuity, creativity and work ethic to remember when Made in the USA was a sign of pride and strength. A strong, well-educated labor force, one in which workers can afford to live, eat, move around in, and enjoy all American life has to offer, is an equal part of that system.

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•HS SPORTS•

Championship wins; on to state playoffs

with Kedra McCall

High school basketball competed in the final round of championship games of their Little Smoky Mountain Conference tournament hosted by Highlands.

JV girls fell short against Cherokee, who joined their conference due to a loss in teams in the Big Smoky Mountain Conference.

The JV boys and Varsity boys both pulled out wins over Hiwassee Dam to finish as Conference Tournament Champions.

Varsity girls also finished with a strong win over Blue Ridge to take the Conference Tournament Championship title.

Both varsity teams advanced into state playoffs after these wins.

The Varsity boys traveled to Lincoln Charter to face the number one seed. After facing a tough opponent, the boys fell short.

Although the boys will not advance further, they did earn a trophy after battling to win their tournament.

Varsity girls faced the number 27 seed, Bessemer City at home. They won to advance to the second round where they will face Langtree Charter Academy. They will play at home tonight, Thursday, Feb. 27th, starting at 6 pm. Come out and support your Highlanders!



• INVESTING AT 4,118 Ft. •

A Day in The Life of a Realtor

After a morning of having nails done, a pedicure and aromatherapy massage, I put on my designer clothes, Gucci shoes, with my Louis Vuitton handbag on my arm and head out the door in perfect weather and sunshine galore.

I stop at Caudlers for a cappuccino with extra froth and head to the office in my brand-new Porsche. Upon arrival I sit and chit-chat with my brokers as we count the number of commission checks we just picked up. I can't wait to pad my bulging bank account.

Then it's time for lunch with clients at Madisons where we are treated like royalty sipping champagne to celebrate a new, full price offer on a 2 million dollar home. The buyers require no home inspection, are cash buyers and want to close in a week.

I then return to the office where sellers are waiting to list their home below market value, have it in tip-top shape, encapsulation done, and will accept any offer.

I have an assistant do the paperwork and I'm off to the beauty salon because one of my nails broke. Then I'm off to be wined and dined by a 2

million dollar buyer who gives me a Cartier watch for being the best broker in town. I eat my favorite Godiva chocolates paired with an expensive Caymus cabernet and then return home after such a tough day!

OOPS...just woke up from that dream and I'm back to reality!

My morning begins at 7 and consists of two cups of Kuerig coffee, still in my gown, while sorting thru emails and texts. Once my phone is turned on at 7 am the sounds of dings of messages helps me open my eyes.

I start returning emails that came in late at night, check our MLS system to look for new listings, recent sales, and those in dreaded due diligence.

My phone rings at 8 with my assistant being sick and the duty agent having appointments so I skip breakfast and head to the shower. I dress quickly in black pants



Pat Allen, BIC
Pat Allen Realty Group
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and the first jacket I come to in my crowded and messy closet. I find one boot and put on my ortho sandal that covers my broken toe – a result of reaching for my phone while jumping out of the tub to answer it. It was an appraiser needing to get into one of my listings that the bank requires. It may or may not appraise – creating loss of a sale.

I then realize my car is low on fuel so brave the high winds and freezing temps. I arrive at the office and look at the 1-inch space left on my desk next to files piled up.

I then meet with a disgruntled seller who doesn't want to do any repairs from the home inspection and is offended. I go into my therapy mode to try and get this resolved. The repairman is two weeks behind so we have to extend dreaded due diligence which is added paperwork and the buyer

still has the right to walk away during that period.

I then go on a listing appointment after doing research on the sellers' home gathering the deed, tax information, septic permit, etc.

And then the seller tells ME the price he or she wants ... I explain it is too high and not at market value and have comparables to justify it. They say they will be in touch and then list with another broker who overprices it and it is stays on the market for years.

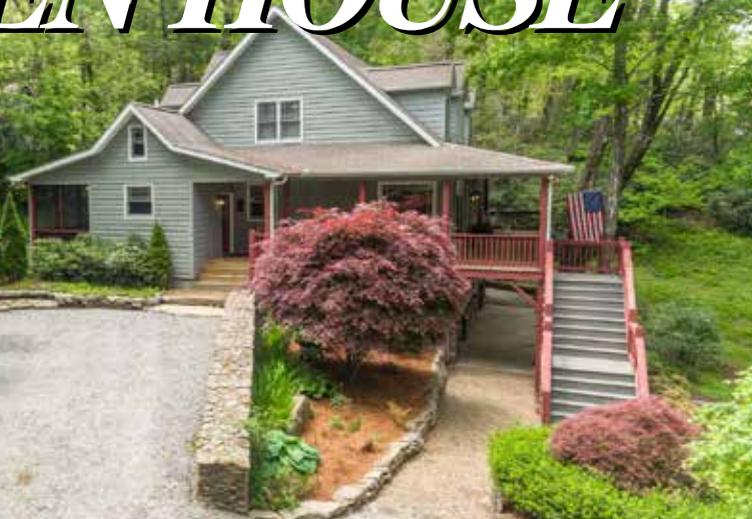
Meanwhile, I go and turn on lights for a showing and turn up the heat. When I return to check to see if the lights were turned off by the showing broker several are still on and the door is left unlocked.

I come back to the office and check emails and have buyers who have contacted me about scheduling listings they found on Zillow – which is the most erroneous site ever!

I make appointments to show all 10

• See INVESTING page 10

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...PRIMARY 2020 continued from page 1

on several disaster relief mission trips.

Archerd and his wife, Anne have been married for 37 years and raised four daughters while living in Asheville for the past 22 years.

Archerd worked his way through school earning a BSBA in Accounting from University of Florida, MBA from Southern Methodist University, practiced as a CPA with Price Waterhouse and was the Managing Partner of a local Asheville CPA firm. He has successfully started several small businesses including founding and leading a real estate investment company since 2001. He has created jobs, managed budgets, been accountable to his partners and investors.

"I am a political outsider who will answer first to my Lord and then to the citizens of the 11th District," said Archerd. "I will make decisions based on a foundation of conservative beliefs, 40 years of business experience, and love of our country. I

will defend the Constitution. I will not bend to the political establishment but always be accountable to our friends, neighbors and citizens in the 11th District. I have a fire in my belly and a history of hard work. I will take these attributes to Washington intent on making a difference; then I will come back to the place I call home – Western North Carolina. I do not view serving in Congress as a career; but, as a serious responsibility, honor and duty."

Do you live within District 11? Do you think it is important to live within the District you are trying to represent?

"Yes, Buncombe County for the past 22+ years. Yes, this is very important, if you don't know the people, how can you represent them?"

What do you see as being the biggest issue facing District 11 and how would you address it if elected?

"Immigration and Border Security – I will be a warrior with President Trump to secure our borders, stop the flow of illegal immigrants, end catch and re-

lease," said Archerd. "I will draft new laws to end sanctuary cities and require cooperation of local and state law enforcement with ICE."

What are your thoughts on the Impeachment process?

"The impeachment process was totally unjustified and very harmful for the country," said Archerd. "Nancy Pelosi and the Democrats have been attempting to get President Trump out of office since he was elected. This was just their most recent attempt. It should never have happened and was done for political purposes."

For residents of Macon County, its status quo for leaders to forget about our small community. If elected to Congress, how do you plan to be a voice for the entire district, even the small western-most counties like Macon?

"As your representative to the People's House (US House of Representatives) I will have a continual presence in the 11th District including Macon County," said Archerd. "We will also develop ways to open communications with the rural areas to ensure that their voices are heard."

What is your stance on marijuana legalization?

"No do not believe that marijuana is beneficial to our society and should not be legalized," said Archerd.

Any other issues or information you would like your voters to know.

"Moral Values – Our world is upside down right now; we are in a battle of good vs. evil," said Archerd. "I will fight for the rule of law, defend our gun rights and stand for our pro-life and pro-family values."

Madison Cawthorn

Madison Cawthorn is an 8th generation resident of North Carolina's 11th Congressional district. His ancestors have served Western North Carolina communities for over 200 years including in the Revolutionary War.

Cawthorn was home-schooled in Hendersonville and was nominated to the U.S. Naval Academy by Rep. Mark Meadows in 2014. However, Cawthorn's plans were derailed that year after he nearly died in a tragic automobile accident that left him partially paralyzed and in a wheelchair. Cawthorn's ordeal built his faith, made him a fighter, helped him appreciate every day, and inspired him to help everyone he encounters overcome whatever adversity they face in their daily lives.

Today, Cawthorn is a small businessman. He is the owner and CEO of a real estate investment company. Cawthorn is also a motivational speaker. He challenges people across the nation to have faith, work hard, play by the rules and pursue the American dream.

A constitutional conservative, Cawthorn is committed to defending the values of faith, family and the freedom that have made America great. Cawthorn attends Biltmore Church in Hendersonville. He enjoys hunting, cooking, travel, fitness, photography & videography, and studying history. He is engaged to be married to Cristina Bayardelle

"I am running for Congress for three main reasons," said Cawthorn. "First, we need term limits in congress so that there is incentive within the House. More will be accomplished if there are term limits. Second, we need a balanced budget amendment. It is immoral to place this kind of debt upon ourselves and the upcoming generations. The third and most important reason is that we have to combat the rise of socialism in this country."

Do you live within District 11? Do you think it is important to live within the District you are trying to represent?

"I grew up and live in the 11th district," said Cawthorn. "This is my home. You shouldn't be allowed to represent the district if you don't live in it. How do you know what's best for the district if you don't even live there?"

What do you see as being the biggest issue facing District 11 and how would you address it if elected?

*Candidate did not answer this question.

What are your thoughts on the Impeachment process?

"The whole impeachment process was a waste of time and money. I stand with President Trump," said Cawthorn.

For residents of Macon County, its status quo for leaders to forget about our small community. If elected to Congress, how do you plan to be a voice for the entire district, even the small western-most counties like Macon?

"When someone is elected, it is their duty to represent each resident of the district," said Caw-

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• THE INK PENN •

A Dream I Never Knew I Had



Kathy Manos Penn

When I repeated my plot response, she said, “Oh that’s easy, all you need is a dead body!” Easy for her to say. Still, I’ve managed to do it—write two mysteries—dead bodies and all. Check it out.

A Cotswolds village . . . a grieving heroine . . . two furry sidekicks . . . and a murder!

Do you like heroines who’ve lived a little? Who’ve suffered life’s ups and downs but kept on trucking? Then you’ll love Leta Parker and her new friends in the

Cotswold village of Astonbury.

When tragedy strikes Leta Parker’s life, the successful banker and closet sleuth chases a lifelong dream to retire to England. Leaving her friends and neighbors in Atlanta, she settles into Astonbury with her talkative dog and cat, Dickens and Christie.

Picture her driving a refurbished London taxi to the bookshop and the tearoom, enjoying leisurely walks with Dickens the dog, and sipping coffee in the garden with Christie, her sassy cat.

When Leta stumbles across the dead body of a new acquaintance, her inner Nancy Drew comes out. Before you know it, she’s enlisted the help of Wendy, a retired English teacher friend – and even Wendy’s elderly mum.

Two whipsmart retirees, one spunky senior citizen, and a feisty dog and cat are on the case!

Who better to unearth clues from their friends in the village? Even Dickens and Christie get in on the act gathering intelligence from their four-legged friends and

pointing out the obvious to Leta.

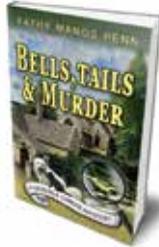
What do authors A.A. Milne, Arthur Conan Doyle, and J.M. Barrie have to do with all this?

Is their connection with the Cotswolds merely an interesting bit of trivia, or is it more? Will Leta and Wendy let their literary noses lead them astray?

You’ll be captivated as this unlikely team chases clues and ferrets out a long-buried secret – a scenario that would make any BBC cozy mystery producer proud. No matter the clues uncovered by Dickens and Christie, you’ll be hard-pressed to guess who the villain is unless, like Leta, you’re able to “talk to the animals.”

Grab a copy of Bells, Tails, and Murder today – book one of my new Cozy Animal Mystery Series. Use this link <https://amzn.to/2SlnUXM> to order your copy now from Amazon. Happy reading!

• *Author Kathy Manos Penn is a Georgia resident. Find her books on Amazon. Locally, “Lord Banjo the Royal Pooch” is available at Highlands Mountain Paws. Contact her at ink-penn119@gmail.com, and follow her on Facebook, www.facebook.com/KathyManosPennAuthor/.*



It started with a column for the local paper in Dunwoody followed by one in the Highlands Newspaper. That’s when I discovered how much I enjoyed writing. That’s when I discovered my passion. Then came a book co-written with my dog. (What, doesn’t everyone do that?)

Now I’m living a dream I never knew I had – writing cozy animal mysteries featuring a dog and cat who talk to their owner. If a dog can write a book, surely animals can communicate. Naturally, my office assistants help with the dialogue. And, yes, they are angling to be listed as co-authors.

Bells, Tails, and Murder – book one in the Dickens & Christie mystery series – is now available on Amazon. (Use this link <https://amzn.to/2SlnUXM>.) Book two comes out this Spring.

What made me start writing cozy mysteries? When I helped Lord Banjo write his book, several people suggested I try my hand at writing mysteries. My response? You want me to come up with a plot?

I didn’t give the idea another thought until I connected with a marketing coach. As we got to know each other, she suggested I write a cozy animal mystery. If you’re not familiar with cozies, they contain no cursing, no sex, and no blood and gore. Think Jessica Fletcher and Miss Marple. Given my penchant for writing with my dog, the animal part made sense.

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• HIGHLANDS AREA EVENTS •

Ongoing

- Movies at the Playhouse Fri & Sat 1, 4, 7; Sun. 1 & 4; Tues-Thurs 1, 4, 7.
- Ice Skating at K-H Founders Park – Thurs., 1-8p; Fri. & Sat 1-10p; Sun. 1-5p..
- The Bascom is open Friday - Monday 10am-5pm (Sundays 12pm -

5pm). Visitors are welcome to enjoy the newly updated Story Walk Trail throughout the week.

- At the Highlands Recreation Dept. pool. Public Swim Monday-Thursday 11a-7p Friday and Saturday 11a-6p and Sunday 1-6p.
- Fibber Magee's Clothing Thrift Store on Laurel Street is open

Tues.-Friday 10a to 4p and on Saturday from 10a to 2p.

First Mondays

• New Guided Botanical Garden Tours: A Garden in Every Season. 11:30 am - 12:30 pm. Meet at the Highlands Nature Center Free, All ages welcome.

• Shortoff Baptist Church non-denominational Men's Mtg at 7p.

Mondays

• At the Rec Park, Dance2Fit classes with Tori Schmitt at 5:30pm.

Mon.-Wed.

• Hip Hop classes with Tori Schmitt 5:30-6:30.

Mon. & Thurs.

• The Joy Program at HUMC 11:30a to 1:30p. Includes a free lunch and a variety of programs and games. All seniors are welcome. For more info, call Kristy Lewis at 526-3376.

Mon. & Fri.

• Gentle Yoga at the Rec park at 9:15-10:15 a.m.. All levels welcome.

Mon., Wed., Fri.

• Heart Healthy Exercise Class Monday, Wednesday and Friday 8:30am-9:30am.

• Step Aerobics with Tina Rogers 8-9a.

Mon., Wed., Thurs.

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

Tuesdays

• FREE Community Table Dinner at the Community Bldg. at 6p.

• The Highlands Writers Group meets Tuesday, at 3pm in the downstairs boardroom at The Bascom. Writers at all levels of proficiency are welcome. For additional information, contact Bud Katz, 828-526-3190 or budandlynn@me.com.

• The Humanist Discussion Group meets from 10:30-11:30 am in the Meeting Room at the back of the Hudson Library.

Third Tuesday

• The Macon County Poultry club meets to discuss topics related to raising backyard chickens. For more information please call 828-349-2046 or 828-369-3916.

• Highlands Area Indivisible Group meets at 5 pm in the Meeting Room at the back of the Hudson Library.

Tuesday and Thursdays

• At the Rec Park, Dance2Fit with Tori Schmitt at 7:30am.

• Exercise Class with Michelle Lane at 5:30. A combination class with many different styles of exercise at Rec Park.

Wednesdays

• At Community Bible Church, 5-5:30p - Dinner – Free (Donations Appreciated) 5:45-7p - G.R.O.V. Get Real on Wednesdays – Classes offered on money management, addiction, discovering your spiritual gifts and personality type, studying the bible, evangelism, parenting, marriage, grief, and more. All are welcome! Visit www.cbchighlands.com.

• Power Flow Yoga with Nalicia Allio a certified Yoga Instructor 12-1pm and 6:30-7:30pm.

First Wednesdays

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

3rd Wednesdays

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

Wed. & Fri.

• Highlands/Cashiers Alcoholics Anonymous "Open Meetings" are for anyone who thinks they may have a drinking problem or for anyone interested in the A.A. recovery program. Open meetings are held in Highlands @ the 1st Presbyterian Church, 471 Main St., at noon. And held six times a week in Cashiers at the Church of the Good Shepherd, Rte 107, Cashiers. For meeting times in Cashiers go to website www.aawnc80.org or call (828) 349-4357.

• Duplicate Bridge 12-4pm at Rec Park.

Thursdays

• Storytime at Hudson Library, 10:40 am. Open to the public

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

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

2nd Thursdays

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

3rd Thursdays

• American Legion Post 370 meets in the 9:09 Chapel of the First Methodist Church at 315 Main Street in Highlands for Breakfast at 9AM followed by the meeting at 10AM.

• Kidney Smart Classes in Franklin: from 4:30-6pm, Angel Medical Center, Video Conference Room,

3rd Floor, 120 Riverview St. Contact Majestic 828-369-9474.

• Highlands Town Board meeting at 7p in the Community Building on US 64 east and Poplar Street.

4th Thursday

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

Fridays

• Knee High Naturalists at the Nature Center 10a - 11a. Free, children of all abilities welcome.

Through Feb. 28

• Scholastic Book Fair at Highlands School.

Fri., Feb. 28

• Coffee with the Mayor in the meeting room of the Hudson Library on Main Street in Highlands at 11 a.m. Topic: Budget Priorities for FY 2020/21

Sat., Feb 29

• The Nantahala Hiking Club will take a moderate 6-mile hike, elevation change 800 ft., from Sawmill Gap, following Forest Service RD 7134 to Rocky Bald Ridge, then to Wine Springs on the Appalachian Trail and down the Bartram Trail to Sawmill Gap. Meet at Westgate Plaza at 9 am, drive 40 miles round trip. Call leader Gail Lehman, 524-5298, for reservations. Visitors welcome.

Sun., Mon., March 8-9

• Beat the late winter/early spring "blahs!" Come out and audition or volunteer your help for Highlands Cashiers Players spring production, Agatha Christie's The Unexpected Guest. This is a two act stage play to be held at the Performing Arts Center. There are parts for 3 or 4 women and 4 men and a teenage boy. The performance dates are Thurs. May 21 through Sunday May 24 and Thurs. May 28 through Sunday May 31. Auditions will be held at PAC Sunday March 8 starting at 3:30 with "call backs" on Monday March 9 at 5. Scripts are available to read at both the Highlands and Cashiers libraries.

Wed., March 11

• Kindergarten registration for Highlands School at 10 a.m.

Fri., March 20

• The next Senior Dinner at the Highlands Civic Center is will March 20th at noon. Senior Dinners are the third Friday of each month November through April.

'A Ghostly Slumber Party' Thurs.-Sun. at PAC



The Highlands Performing Arts Center will present the Highlands PAC Youth Theater production of A Ghostly Slumber Party on Thursday & Friday, February 27 & 28 at 10am for the schools performances and again on Saturday, February 29 at 7pm and Sunday, March 1 at 3pm. This year's production is similar to our 2015-16 school year show. However, it's taken a very different slant, based on the mix of students who auditioned, and those who are involved with tech, design, and production of this year's production. The show includes "The Slumber Party" scenes by Luke Osteen, excerpts from "The Raven" by Edgar Allan Poe, "The Highwayman" by Alfred Noyes, and "The Troll" by T.H. White. It's recommended for High School and Middle School students; however, younger audience members should be able to enjoy the production, too. Please be aware that "The Troll" does get scary and intense at times.

This show is built around a girls' sleepover. Let's just say that the girls may have unrolled their sleeping bags somewhere in the heart of The Twilight Zone. It's One Act (no intermission) and will run about an hour long.

It's free for both students and adults to attend any and all the shows – school shows & public shows. We have charter school, homeschool, public school, & private school students from Blue Ridge School, Blue Ridge Early College, Clayton, Franklin, Highlands School, Rabun Gap-Nacoochee School, and Summit Charter School involved in this year's show. Tickets are available online: www.highlandsp Performing Arts Center, 507 Chestnut Street, Highlands

...HCA continued from page 1

Hospital.

- How Mission Health implements its charity care and uninsured patient policies.

- How HCA discloses to patients the charges that they must pay.

Details follow about each of these concerns.

Complaints about quality of care

The meetings held by the Independent Monitor over the last month have been a constructive opportunity for HCA customers to publicly raise their concerns about Mission Health. Our office has asked concerned members of the public not only to contact the Independent Monitor, but also to file complaints with our office by visiting ncdoj.gov/file-a-complaint/. We have received 30 written complaints about Mission since January 1.

Many of the complaints raise concerns about quality of

care. These complaints frequently raise concerns about the impact of staffing cuts, especially for nurses. Some of the stories in these complaints are harrowing to read, and we are taking all of them seriously.

The testimonies provided in these complaints align with a recent change in one statistical score measuring patients' satisfaction with quality of care. HCA's facilities have generally maintained their star ratings from the U.S. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, which measures patient care. However, the Mission Asheville hospital has declined in the Leapfrog Hospital Safety Grades.

Leapfrog's Fall 2019 score for the Mission Asheville hospital was a "C." This is part of a trend of decline; the Asheville facility scored "B" grades in Spring 2019 and Fall 2018, and it scored an "A" grade in Spring 2018, Spring 2017, Fall 2016, and Spring 2016.

We plan to respond to these

complaints in three ways.

- We will provide HCA with copies of the complaints and ask for HCA's response.

- We are sharing complaints about quality of care with the regulators at the Department of Health and Human Services who investigate hospital quality-of-care concerns.

- We will evaluate all the complaints we receive, taken together, to determine whether HCA is failing to provide any services that it promised to provide under the Asset Purchase Agreement. We will share this information with the Independent Monitor and Dogwood Health Trust.

Sections 7.13(a) and 7.13(b) of the Asset Purchase Agreement, together with Schedules 7.13(a) and 7.13(b), require HCA to provide until January 2029 many defined services, such as "general medicine services" at the Asheville facility. Widespread quality of care issues at Mission facilities would raise real questions about whether

HCA is providing the services that it guaranteed.

Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) staffing at Angel Hospital

We have been told that Angel Hospital no longer has a Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner on staff. These nurses are trained to provide specialized support in emergency rooms to survivors of sexual assault.

In the Asset Purchase Agreement, Section 7.13(b) and Schedule 7.13(b) provide that HCA "shall not discontinue" at Angel any "Emergency Services" or "Acute Medicine Services."

SANE nurses' support to sexual assault survivors, in an emergency or acute medicine setting, is time-sensitive and of critical importance.

We ask that HCA look into this issue and provide further information to this office by March 4, 2020.

Charity care

Mission promised that it will

provide unable-to-pay patients with at least the assistance described in Exhibit C to the Asset Purchase Agreement. As we have discussed, we have several concerns with the way in which HCA's charity care and uninsured patient policies appear to have been implemented.

First, the charity care policy is not transparent about what services are covered. We understand that HCA interprets the policy as covering only emergent care. HCA also extends the policy on an ad hoc basis to certain necessary care outside the emergency room. There is no list available of what procedures meet these criteria, and we have heard from patients and physicians that they are confused about whether particular treatments are eligible under the policies.

Second, it is not easy for physicians or patients to learn how the charity care policy will be applied to their specific circum-

• See HCA page 14



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Sample Ballot - Republican Party Primary Macon County, North Carolina March 3, 2020				R0005 	
BALLOT MARKING INSTRUCTIONS: A. With the marking device provided or a black ball point pen, completely fill in the oval to the left of each candidate or selection of your choice as shown. B. If you tear, deface or wrongly mark this ballot, return it to request a replacement.					
					
FEDERAL OFFICES		STATE OFFICES		NC Commissioner of Insurance (You may vote for ONE)	
Presidential Preference (You may vote for ONE)		NC Governor (You may vote for ONE)		<input type="radio"/> Ronald Pierce <input type="radio"/> Mike Causey	
<input type="radio"/> Donald J. Trump <input type="radio"/> Joe Walsh <input type="radio"/> Bill Weld <input type="radio"/> No Preference		<input type="radio"/> Dan Forest <input type="radio"/> Holly Grange		NC Commissioner of Labor (You may vote for ONE)	
US Senate (You may vote for ONE)		NC Lieutenant Governor (You may vote for ONE)		<input type="radio"/> Chuck Stanley <input type="radio"/> Josh Dobson <input type="radio"/> Pearl Burris Floyd	
<input type="radio"/> Thom Tillis <input type="radio"/> Paul Wright <input type="radio"/> Larry Holmquist <input type="radio"/> Sharon Y. Hudson		<input type="radio"/> John L. Ritter <input type="radio"/> Mark Robinson <input type="radio"/> Scott Stone <input type="radio"/> Andy Wells <input type="radio"/> Buddy Bengel <input type="radio"/> Deborah Cochran <input type="radio"/> Renee Ellmers <input type="radio"/> Greg Gebhardt <input type="radio"/> Mark Johnson		NC Secretary of State (You may vote for ONE)	
US House of Representatives District 11 (You may vote for ONE)		NC Attorney General (You may vote for ONE)		<input type="radio"/> E.C. Sykes <input type="radio"/> Chad Brown <input type="radio"/> Michael LaPaglia	
<input type="radio"/> Joey Osborne <input type="radio"/> Vance Patterson <input type="radio"/> Albert Wiley, Jr. <input type="radio"/> Chuck Archerd <input type="radio"/> Lynda Bennett <input type="radio"/> Matthew Burril <input type="radio"/> Madison Cawthorn <input type="radio"/> Jim Davis <input type="radio"/> Dan Driscoll <input type="radio"/> Steven Fekete, Jr. <input type="radio"/> Dillon S. Gentry <input type="radio"/> Wayne King		<input type="radio"/> Jim O'Neill <input type="radio"/> Sam Hayes <input type="radio"/> Christine Mumma		NC Superintendent of Public Instruction (You may vote for ONE)	
		NC Auditor (You may vote for ONE)		<input type="radio"/> Catherine Truitt <input type="radio"/> Craig Horn	
		<input type="radio"/> Anthony Wayne (Tony) Street <input type="radio"/> Tim Hoegemeyer		NC State Senate District 50 (You may vote for ONE)	
				<input type="radio"/> Sarah Conway <input type="radio"/> Kevin Corbin	
				Continue voting next side →	
A		B		C	
		North Carolina		Ballot Style R0005	

-- VOTE BOTH SIDES --

...PRIMARY 2020 from page 8

thron. "It is most important to stay in touch with all communities and people of the district."

What is your stance on marijuana legalization?

*Candidate did not answer this question.

Any other issues or information you would like your voters to know.

"I'm a fighter who has overcome great adversity, and I believe America is worth fighting for!" said Cawthron. "Check out my website to find out more about who I am and what I believe."

Jim Davis

James (Jim) Wayland Davis, 73, has been married to his wife

DISTRICT OFFICES

NC District Court Judge District 30 Seat 6

(You may vote for ONE)

- Kaleb Wingate**
- Mitchell Keith (Mitch) Brewer**
- Rich Cassady**
- Jim Moore**

COUNTY OFFICES

Board of Commissioners District 2

(You may vote for ONE)

- Bryan Rauers**
- Josh Young**
- Terry W. Bradley**

End of Ballot

Judith since 1972. Together they have two sons, Jeff Davis, age 43, (wife Rebecca and daughters Carly and Megan), and Joshua Davis, age 42. Davis earned a BA in Biology in 1969 from Southern Adventist University; DDS 1974 Loma Linda University School of Dentistry; MS Orthodontics 1989 Loma Linda University Graduate School. He practiced general dentistry from 1974-1986 in Franklin, NC and practiced orthodontics from 1989- present in Franklin.

Davis served on the Macon County Board of Commissioners from 1996-2000 and from 2004-2010. He has served in NC Senate District 50 since 2011. In the Senate, Davis has served as the Chairman Joint Legislative Committee Transportation Appropriations; Chairman Senate Transportation Policy Committee; Member Senate Finance, Health Care, and Judiciary Committees; Member Appropriations/Base Budget

"I am running to continue my public service to the citizens of western North Carolina," said Davis.

Do you live within District 11? Do you think it is important to live within the District you are trying to represent?

"I have lived in the district for the past 45 years except when attending graduate school from 1987-89," said Davis. "I do not understand how anyone who does not live in the district can claim to know the citizens and their needs."

What do you see as being the biggest issue facing District 11 and how would you address it if elected?

"The biggest issue in District 11 is the availability of well-paying jobs with good benefits," said Davis. "I would advocate for continued tax and regulatory reform to incentivize the continued creation of those jobs."

What are your thoughts on the Impeachment process?

"The present impeachment process was purely political," said Davis. "Article Two, section 4 of the United States Constitution says, "The President, Vice Presi-

...PRIMARY 2020 from page 12

dent and all civil Officers of the United States, shall be removed from office on Impeachment for, and Conviction of, Treason, Bribery, or other High Crimes and Misdemeanors." I have seen no evidence of any impeachable offense committed by the President."

For residents of Macon County, its status quo for leaders to forget about our small community. If elected to Congress, how do you plan to be a voice for the entire district, even the small western-most counties like Macon?

"During my public service I have remained a champion of local government so I challenge your assertion the it is "status quo" for leaders to forget about small communities," said Davis. "I will never forget from whence I came."

What is your stance on marijuana legalization?

"I am opposed to the legalization of recreational marijuana," said Davis. "Recent scientific studies have shown how harmful its use is to adolescents. I voted for the limited medical marijuana law passed by the North Carolina legislature in 2015."

Any other issues or information you would like your voters to know.

"I am the only candidate in the race who has served in elected office," said Davis. "Consequently, I have a 19-year record for folks to examine. Should voters give me the privilege of continuing my public service they have ample evidence on which to base their opinion."

Dan Driscoll

Dan Driscoll is a third-generation combat veteran and spent much of my childhood in Banner Elk. He attended Appalachian Christian School and Watauga High School where he met his high school sweetheart, Cassie, who is now his wife. They have two kids, Daniel, Jr. who is four and Lila who is two.

Driscoll graduated from UNC and joined the U.S. Army. After completing officer candidate school and graduating from Ranger School, he joined the 10th Mountain Light Infantry Division in Fort Drum, NY, where he served as a Cavalry Scout Platoon

Leader for the next two years. Driscoll was deployed to Iraq in 2009.

Upon returning from Iraq, he enrolled at Yale Law School on the GI Bill. During his time at law school, he felt called to serve the veteran population. Driscoll worked for Yale's Veterans Legal Services Clinic, providing free legal counsel to veterans of our nation's wars. After graduating he felt the pull to go home, to return to where he was raised, and make a difference for those around him.

Since returning to North Carolina, Driscoll has been working for an investment firm that helps build small businesses across the state. He has been involved in the creation of new jobs across North Carolina, including his latest project opening a new home maintenance business in Hendersonville.

"I'm a third-generation war-time veteran," said Driscoll. "This upbringing instilled in me a focus on hard work and a love of country. While a freshman at UNC, with the country in the throes of the War on Terror, I gave up the typical college experience so I could enlist in the military as quickly as possible. That military experience cemented in me the desire to live a life of public service. With the country at another tremendous crossroads, it feels like now is the time to serve again. As a small business owner in North Carolina, I know first-hand the struggles of creating a business in the current regulatory environment. I believe that a pro-business environment and well-trained citizenry creates more stable, higher paying jobs, and I'll advocate for both. Additionally, the infrastructure in rural America generally, and the NC-11 specifically, is in massive need of an upgrade. We are not well prepared for the tectonic changes that are coming with advancing technology. This weak infrastructure is significantly hindering the ability of many Americans to start and grow businesses. I'm passionate about helping bring federal spending and innovation to these areas."

Do you live within District 11? Do you think it is important to live within the District you are trying to represent?

• See PRIMARY 2020 page 15

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Sample Ballot - Democratic Party Primary Macon County, North Carolina March 3, 2020		D0002
BALLOT MARKING INSTRUCTIONS:		
A. With the marking device provided or a black ball point pen, completely fill in the oval to the left of each candidate or selection of your choice as shown.		
B. If you tear, deface or wrongly mark this ballot, return it to request a replacement.		
FEDERAL OFFICES		US House of Representatives District 11 (You may vote for ONE)
Presidential Preference (You may vote for ONE)		<input type="radio"/> Michael O'Shea <input type="radio"/> Phillip G. Price <input type="radio"/> Steve Woodsmall <input type="radio"/> Gina Collias <input type="radio"/> Moe Davis
<input type="radio"/> Deval Patrick <input type="radio"/> Bernie Sanders <input type="radio"/> Tom Steyer <input type="radio"/> Elizabeth Warren <input type="radio"/> Marianne Williamson <input type="radio"/> Andrew Yang <input type="radio"/> Michael Bennet <input type="radio"/> Joseph R. Biden <input type="radio"/> Michael R. Bloomberg <input type="radio"/> Cory Booker <input type="radio"/> Pete Buttigieg <input type="radio"/> Julián Castro <input type="radio"/> John K. Delaney <input type="radio"/> Tulsi Gabbard <input type="radio"/> Amy Klobuchar <input type="radio"/> No Preference		NC Commissioner of Agriculture (You may vote for ONE)
		<input type="radio"/> Walter Smith <input type="radio"/> Jenna Wadsworth <input type="radio"/> Donovan Alexander Watson
		NC Superintendent of Public Instruction (You may vote for ONE)
		<input type="radio"/> Keith A. Sutton <input type="radio"/> James Barrett <input type="radio"/> Constance (Lav) Johnson <input type="radio"/> Michael Maher <input type="radio"/> Jen Mangrum
		NC Treasurer (You may vote for ONE)
		<input type="radio"/> Dimple Ajmera <input type="radio"/> Ronnie Chatterji <input type="radio"/> Matt Leatherman
		COUNTY OFFICES
		Board of Commissioners District 2 (You may vote for ONE)
		<input type="radio"/> Betty Cloer Wallace <input type="radio"/> Olga Lampkin
		End of Ballot
US Senate (You may vote for ONE)		NC Lieutenant Governor (You may vote for ONE)
<input type="radio"/> Erica D. Smith <input type="radio"/> Steve Swenson <input type="radio"/> Cal Cunningham <input type="radio"/> Trevor M. Fuller <input type="radio"/> Atul Goel		<input type="radio"/> Ernest T. Reeves <input type="radio"/> Roy Cooper
		<input type="radio"/> Allen Thomas <input type="radio"/> Bill Toole <input type="radio"/> Terry Van Duyn <input type="radio"/> Chaz Beasley <input type="radio"/> Yvonne Lewis Holley <input type="radio"/> Ron Newton
		NC Auditor (You may vote for ONE)
		<input type="radio"/> Luis A. Toledo <input type="radio"/> Beth A. Wood
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	North Carolina	Ballot Style D0002

...RUBY continued from page 1

said Highlands Police Chief Bill Harrell. "Ruby was the first K9 ever for Highlands and she made her presence felt quickly with numerous finds [people, evidence, articles, and narcotics]."

Ruby was a black lab and a full patrol dog, which means she was used for various types of police work including narcotics detection, apprehension, and human scent tracking. Chief Harrell credits the success of the department's K9 program to Ruby.

"Ruby paved the way for our two newest K9 Officers Hope [a German Shepherd] and Xena [a Malinois]," said Harrell. "Had Ruby not been as successful and received such a welcoming by the Highlands community, the K9 unit we have wouldn't be."

Ruby became a very valued family member to her handlers, their immediate family and department members.

Officer John Cherry was Ruby's first handler, before his military deployment in 2010 and then Master Officer Thomas Parker was assigned as her partner.

Ruby lived with the Parker family while on duty and stayed with them after "retirement."

Officer Parker said she was part of the family.

"Ruby was a great dog all around, she did not know a stranger and was loved by lots of people in town," said Parker. "She quickly became a part of my family and was very protective of my children. As a K9, Ruby enjoyed going to work and she would get excited as I was getting ready for duty. Ruby always got excited when it was time to get out of the car and do a search."

While working with Parker, Ruby's alerts resulted in over 55 law enforcement actions including 24 arrests and 31 citations. Ruby tracked and located seven subjects that were lost or had dementia and wandered from their residences.

"She will be sorely missed," said Harrell.

According to Chief Harrell, she also performed 13 tracking missions, finding all targets.

A short memorial ceremony will be held at Highlands Police Department in the coming weeks as soon as arrangements can be finalized.

"Please look and listen for information as it becomes available," said Harrell.



Ruby with her handler Officer Thomas Parker and the rest of the Parker family with whom she lived at her retirement ceremony, Oct. 26, 2017 at the Community Building.

— Photo by Kim Lewicki

...HCA continued from page 11

stances. HCA has chosen to have the Chief Medical Officer personally make the decisions about whether to extend coverage. He is clearly approaching these duties in a principled and thoughtful way, but his busy schedule makes it impossible for physicians to easily contact him.

Third, HCA's decision to focus on emergent care appears inconsistent with the Asset Purchase Agreement.

Exhibit C to the APA, the model Charity Financial Assistance Policy, provides that the patient may be eligible if she "incurred emergent, non-elective services." The working understanding of this policy at HCA seems to eliminate the word "non-elective" from the sentence.

Fourth, the descriptions of the uninsured patient and charity care policies on Mission Health's website do not match the policy attached to the APA. The Mission Health page on charity care represents that the policy covers "non-elective services" that a patient received.

In calls with our office, HCA has mentioned that HCA is providing greater financial assistance to low income patients than Mission Health System previously provided. As mentioned on our most recent call, the total amount of care is an important measure of whether Mission patients are — as a practical matter — able to access the charity care benefits HCA promised to provide in the Asset Purchase Agreement.

In order to help us assess the situation, we request the following information for the 12 months before and the 12 months after HCA's acquisition of Mission.

Please provide this information on a

system-wide basis for all the facilities in the Mission system.

1. Utilization rates for financial assistance policies in the Mission Health System under Mission Health System, Inc.'s ownership and under HCA's ownership.

2. Dollar value of financial assistance provided under Mission Health System Inc.'s ownership and under HCA's ownership.

3. Dollar value of all write-offs or write-downs of patient bills provided under Mission Health System Inc.'s ownership and under HCA's ownership.

4. The overall percentage increase or decrease in charges for medical services since the consummation of the sale of Mission Health System.

5. The overall change in gross revenues from medical services since the consummation of the sale of Mission Health System.

6. A list of every individual involved in making coverage decisions for HCA's financial assistance policies at Mission Health System, by name and title.

7. The average number of cases per week that are considered in the weekly charity care appeal process Dr. Hathaway described.

8. Mission Health's policies and practices with respect to requiring payment in advance for services delivered in the hospital as they existed before the transaction and as they exist today.

9. A copy of the one-page description of HCA's financial assistance policies that was distributed to doctors with admitting

• See HCA page 22



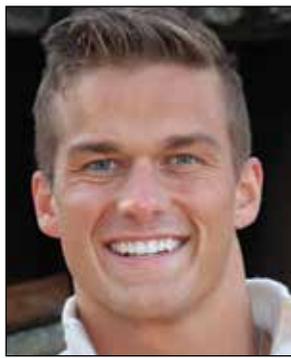
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...PRIMARY 2020 continued from page 13



Chuck Archerd



Madison Cawthorn



Jim Davis



Dan Driscoll



Wayne King

“My wife and I grew up in western North Carolina, and I recently moved to Buncombe County,” said Driscoll. “Since leaving to serve in the Army, I’ve had a number of addresses but am happy to be back where my wife I are excited to raise our children in the community that raised us. I do believe that it is important that you live within the district you represent, as I believe the mountain values of hard work, faith and family are important when representing the families of this district.”

What do you see as being the biggest issue facing District 11 and how would you address it if elected?

“I know first-hand the struggles of creating a business in the current regulatory environment,” said Driscoll. “I believe that a pro-business environment and well-trained citizenry creates more stable, higher paying jobs. I’m passionate about helping bring federal spending and innovation to this area.”

What are your thoughts on the Impeachment process?

“The Senate should have acquitted 100-0,” said Driscoll.

For residents of Macon County, its status quo for leaders to forget about our small community. If elected to Congress, how do you plan to be a voice for the entire district, even the small western-most counties like Macon?

“Frequently, candidates say one thing to get elected and then do another once in congress,” said Driscoll. “The Army Ranger Creed talks about leaving no man behind. As your Congressman, I will aspire to that same level of commitment to all my constituents.”

What is your stance on marijuana legalization?

“I stand with President Trump and agree that it is a state issue,” said Driscoll.

Any other issues or information you would like your voters to know.

“I’ll never forget the first words out of my platoon sergeant’s mouth when we first met: ‘Sir, they will never care what you know until they know that you care.’ Fresh out of initial training, I didn’t know how to respond, or, really, what he meant. I knew from my Army training that my non-commissioned officers’ efforts to tactically prepare our unit would have a meaningful impact on our ability to complete our mission – and would be critical to bringing everyone home,” said Driscoll.

“My platoon sergeant’s advice has since become the single most powerful bit of leadership wisdom in my life, one that has influenced virtually every decision I made as a platoon leader and, later, as a business owner. Although it’s been more than a decade since that first meeting between a seasoned platoon sergeant and me, a fresh lieutenant, I hear his voice in my ear daily: to me, serving with honor means working every day to show your family, friends, co-workers and constituents that you care before anything else. And, as I found in the Army and afterward, you cannot show those you represent you care if they and their welfare aren’t above your own.”

Wayne King

Wayne King, 39, has one son, Noah, age 11. He served as the Deputy Chief of Staff for Congressman Meadows office for the last seven years. He has supervised

the entire NC11 district team who helps constituents on a day-to-day basis with issues involving the federal government. King previously was the elected Vice-Chairman of the N.C. Republican Party during the 2012 election cycle.

“I am running for Congress because I love Western North Carolina, our state, and our great nation, because I believe we need more strong conservatives in Congress who will stand and defend President Trump, and because I am gravely concerned that our Constitution, our freedoms, our values and our way of life are under attack,” said King.

“I believe the people of WNC deserve a Congressman who is a fighter and who has proven that they have the experience and the ability to get the job done. Anyone who knows me well knows that I am a fighter, that I will always stand up for what is right, and that I won’t back down. My track record from my seven years serving as Deputy Chief of Staff and District Director to Congressman Meadows shows that I have the experience and ability to get the job done for the 11th District and for our nation.

Do you live within District 11? Do you think it is important to live within the District you are trying to represent?

“I think it is essential that the person elected to represent the 11th District in Congress have a clear understanding of the values of the people across the district and the understanding of the unique challenges and issues facing each of the 17 counties,” said King. “I also think it is essential that they have strong existing relationships across all 17 counties.

I have spent the last seven-plus years either working in District 11 as Deputy Chief of Staff and District Director or, since December, as a Republican candidate for Congress. During this time, I’ve traveled nearly every inch of this district meeting with law enforcement, veterans, ministers, farmers, elected officials, business owners, retirees, blue collar workers, and just every day regular people. I’ve solved problems, big and small, for people, businesses, and local governments across the district.

I’ve built relationships with key stakeholders from one end of the district to the other I’m also a proud native of Western North Carolina. While I don’t presently live in the district, there is no one running for this office that has spent more time traveling this district this district than I have over the last 7 years, and no one who has a deeper understanding, appreciation, and knowledge of ALL 17 counties.

What do you see as being the biggest issue facing District 11 and how would you address it if elected?

“The biggest issue facing the 11th District and our country is that our values and our freedoms, the very principles our country were founded on, are under attack,” said King. “Eroding our rights and freedoms are not the answer. Socialism is not the answer. I will solve this by standing up for our Constitution and fighting to preserve our freedoms and values. I will always stand up for what is right, and I won’t back down. I believe in America and the American people. If we stay true to the principles our country was founded on our best days are still

in front of us.”

What are your thoughts on the Impeachment process?

“It was a sham and a disgrace,” said King. “I am happy that our Senate acted quickly to end the process. The Far Left and Democratic leadership in the House were determined to impeach President Trump from the moment he was elected. The outcome of the impeachment “process” in the House was predetermined before it ever started. Sadly, the number one goal of the Left and of the Democrats in Congress remains to destroy our President and fight him on everything he tries to do for our nation. Unfortunately, there are still some “Never Trump” Republicans who are willing to jump in the boat with them.”

For residents of Macon County, its status quo for leaders to forget about our small community. If elected to Congress, how do you plan to be a voice for the entire district, even the small western-most counties like Macon?

“During my 7 years as District Director and Chief of Staff for Congressman Meadows, I made an effort to regularly travel the entire district, to spend meaningful time in every county, to develop a relationship with elected officials and business and community leaders in every county, and to ensure that unique issues and challenges facing each county were dealt with quickly and fairly no matter the size of the county,” said King. “As your Congressman, I will do the same. You will see me and my staff on a regular basis in Macon County and you will never feel forgotten or left

• See PRIMARY 2020 page 17

... LETTERS continued from page 2

and Chateaux, consists of some of the top 580 independent hotels around the world and we are acting on it en masse. Many of us are trying to lead the industry in a change to be sustainable and lower our carbon footprint wherever possible. I am sure you understand that this is not as easy as it seems when you are referring to luxury hotel standards. There is a perception that luxury and sustainability to not go hand in hand, but we disagree. Many in our family of Relais properties are implementing, or have implemented, many of the changes we are currently trying to implement below.

First, I thought you would enjoy some scary stats and what we are doing about it:

OEHG used 186,432 plastic water bottles last year between OEHG and the club – mostly us.

That is 510 bottles/day!!! I had to check my math because I could not believe this number.

That would be an average of 2.43 bottles of water a room per day if we ran 100% occupancy at all 3 hotels.

On average that is 3,728 pounds of plastic we created last year.

We also used 127,000 of the small one-use soap and conditioner bottles last year.

#timetochange!

We have started installing purified water dispensers similar to what you see now in airports all around our properties. Inside and out. We have purchased thousands of reusable logo'd aluminum bottles which our guests will now use to fill at any of these stations. Shortly we will be discontinuing our plastic bottle usage altogether - everywhere.

By fall we will have installed large format bulk soap and conditioner dispensers in all guest room bathrooms and will eliminate our on use small bottles which end up half used and in the trash.

Even our Nespresso Coffee pods in the room which are made of aluminum are going to be recycled now and turned into bikes and other objects.

<https://www.nespresso.com/be/en/velosophy>

Here are some other green and sustainable practices we have rolled out:

- Paper recycling – all scrap paper is shredded and saved and picked up weekly by a recycling company

- All cardboard and bottles are picked up by J & B disposal

- We no longer order newspapers for every single guest room and offer them in public areas and as requested as 70% ended up in the trash

- Used soap is gathered and sent to Clean the World for recycling and is given to 3rd world countries <https://cleantheworld.org/>

- LED bulbs installed throughout the resort

And, regarding your other concern about housing and healthcare, we are doing our part but could sure use some help – not just for hospitality but for all young professional looking to live and work in this great community.

Richard M. Delany
President and Managing Director, OEI

Don't let Highlands end up like the Jacksonville Beaches communities

Dear Editor,

I read Mayor Pat Taylor's column in Feb. 13 edition of Highlands Newspaper entitled, "Balancing Tourism and Quality of Life" -- about planning for growth in Highlands. I would like to share a few of my thoughts with you.

I grew up in the Jacksonville Beaches area of northeast Florida. Unrestrained growth has dramatically lowered the quality of life there for those of us who lived there prior to the 1970s. Issues include pollution of the St Johns River and the Atlantic Ocean, traffic, no more driving on the beach, and loss of the small-town feel.

In 1988 the State of Florida commissioned the 2010 Comprehensive Growth Plan for Northeast Florida. This plan required concurrency for developments of a certain size. Roads, schools, and infrastructure were to be in place before construction began. It also levied an impact fee on all new construction. Sounds good, right? Well, the ink wasn't dry on the paper before exemptions were granted right and left. I won't say the plan was worthless, but it fell far short of accomplishing its goals.

In the state of Hawaii, Maui and Kauai held referendums about 30 years ago to decide how much growth they wanted. Maui citizens voted for more growth and economic prosperity. Kauai voted to allow minimal growth and to retain their traditional lifestyle. Even so, Kauai is under constant pressure from developers.

Sometimes people get elected to public office for other purposes than to serve their constituents. When I moved to Otto, NC, from Ponte Vedra Beach, FL, in 2017, three of the five St Johns County commissioners were developers. In my neighborhood, Dolphin Cove, they allowed a developer to buy eight acres that was being used for a water treatment plant and two retention ponds. The developer filled in the two ponds, dug a smaller pond, and built 16 homes on this parcel. The nearest exit to

leave the neighborhood on A1A (there are only two ways out) has constant heavy traffic in both directions and is not eligible for a traffic signal. It is virtually impossible to make a left turn using this exit. The eight acres were sold for \$480,000, and could have made an established nature preserve, requiring minimal maintenance, and would have added to the quality of life of county residents.

On a similar note, the president of the local Sierra Club chapter in the 1980s, was an employee of Waste Management Corporation. I always wondered about that.

Most developers who I'm familiar with, care nothing about the impact of their projects on the existing communities. They only want the money. They often present their plans with lawyers and polished presentations. They promote their plans with economic promises for jobs and tax revenue. Numerous studies have shown that development does not pay for itself, much less increase tax revenue enough to cover increased expense. (A search on the internet will confirm this). Some developers have even been suspected of rewarding government officials.

What Highlands has going for it in the face of predatory encroachment are several things. Many of the residents are well educated. Many are financially well off, and able to afford their own lawyers. Many will be motivated to maintain the quality of life that they now enjoy.

I encourage you to make a good comprehensive growth plan. Make sure those who make decisions about new development care more for Highlands than their own agendas.

It has broken my heart to see what has happened to my hometown in Florida, all for the sake of a quick buck. I pray you can avoid it happening here.

David Stearns
Otto, NC

I knew they did it from the start, but no one listens to the cat!

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-Christie

... INVESTING continued from page 7

houses and the day before they are to arrive get an email that they can't make it. I have to cancel all of the showings.

I go out with buyers in the left-over snow and into a few cold houses where the sellers don't understand the humidity issues we have which has resulted in the floors buckling. They inform me they don't want to pay the electric bill in the winter on a million-dollar home. The buyers look at 12 houses in two days, leave town and are never heard from again.

A few other examples of true life as a Realtor:

- I listed a \$1,895,000 home and in seven days it is under contract. The seller is angry and said I ruined her summer! She doesn't like the selling broker and doesn't want him back in her house! We finally get it closed but it was bittersweet for all.

- It's Thanksgiving and a buyer I had been working with for months on a large piece of land calls me just as I'm sitting down to eat the meal I spent all morning cooking.

He informs me that his sister is in town for a short time so we need to go right then to check out the gated-property since she would be a partner. I grab a turkey leg and head out the door. I learned the next day she wasn't interested and never heard from them again.

... PRIMARY 2020 from page 15

out. I will strive to be both the most accessible and the most visible Congressman Macon County has ever had."

What is your stance on marijuana legalization?

"I am opposed to marijuana legalization," said King.

Any other issues or information you would like your voters to know.

"In Congress, I will continue stand with President Trump, defend him from both the left and "Never Trump" Republicans, and work hand-in-hand with our President to Keep America Great," said King. "While "Never

- A home inspector, who touts himself as the "deal killer," ruined a sale last week and makes such comments as, "I wouldn't drink the water" –(nothing is wrong with it) and "Had I built this house I would not have done it this way!"

The only two things required by the state: are there safety issues and are there material facts, meaning things not working the way they were intended or known defects in the home.

I then had to call the seller, who was thrilled his home was under contract, and relay the bad news. Sad day for all.

- An Atlanta athlete made an appointment with one of my brokers to look at land. She cut her trip short, returned home, and he was a "no-show."

- One of my brokers worked with buyers for two years who went to another firm and bought a house because one of their friends knew a broker at the other firm. I had to tend to all of it with the other BIC.

- My seller – whose husband died unexpectedly right after I listed the home – was under contract to sell a cabin and had spent over \$30,000 to appease the buyers who insisted the chimney have a metal flue (which wasn't needed) and my seller also did other requested items. Five days before closing the selling broker advised me his clients aren't going to close

er Trump" Republicans including some who pretend to support him now, refused to support President Trump against Hillary Clinton, I travelled across our state campaigning for and with President Trump, and since he's been elected I've consistently been a strong voice defending our President and working to ensure his agenda and his vision for our nation become reality."

Note:

Republican Candidates Lynda Bennett, Steven Fekete Jr., Dillon Gentry, Joey Osborne, Vance Pat-

due to a mother's illness. My seller received the earnest money of \$20,000 but it didn't cover her expenses. I had to make that phone call and it wasn't easy for either of us. Enormous paperwork and phone calls were involved.

- I had a lovely home under contract the sellers were selling furnished and left town a week before closing. We then realized the extra refrigerator in the garage (it was summertime) had been unplugged and we had to throw out rotten, disgusting, and moldy food galore that was gross. Before closing, the seller contacted the attorney and insisted he was not paying commission on the furniture -- after he said he would -- and I forfeited \$2,500 but the selling broker refused to do so and received hers.

- A buyer – from out of state – called on a Sunday about one of my listings which is getting a lot of showings. She said she wanted to make an offer -- sight unseen -- and that she had done this before many times.

I encouraged her to wait but she insisted and booked a flight to see it. I spent two hours doing all the paperwork and told my seller he was getting an offer. He and his wife were excited. The lady flew in, drove herself to the place without me, and decided she didn't like the area. She texted that to me and didn't respond when I asked if she wanted to see other homes. I had to call my sellers and break the

news, and Albert Wiley Jr. were either unable to be reached as of press time or did not return our candidate profile questionnaire.

This is the last segment of our Primary 2020 6-part series.

To see what you've missed, go to www.highlandsinfo.com, click on News and read issues, Jan. 23 and 30, Feb. 6, 13, and 20.

Voting Guide

Early voting continues through Sat., Feb.29 until 3 p.m.

The primary election is Tuesday, March 3 with polls opening at 6:30 a.m. and closing at 7:30 p.m.

news.

- This past Christmas my daughter and I and little Lucy, my grand dog, were in Charleston for three nights to enjoy the beautiful decorations and great restaurants.

The first night there I received a call from a gentleman who inquired about one of my listings and said he was going to buy a house in the next 30 days. I answered all of questions and he asked that I send him other options that met his criteria. He would be up the day after Christmas to look at them.

I spent Christmas Eve researching for him and making appointments to show. He emailed on Christmas Day that his plans had changed and he wasn't coming to look. Never to be heard from again!

I could go on and on but my space is limited here. Also, after reliving all of this I need a glass of wine! So now you know the rest to the story.

- *Pat Allen is owner of Pat Allen Realty Group and a Certified Luxury Home Marketing Specialist and is certified in Resort and Second home properties. She chooses to remain an independent firm and her firm was recently selected as a Leading Real Estate Company of the World. She is consistently a top producer and award-winning broker on the plateau. Visit her on the web at [Pat Allen Realty Group.com](http://PatAllenRealtyGroup.com), call 828-526-8784, or 828-200-9179. The office is conveniently located at 295 Dillard Road with a second location at 5121 Cashiers Road opening soon.*

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• SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING •

Head in the Clouds

By Margaret Howell
Holy Family Lutheran Church

Has it been a weird winter or what? Still, we are far more fortunate than the Midwest and northeast--buffeted by one fierce winter storm after another. I have friends from Minnesota who say they are shoveling snow one day and cooking out on the next. California, plagued by wildfires the past year, is now threatened by huge storms which puts many homes in the burned out hills at risk of landslides. Hmmmm, maybe we don't have it so bad after all!

In our texts for today we have the familiar imagery of mountains and clouds.

Being mountain dwellers ourselves, we know that up here on the peak plateau, the next cloud could contain anything from rain or snow, to sleet or a combination of all three. Now we have spoke recently about the significance of Mountains as places where God is met. In the Bible, God spoke directly to Abraham. He spoke directly to Moses. He spoke directly to Job. But to your neighbor down the street?

T.M. Luhrmann, in the book "My take: If you hear God speak audibly, you (usually) aren't crazy"

Most people reading the ancient Scriptures understand these accounts of hearing God's voice as miracles that really did happen but no longer take place today or maybe as folkloric flourishes to ancient stories. Even Christians who believe that miracles can be an everyday affair can hesitate when someone tells them they heard God speak audibly. There's an old joke: When you talk to God, we call it prayer, but when God talks to you, we call it schizophrenia.

Except that usually it's not.

If any of us have seen Cecil B. DeMilne's version of the Ten Commandments, you might remember that the top of Mt Sinai was covered with fierce, dark clouds, from with lightning and thunder rolled. Moses went up into the cloud and was gone for 40 days. Like Jesus' 40 days in the wilderness, this was a test, not of Moses, but of his people down on the plain below. They failed, by the way. There are great parallels between Jesus and Moses in these two events. Both had encounters with the divine, and both emerged from their trial, strengthened in spirit, if now in body, to try and minister to a fickle and faithless people.

Clouds are a great symbol for the divine, they are substantial, yet cannot be seen into or through. They are light as air but can contain great and fearsome power. To enter into God's presence is like finding oneself enveloped in a heavy fog -- we lose all points of reference and find

• See SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING page 19

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 for more information, or call 706-746-3303

Proverbs 3:5

BLUEVALLEY 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 SKYVALLEY

706.746.3144 • 696 Sky Valley Way #447,

Pastor Gary Hewins

Worship: Sun. 9 a.m., with Holy Communion the 1st & 3rd

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

EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF THE INCARNATION

Rev. W. Bentley Manning • 526-2968

Monday-Friday: Morning Prayer at 8:15a. Sundays: 8 am

Holy Eucharist Rite I; 9 am Sunday School; 10:30 am Holy

Eucharist Rite II. Childcare available at 10:30

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH HIGHLANDS

828-526-4153 • www.fbchighlands.org

Dr. Mark Ford, Pastor • 220 Main Street, Highlands

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

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

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Curtis Fussell & Emily Wilmarth, pastors

526-3175 • fpchighlands.org

Sun.: Worship 8:30a Adult Ed.: 9:30a.m.; Worship 11 a.m.

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

Wed: Choir: 6p

GOLDMINE BAPTIST CHURCH

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GRACE COMMUNITY CHURCH OF CASHIERS

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www.gracecashiers.com • Pastor Steve Doerter: 743-9814

Services: Sundays 10am - Wed. - 7pm; Dinner - Wed. 6pm

• PLACES TO WORSHIP •

John 3:16

HAMBURG BAPTIST CHURCH

Hwy 107N. • Glenville, NC • 743-2729 • Nathan Johnson

Sunday: School 9:45a, Worship 11a & 7p, Bible Study 6p

Wed. Kidsquest 6p.; Worship 7p.

HIGHLANDS ASSEMBLY OF GOD

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

Sundays: Worship: 11

HIGHLANDS CENTRAL BAPTIST CHURCH

Pastor Dan Robinson

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

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

Wednesday: Prayer Service, 6:30 p.

HIGHLANDS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Pastor Randy Lucas 526-3376

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

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

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

Intercessory Prayer Ministry

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• POLICE & FIRE REPORTS •

Highlands Police entries from Dec. 31. Only the names of persons arrested, issued a Class-3 misdemeanor or public officials have been used.

Dec. 31

- At 7:09 p.m., officers were called

about a weapon law violation when someone who had consumed alcohol was carrying a concealed handgun.

Feb. 5

- At 3 p.m., officers were called about identity theft when someone used another's identity to purchase phones on their

account.

Feb. 6

- At 10 a.m., officers responded to a 1-vehicle accident on NC 28 and Brushy Face Road.

Feb. 8

- At 3:24 p.m., officers responded to a 2-vehicle accident on Cullasaja Drive.

Feb. 10

- At 4 p.m., officers were called to a residence on Split Rail Row about a missing watch Feb. 13

- At 11:08 p.m., officers responded to a 2-vehicle accident on NC28.

Feb. 12

- At 10:34 p.m., officers were called

about someone communicating threats to a patron at the Ugly Dog Pub.

Feb. 14

- At 9:05 p.m., officers responded to a 2-vehicle accident at the bridge at Mill Creek.

Feb. 21

- At 11:16 a.m., officers responded to a 2-vehicle accident on West Church and South 4th streets.

The Highlands Fire & Rescue log from Feb. 16

Feb. 16

- At 1:20 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to Clubhouse Trail.

• See POLICE & FIRE page 22

...SPIRITUALLY continued from page 18

ourselves completely vulnerable to whatever might come at us.

It is, in short, a journey into the great unknown, a mystery.

In our gospel for today, Jesus takes his three most trusted disciples Peter, James and John, and walks up to a mountain top, probably Mt Tabor in southern Galilee, a hill that rises only a few hundred feet above the surrounding plain. The high mountain symbolizes the border zone between earth and heaven, between material and the spiritual.

In both our OT and NT texts, humans must be given divine help to interpret the scene. Moses receives instructions from God, and in Matthew's gospel, peter, having put his foot in his mouth yet again, is silenced by an utterance from a bright cloud, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him!"

It is a mystery about what Elijah and Moses said to Jesus, but it is important to understand that he listened to them. Some theologians speculate that they, humans who were taken into heaven before they died, were giving words of encouragement to Jesus, who was facing suffering and a lingering death on the cross. --Walter Wangerin writes: "At his baptism, Jesus is the romantic hero. On the Mount of Transfiguration, he is a mythic hero. From the Temptations down and down to death, he is a tragic hero."

God's words from the cloud seem to reinforce that idea. This moment of glory identifies Jesus as the Messiah, which is why he probably swore his disciples to silence until after the resurrection. The events of his passion must play out as God intends, without interference by man. The three men he trusted most witness his heavenly glory on and would also be with him at Gethsemane, the prelude to his earthly agony.

What does this mean for them and us? It's easy. We are to Listen to Him!

I don't know about y'all, but I'm not naturally a good listener. I have to work very hard at it and often, fail miserably. As I said last week, I've always marched to a different accord. When I was young, I had my future all mapped out and nobody was going to steer me off the path I had plotted for myself. It took years of unfulfilled dreams, disappointment and suffering before I listened – really listened – to God. I was extra stubborn, 'cause God had to really wallop me with the heavenly 2 x 4 before I paid attention. I had to lay all my plans aside and follow were God led.

It was not easy. My husband, Jon, stuck by me, but everything else in my life changed.

It was like walking into a cloud. I had no idea what was in front of me.

Many of us have had a mountain top experience or two. But eventually, Like Peter, James and John, we have to come down off the mountain, and their case, follow Jesus to a scene that will be frightening beyond their imagination. Does this momentary vision of glory help them through this journey in the valley? How can our brief visions of God's love in worship strengthen us in the trials we have not yet foreseen?

For me, it means I am not alone. God is with me, always, and my family of faith is with me, always.

Our places of worship are not only places to worship God, but are places in which we come together to be nourished with the Word and Meal. It is here that God meets us. This is our little mountain top! For those of us who drive up to the Highlands plateau, you are climbing up to the mountain top just as Moses, Jesus, Peter, James and John did! Maybe that's why despite the difficulty of driving up a precarious mountain roads, you keep doing it---because you KNOW that this is where we gather as a family to experience the mystery that is relationship with Christ. It's SPECIAL! It is coming together of the earthly and the divine. It is a step into the unknown, relying on God when the future hangs in clouds, unseen.

"O God, you have called your servants to ventures of which we cannot see the ending, by paths as yet untrodden, through perils unknown. Give us faith to go out with good courage, not knowing where we go, but only that your hand is leading us and your love supporting us; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, Amen."

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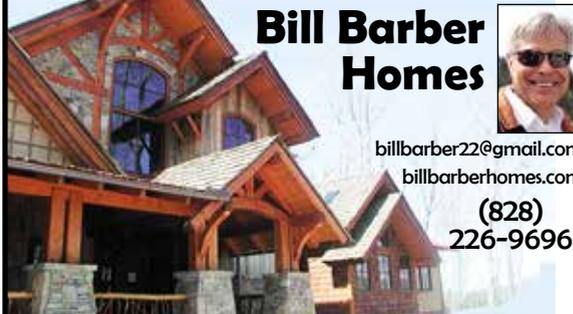
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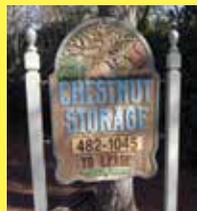
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FULL-TIME TEMPORARY MARKETING POSITION. OEI is seeking a marketing professional and graphic designer experienced in page layout and ad creation for both print and digital to fill a six-month position between approximately March 1 and September 31, 2020. At least two years of professional layout and design required. This position designs billboards, newspaper and magazine ads, digital ads and more for a high-end luxury brand. Some experience in website updating—or ability to learn—required (content management, not coding). Must have high integrity, sense of humor, consistently positive nature, interpersonal skills and work well as part of a close team. Position is 100% onsite in Highlands, NC, no exceptions. There is a possibility that this position could become permanent. Please provide cover letter, resume and samples. References will be required.

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...POLICE & FIRE from page 19

• At 1:03 p.m., the dept. was called to a location on the Franklin Road about a rescue and medical call.

• At 3:27 p.m., the dept. was called to a location on Hickory Knut Gap Road to help with a search.

Feb. 17

• At 3:06 p.m., the dept. provided public assistance at a location on Dixon Drive.

Feb. 20

• At 7:22 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a loca-

tion on Shortoff Road.

Feb. 23

• A little past midnight, the dept. responded to a motor vehicle accident on N. 4th Street and Foreman Road.

• At 5:43 p.m., the dept. responded to a call of a chimney fire at a residence on Harris Drive.

Feb. 24

• At 10:58 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a location on Clubhouse Trail.

...HCA continued from page 14

privileges in the 2019 third quarter meeting.

We suggest you use the 12 months before and the 12 months after the transaction, but if the available data does not fit neatly into those time frames, we will accept different comparable periods.

We understand that some of this information may represent confidential health care information; we ask you to mark information as confidential only as absolutely necessary. We ask that you respond to this portion of our letter by March 11, 2020.

Billing issues

Finally, some billing issues have been raised with our office. Patients raised concerns about an "outpatient" fee that HCA may be charging to patients of Mission affiliated primary care providers, even if the patients never set foot in Mission hospitals.

We ask that Mission provide our office with all disclosures that it made to customers about this outpatient fee. Please respond to this portion of our letter by March 11, 2020.

We appreciate your atten-

tion to the concerns we raise in this letter, and we look forward to your responses. We all agree about the overwhelming importance of Mission Health to the people of Western North Carolina. It is in everyone's interest to resolve the issues raised in this letter in an efficient and transparent way. Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions.

Copied in on the letter were:

Ron Winters and Tom Urban, Independent Monitor; Antony Chiang, Dogwood Health Trust; Bob Saunders, Brooks Pierce, Counsel for HCA; Geary Knapp, Department of Health & Human Services

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