

Highlands Newspaper

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Thursday, July 2, 2020

MC Schools plan for Fall still unclear

By Brittney Lofthouse

School districts, and parents, across North Carolina have been anxiously awaiting July 1 for an announcement from Governor Roy Cooper regarding how schools

will operate this Fall.

Weeks ago, Governor Cooper unveiled three possibilities for the upcoming school year – Plan A -minimal social distancing, Plan B - moderate social distancing, and

Plan C – Virtual Learning. He told the public that by July 1, based on numbers of COVID19 in the state he would be announcing which of the three plans school districts

• See SCHOOLS page 22

Planning Board's OK will prompt changes

At the Monday, June 22 Planning Board meeting, members discussed three issues – two of which will go on to the Zoning Board – a rare occurrence these days.

In the past, the main reason to go to the Zoning Board was to obtain a Special Use Permit (SUP). However, about two years ago, the criteria defining the need for a SUP changed so most requests that would have previously fallen under the SUP category are now handled by the Planning Department. This means applicants no longer have to go to the Planning and Zoning boards for permits as often.

Another reason to go to the Zoning Board is for Conditional Zoning requests. Applicants must first go to the Planning Board,

• See PLANNING page 7

Happy 4th of July!

Facebook Concert

The Wobblers, one of South Carolina's most unique roots bands. with an emphasis on New Orleans style rhythms and unique instrumentation will be live-streaming July 4, 7-9 p.m. on the visithighlandscnc Facebook page.

Music from a Pickup Truck

On Saturday, July 4, members of the Southern Highlands Band will be performing while riding downtown in a pickup truck from 11a - 2p.

Look for them while you're shopping, dining or strolling on the downtown streets – wearing your mask – and enjoy a bit of their great blue-grass music.

Stroll on the Greenway

The Highlands Plateau Greenway is hosting a three-quarter mile hike on the Oak Street Trail from 9a-1.

Highlands Biological Station

July 4th Scavenger Hunt - July 2-6 - See if you can spot certain plants and flowers in the Botanical Garden! Remember to look and leave natural objects where you find them.

Scavenger Hunt details available at the kiosk at the main Botanical Garden entrance and at the Chamber of Commerce Visitor Center.

Highlands Playhouse

The Highlands Playhouse will be selling movie-quality popcorn on the deck of the Playhouse from 1-4 p.m. Plan to drop by and purchase some. The Playhouse will appreciate your support.

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Governor: Masks mandatory in NC; Phase 2 extended until July 17

Town Hall employees test negative; one test pending

By Kate Martin
Carolina Public Press

As of Friday, June 26, masks are required attire in public – inside businesses and outside when it is impossible to be physically distant from others, Gov. Roy Cooper said last week.

Cooper issued an executive order on the masks, and extended the current level of restrictions, called Phase 2, through July 17. Phase 2 restricts the number of people who can gather inside a business or outside and forbids the operation of bars and gyms.

Some businesses were hoping



to reopen under Phase 3 at least by July 2, but those plans are now on hold.

In light of the recent increase of COVID-19 cases in North Carolina, Cooper had warned that he was still deciding on the appropriate policy concerning Phase 3.

“Hospital capacity can be overwhelmed in the blink of an eye,” Cooper said last Wednesday. “Once we see that capacity is gone, it can be too late to turn the tide.”

Cases of the new coronavirus, continue to rise statewide,

• See MANDATE page 6

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• THE PLATEAU'S POSITION •

• MAYOR ON DUTY •

Paving projects on the way

Yesterday day marked the start of a new budget year for the Town of Highlands. The Town Board approved a scaled back budget at their June meeting.

The Town Manager developed the balanced budget based on projections of less revenue due to the COVID-19 pandemic. If there is an upswing in the economy at midyear, some capital projects that were cut may be reconsidered. Same goes for a cost of living adjustment for town employees. Our employees have truly stepped forward during this state of emergency. I hope we can make a midyear adjustment in their compensation provided revenues increase.

There are several road paving projects that were funded in this budget. The town has been behind in road paving for several years. The board felt these roads projects could not be postponed for another year. At the top of the list was the second part of Cullasaja Road. Last year the first leg from US 64 to Mirror Lake was done. The



Highlands Mayor
Patrick Taylor

rest of the road to the bridge at Mirror Lake will be paved this summer. Also, Hickory, Cowan, Church Street Alley and Pinecrest will be paved.

These road paving projects will start sometime in late August and go through September. Lamar Nix, our public works director, schedules paving when weather conditions are optimum and traffic is light. For instance, the week of the Fourth of July, or during the

late October leaf season, are not good times to be delaying traffic for road paving.

The budget also has funding for sidewalk repairs on Satulah, Pierson Drive and in front of Reeves Hardware. The concrete curb and railing at Reeves are in bad condition. A new wrought iron rail will replace the existing ugly pipe rail. Repairs to the Loafers Bench on Main Street are also funded for this year.

The town will purchase a new garbage truck this year for \$172,000. This truck will be a midsize truck and replace an old one that has been rusting out in the back for a number of years. A new wood chipper is being purchased for the electrical department for \$85,000. The old chipper has been used on a daily basis for many years, and like the garbage truck it is simply worn out.

The 50-year-old, 2-inch galvanized waterline serving Valentine Lane will be replaced this year for \$192,000. The town has been replacing these old, rusty galvanized lines for a number of years.

The police department will upgrade their radios to the new Viper system. This system is used by the NC Highway Patrol. The Viper radio system will cost \$34,000. It provides much better reception in these mountains, and it allows different first responders seamless communication with one another.

I want to wish I everyone a very happy Fourth of July Weekend. We are suffering together through this COVID-19 emergency. We will endure this scourge and get it under control. We are a free and innovative country that will resurge and thrive.

• HIC'S VIEW •



• NOTICE •

The Highlands Newspaper office at 256 Oak Street is temporarily closed. We are going through some renovations and updates, and plan to be back open in a few weeks with new and improved facilities.

In the meantime, we are working out of our home office. To contact us – as always – please email highlandseditor@aol.com or call 828-200-1371.

• WEATHER •

Thu, 2-Jul	Fri, 3-Jul	Sat, 4-Jul	Sun, 5-Jul
			
77°F 61°F	78°F 61°F	80°F 61°F	78°F 62°F
A t-storm around in the p.m.	A thunderstorm in spots	Clouds and sun with a t-storm	Partly sunny with a t-storm
RealFeel® High: 87° Low: 68°	RealFeel® High: 88° Low: 71°	RealFeel® High: 89° Low: 70°	RealFeel® High: 87° Low: 67°

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Highlands Newspaper

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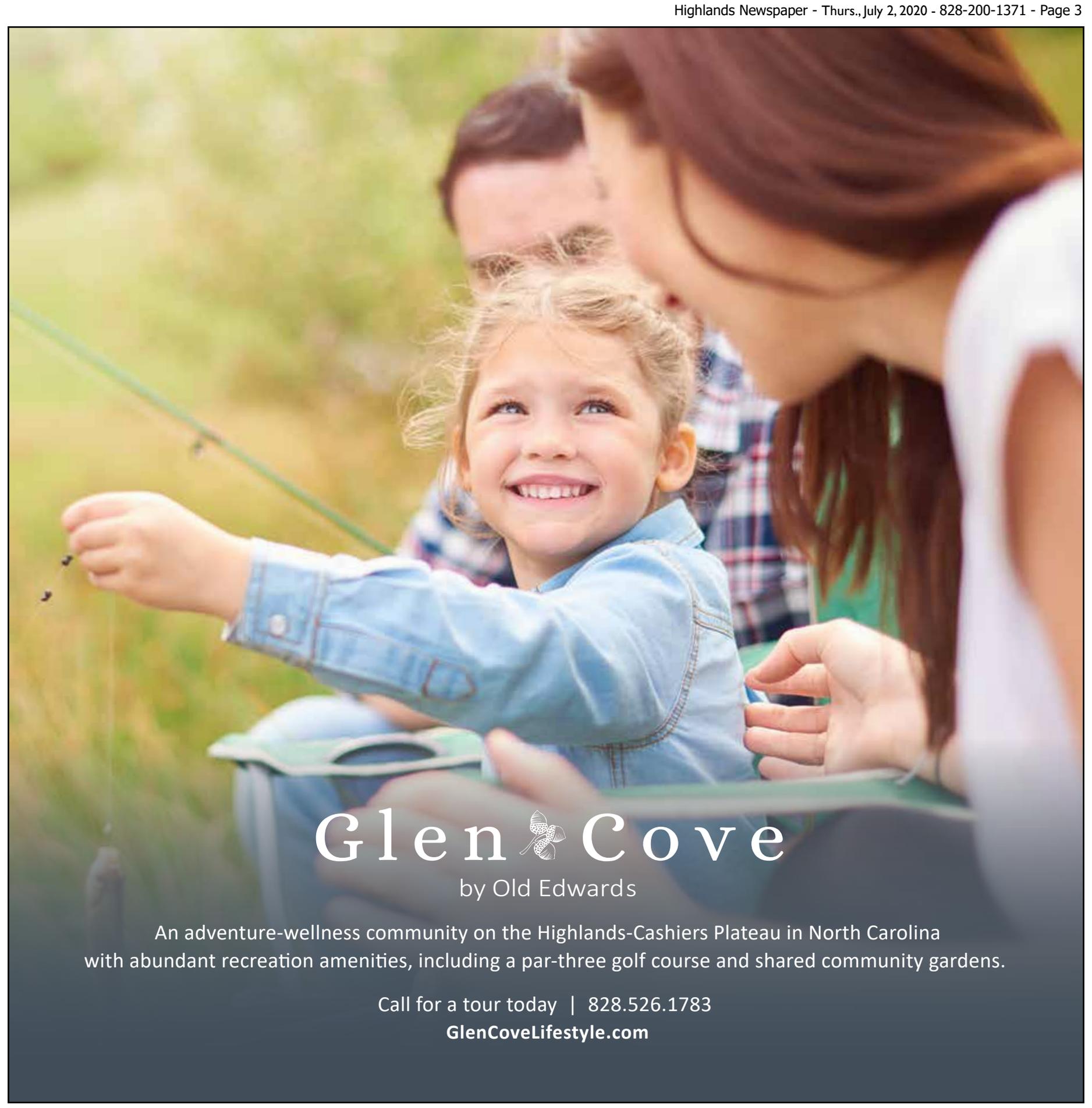
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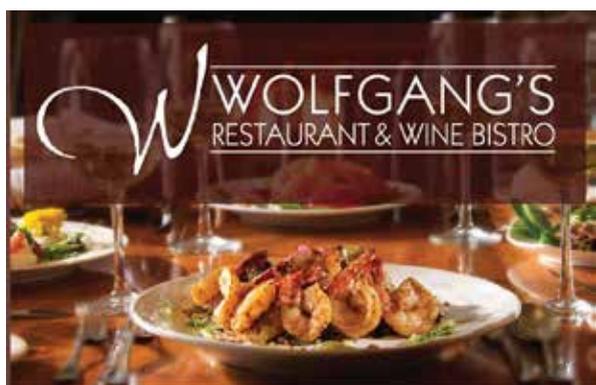
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• OBITUARIES •

Jane A. Lewis



Jane A. Lewis, 84, went to be with our Lord and Savior on June 27, 2020. She was born in Highlands, NC, on September 17, 1935, where she spent her entire life. She was the daughter of the late Charlie Anderson and Mattie Hall Anderson. Growing up, she enjoyed many happy hours riding horseback at Cranes Stables and hiking the beautiful mountains.

Following graduation from Highlands High School, she met the true love of her life, Alan Lewis, who was sent to Macon County as a North Carolina State Trooper, and soon found his way to Anderson's 5¢ & 10¢ Store where she was working in the family business. After falling in love they were united in marriage at the First Presbyterian Church in Highlands on November 28, 1954, by Alan's father, Reverend Arthur Lewis, a Methodist preacher.

She was a lifetime member of First Presbyterian Church, being very active as a choir member and Sunday School teacher, and also held offices in the Women of the Church organization in her younger years.

She always loved and prayed for her family every day, her "jewels." Survivors include her four children, Martha L. Betz and husband Richard, Angela L. Jenkins, Bill Lewis, and Scott Lewis; four grandchildren, Sam Jenkins (Jessie), Jimmy Jenkins (Jessica), Amy J. Ramey (Brandon), and Katy Betz (David); seven great-grandchildren, Analyse Crook, Ella Crook, Aiden Crook-Jenkins; Briana Jenkins, Karmen Jenkins, Kadence Ramey and Cambran Ramey. Additionally, she is survived by her sisters, Angela Hardin of Asheville, Anne Sellers of Clemson, Mary Shearouse of Candler, and sister-in-law Lizette Pryor of Raleigh; several cousins; and many nieces and nephews. Mrs. Lewis was preceded in death by her beloved husband, Alan Lewis, and one infant great-grandson, James Taylor Ramey.

A funeral service could not be held at the First Presbyterian Church due to COVID-19. Pallbearers would have been Sam Jenkins, Jimmy Jenkins, Brandon Ramey, Paul Kinsland, Terry Potts, and Greg Thompson; honorary pallbearers Richard Betz, Jeff Cox, Jimmy Lowe, Steve Ham, and Skip Hughes. A private graveside service will be held at Highlands Memorial Park with the Rev. Curtis Fussell and Rev. Emily Wilmarth officiating. In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to the First Presbyterian Church, P.O. Box 548, Highlands, NC 28741.

Online condolences can be left at www.bryantgrant-funeralhome.com

Bryant-Grant Funeral Home & Crematory is serving the Lewis family.

• See OBITUARIES page 14



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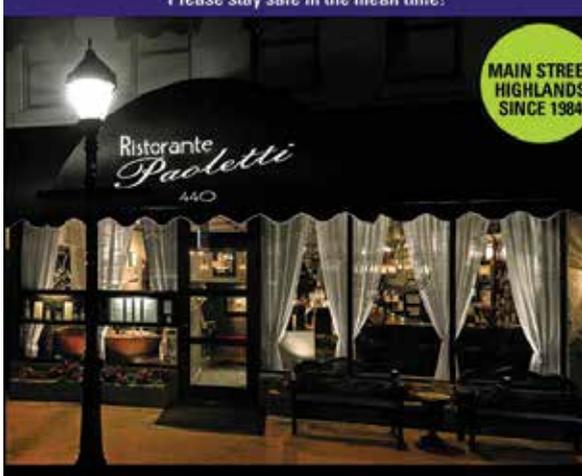
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...MANDATE continued from page 1

including several days of record-breaking hospitalizations for COVID-19.

Enforcement of mask wearing is up to the businesses, but if they allow patrons to go without masks, they can be cited by local law enforcement, Cooper said. Businesses can also refuse to allow people without masks into their establishments. If people persist, then businesses can call law enforcement to remove patrons for trespassing, he said.

Highlands Police Chief Andrea Holland said the department is taking a soft stance enforcing the mask mandate.

"As the order says, it is primarily up to the businesses to ensure compliance. I visited most businesses the past few days and they all had already begun requesting facial coverings before entering. If an individual refuses to leave, they could be charged with trespassing, according to executive order 147. That is a misdemeanor charge," she said. "But our main focus is to educate and ask people to comply. It depends on the situation whether an enforcement action would occur. As far as monetary, it would be determined by the courts if criminal enforcement occurred."

"According to Dr. Anthony Fauci North Carolina could see an insidious increase in community spread, which will be much more difficult to contain as the community spread amplifies itself," said Gov. Cooper. "(Fauci) also testified that the next couple of weeks are critical for our country in our fight against COVID-19."

Specific requirements for masks

According to Cooper's executive order signed Wednesday, face coverings are required anywhere someone cannot be physically distant from people outside of their household, whether indoors or out. The masks apply to anyone age 11 or older.

Exceptions include if a person is actively eating or drinking, exercising strenuously or has a medical or behavioral condition that prevents the wearing of masks.

"Under this executive order, all North Carolinians will be on the honor system about whether ... there is a reason why they cannot wear a face covering," the executive order states. "Everyone in this state is asked to tell the truth and — if they are healthy and able to wear a mask — to wear a face covering so that they do not put other people at risk of serious illness and death."

...PLANNING continued from page 1

then the Zoning Board and finally to the Town Board for approval.

At this month's Planning Board, members heard a Petition for a Conditional Zoning District submitted by Old Edwards Inn and Spa, LLC (OEI) for the 22-acre "The Farm" property located off Arnold Road

According to Assistant Planning Director Michael Mathis, OEI is requesting annexation by the Town Board to get on the town sewer.

Though in compliance, The Farm septic system is near Lake Sequoyah – the town's Class 1 water system – which Mathis said may mean the town will gladly annex.

The property is contiguous with the Town of Highlands and based on the recommendation of the Land Use Committee and contingent on approval, OEI would have to add 2.79 acres, to The Farm parcel to comply with the town's watershed requirements. The property is in the critical watershed which has strict built-upon requirements. To be in compliance, more acreage is needed. OEI owns 44 acres there so adding 2.79 acres is easy to do.

The Farm currently operates as a wedding venue/outdoor entertainment area. The use was established while the property was a part of Macon County. At one time, the property was included in the town's Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (ETJ) and zoned B-5 commercial.

With ETJ gone, OEI is applying for B-3 conditional zoning so that the use will conform with the town's ordinance and zoning classifications. If approved, the property expansion will have to comply with the town's Unified Development Ordinance (UDO).

The Planning Board recommended approval of OEI's Conditional Zoning application.

Next OEI will go to the Zoning Board and if it approves, on to the Town Board which has the final word.

The next issue involved the High Dive bar/restaurant on Carolina Way owned by Thomas and Kay Craig

The Craigs wish to make the entire business the same use. Though allowed, since the plan is a change of use, a SUP is needed.

According to past SUPs, the business operates as a private club on the inside, and a restaurant on the outside.

• See **PLANNING** page 14

The Closers.

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Photo taken in January 2020 before social distancing.

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• LETTERS •

Gratitude

Dear Editor,

Finally, the positive psychology movement has recognized Gratitude as maybe the most important strength and virtue that enables a person to live well and as the “sweetest” of all the emotions. In fact, gratitude may well have the highest connection to mental health and happiness of all the personality traits ever studied.

As long ago as 70 BC, Rome’s greatest orator and statesman, Cicero, said, “Gratitude is not only the greatest of all virtues but the parent of all others. It unlocks the fullness of life.”

Why? For starters, it is impossible to feel grateful and depressed at the same moment. Over 200 suicidal patients with severe depression problems were asked to write down everything they were grateful for. The results were amazing. As many as 90% had positive improvement, and many are living a positive life today. It has also been proven to be effective in treating people with addiction problems and mental health problems.

Just to name a few of a long list of benefits, focusing on gratitude will increase your joy and passion in life, elevate your feelings of self-worth, lift your mood, cut in half your risk of depression, reduce anxiety and stress, lower blood pressure, and increase overall better health. The list goes on and on and on.

Willie Nelson said, “When I started counting my blessings, my whole life turned around.”

Zig Ziglar, the great motivational speaker and author, said, “The greatest source of happiness is the ability to be grateful at all times.”

As we are struggling with the coronavirus, and stepping into summer, focusing on gratitude can be a powerful change of internal season. Here’s a simple tip: Keep a daily journal and write down four or five things that happen to you during the day you are grateful for. It’s that simple. Then watch the results. Focusing on what you are grateful for can literally change your life.

Kenny Youmans
Highlands

Trash talk in Highlands may become very costly

Note: I have included a contronym in this missive. For those who are not familiar with a contronym, please see note at end of this missive.

Dear Editor,

“Bear Resistant Toters Are required by August 1st, 2020....” so states a notice published by the Town.

Doggonit, for myself and very possibly other people in this wonderful city, this creates a dilemma. By the way, reading this letter is optional. If at any point, you do not care to read further, you may choose to go back and unread the portion you have read.

However, it is required that you read the Mayor’s always welcome and informative message up at the front part of this great free newspaper. I do recommend that you at least peruse the advertisements. They are what makes this paper free!

Well, back to the dilemma. I have given much thought as to how I could make dilemma-aide (sic) from this bear resistant requirement- unfortunately, all to no avail.

My options seem to be:

OPTION 1: Leave highlands. More about this later.

OPTION 2: Bury the trash. Yep, the town’s Notice 803-New Sanitation Rules and Regulations states “It is declared to be unlawful and to constitute a nuisance for any person to deposit on or to bury in or cause to be deposited on or buried in any public square, street, alley, vacant or unoccupied lot, sidewalk, parkway, or bank of any lake, stream, or waterway.” It does not seem to prohibit burying trash on private property, as long as you stay away from said streams and waterways, ectara. Perhaps, others may make

• See LETTERS page 10



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...LETTERS continued from page 8

use of this option. You may take it for granite (sic), that I will not be burying trash on my property. Any time I need to dig a hole on my bit of land on the north face of Mount Satulah, I first drive a steel rod into what passes for soil.

Any depth greater than 12 inches, the steel rod most often strikes (yes, you guessed it) granite. Anyway, Nicks' bears would dig it up and make a mess. So, forget that

Okay, now about Nicks' bears. Nicks' Fine Food Restaurant was my neighbor for many years. All the bears on Satulah would make daily visits to Nicks' dumpsters and then on a well-worn path, come to check out my bird feeders. So, for over 20 years, all the bears on Satulah and I have co-existed. I prefer the bears to other varmints who may choose to 'relocate' (steal) costly Bear Resistant Toters. Some res-

taurants seem to burn when they are not profitable. In the case of the next-door restaurant, a few years ago, the town of Highlands burned it to the ground. I believe an accelerant was used. However, I think this was not a case of arson. Well, the bears still remember where Nicks' dumpsters and my birdfeeders were. They and their offspring still routinely visit both sites, even in the daytime. So, for me option number 2 won't do as a palatable dilemma-aide (sic again).

OPTION 3: Purchase the 'required' 46 pounds (when empty) Bear Resistant Toter (BRT). Let me count the ways I do not love thee BRT! Apparently, the town believes that some varmints other than bears may 'relocate' these rather costly BRTs (\$208.15 at the Town suggested Reeves Hardware). The Town Toters are embossed as to being the proper-

ty of Highlands. I assume this is intended to deter the relocation (theft) of the town containers.

The far end of my long and quite steep driveway joins Highway 28 and is not visible from my house. For several reasons, I am really inclined (pun intended) to not purchase the 'required' BRT. First the possible long-term cost. The town has provided twice a week trash removal service for over 20 years. The current cost is \$5 per event. At Reeves, I expressed my concern about 'varmints' stealing (official term is relocating) the BRT each time I left it at the highway. I was told that others have the same concern. If this were to happen, my total cost would be (\$208.15 plus \$5.00) \$213.15 twice a week. Even if it were to occur only once a week, my annual cost would be 52 times \$213.15 or \$11,083.80. Seems a bit much.

My other problem is the combination of the long steep driveway and the weight of the BRT plus the weight of the trash. The people at Reeves are extremely helpful and pleasant, so I thought I would try a 'dry run' by borrowing a BRT with a 20-pound bag of birdseed and wheeling it down and up Third Street between Main and Spring. The dry run didn't happen because it was raining and they did not have a BRT in stock. I have even considered modifying my electric wheelchair to move a BRT down and up my drive. I did not succeed in devising a safe method. Certainly not possible in the winter with snow and ice present. Well Option three is out.

OPTION 4: Leave Highlands: I currently tuck my old tacky (not too much risk of being 'relocated') non-bear-resistant plastic trash container in the backend of my vehicle to transport it down and up the driveway. This method even works in the winter. So, beginning August 1st, 2020, I will leave the City of

MARC HEHN
TOWN OF HIGHLANDS BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Happy Birthday America!
July 4, 2020

Please support our local businesses during these very challenging times.

- Marc & Betsy Hehn

• INK PENN •

Who remembers Travis McGee?

What a blast from the past! In one of the gazillion emails I get from Amazon, a Travis McGee mystery was listed as a reading suggestion. I don't know that I read all 21 of John D. MacDonald's McGee books, but I certainly read plenty.

I likely picked up the first one in the 70s, and I was still reading them in the 80s for sure. McGee lived on a houseboat docked in Fort Lauderdale. It was named The Busted Flush for the poker hand that won him enough money to purchase his home. When he wasn't traveling in his houseboat, it was supposedly docked at slip F-18 at Bahia Mar Marina.

I was such a fan that when I was down there one year for the annual Fort Lauderdale to Key West sailboat race, a friend and I made a late-night visit to the marina to find the slip. She was a fan too, and we'd left our husbands behind at the party at the yacht club. There may have been alcohol involved in that adventure.

Regardless, we enjoyed ourselves. The McGee books all have a color in the title. The first in 1964 was "The Deep Blue Good-bye," and the last in 1984 was "The Lonely Silver Rain." McGee wasn't a private investigator or a policeman. Wikipedia calls him "a self-described 'salvage consultant' who recovers others' property for a fee of 50%."

Various women float in and out of McGee's life, and he's usually rescuing them from bad luck or bad men. I suspect in this day and age, feminists would rail against the books as somewhat sexist. It's been too long since I read one to know for sure. He drives a vintage 1936 Rolls Royce that a previous owner had converted into a pickup truck, and he calls it Miss Agnes after one of his elementary school teachers.

In the 2013 reissue of "A Deadly Shade of Gold," Lee Child's introduction provides this description of the hero:



Kathy Manos Penn

"But the good knight's armor was always tarnished and rusted. The fight was never easy and, one feels, never actually winnable. But it had to be waged. This strange, weary blend of nobility and cynicism is MacDonald's signature emotion."

He didn't just write mysteries, he wrote great mysteries. One of his McGee books won The National Book Award.

In 1972, The Mystery Writers of America honored him with the Grand Master Award for lifetime achievement and consistent quality.

I had no idea that it was his novel "The Executioners" that was made into the movie, "Cape Fear."

Two of his books became movies. The first starred Rod Taylor. The second, made for TV, starred Sam Elliott. He declined to allow his books to be made into a television series, thinking people would stop reading the books if that happened. Oliver Stone and Leonardo DiCaprio were rumored to be developing a movie of "The Deep Blue Goodbye" but it's yet to come to fruition. Now, that's a movie I'd see.

Having read about the possibility of a movie, I'm yearning to hear it's coming soon. Barring that, I may have to go back and start the McGee series again. They're slim books, in the 225-275 page range, and easy to read. Occasionally, a character from an earlier book reappears, so it's good to read them in order. But, who am I fooling? There are way too many books on my TBR list for me to start re-reading books from my past.

If you've never read them, though, treat yourself. I predict you'll be hooked.

- Author Kathy Manos Penn is a Georgia resident. Find her cozy mysteries on Amazon. Locally, "Lord Banjo the Royal Pooch" is available at Highlands Mountain Paws. Contact her at inkpenn119@gmail.com, and follow her on Facebook, www.facebook.com/KathyManosPennAuthor/.



Our Community Needs Us!

We all **love** this area, but with the Covid crisis, our *community* needs us to step up. So how can we **help**? Whether full timers, seasonal residents, or regular visitors, helping may be *simpler* than we think.

- Be *generous* beyond the norm.
- Make *donations* to local non-profits that you'd not normally make. Or *increase* the amount that you'd normally offer.
- And instead of waiting until the end of the year, make your donations *now*.
- Go to stores and **buy two** of something – or splurge on items that you'd normally wistfully walk by. Start buying **Christmas** presents or **gift certificates** now: stash up.
- Pay **extra for haircuts** and other services, making up for those that never happened.
- Eat out – or **take out – more often** than usual. To help the restaurant owners, order the expensive dishes – and maybe offer to buy a \$50 dessert, just for the heck of it.
- And for waitstaffs and other service workers, make your **tips impressive**.
- If you would like to **volunteer** your time and services, sign up with the Highlands Chamber of Commerce initiative **Neighbors Helping Neighbors** at highlandschamber.org/neighbors-helping-neighbors/

It is, indeed, better to give than receive. Given the craziness of these times, our neighbors need our help; hopefully, all of us **who are able** will

show our appreciation to those who work so hard to make Highlands-Cashiers the unique area it is.

Be creative. Be generous. Be grateful.

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• WORD MATTER •

On Protest

Some of our neighbors in Highlands clearly don't remember that our nation was born in protest. The Boston Tea Party was a protest against a tax on tea by the British Crown without representation from the colonies. That act of protest gave birth to our grand experiment in democracy. Thomas Jefferson, in a letter to James Madison, wrote, "A little rebellion now and then is a good thing." When Madison drafted the U.S. Constitution, his first afterthought involved citizens' rights to say and do things that make others uncomfortable.

Article One of the Constitution empowers Congress with the right to establish the legal

principles under which states would operate. The First Amendment says: "Congress shall make no law regarding an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof, or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press, or the right of the people peaceably assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances."

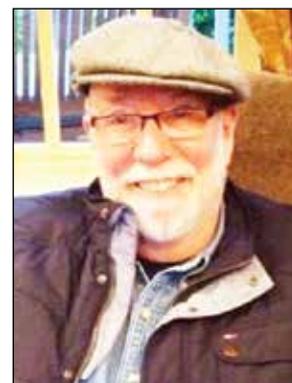
There's no need to unpack the framers intent. As is stated in the common law of torts, *res ipsa loquitur*; it speaks for itself.

Following release of the video-recorded killing of George Floyd on Memorial Day in Minneapolis, our nation, the nation of Jefferson and Madison, was transported back to any of the countless times when the fabric of civil society began to unravel following an overt act of racist behavior.

It's tragic that many perfectly legal protests around the nation were corrupted by violent criminal activity, not necessarily involving protestors, but by those who would co-opt legitimate exercises in free speech.

Legal protest occurred throughout the nation, the world, for that matter. One even occurred here, in Highlands.

Pause for two important points: First, the overwhelming majority of America's police officers are skilled, well-trained, highly committed professionals. Their work protecting and serving the people of our nation requires no defense from me. There are bad apples, but thankfully very few. In fact, many police, already weary



Bud Katz

from months of exhausting pandemic work, went out of their way to protect legitimate protestors, and managed to arrest looters, arsonists, firebombers and other violent criminals.

Second, whenever protest occurs, organized or spontaneous, some people are going to feel uncomfortable. They're going to be upset.

The purpose of protest is to get the attention of people who haven't been paying it. And, the discomfort people feel flows from both the act of protest, and the messages. Some people don't care for someone else's version of free speech because they're hearing things they may not like about themselves. If this discomfort doesn't happen, the protest is ineffective.

On Tuesday, June 2nd, a relatively small group marched through downtown Highlands carrying signs and chanting slogans. In the wake of this remarkable occurrence for our little town, some folks got upset. That means the protest worked.

And, kudos to organizers for keeping things peaceful, if not quiet, as some folks would have preferred. I'm not sure a protest works if it's quiet, or silent, as some others had wished. Silent protest is, in most cases, an oxymoron.

What this column is about, what Highlands Newspaper is about, and what our neighbors, some young and some not so young, accomplished last week, is the exercise of rights expressed in the First Amendment. FREE, PROTECTED speech. Speech, for the purpose of making some people uncomfortable.

There are a couple of groups on the Facebook platform dedicated to what's happening, or what's really happening here in Highlands. Those groups and that platform also enjoy protected free speech. For the record, there are limitations to free speech, mostly involving blatant falsehood, hate speech, or overt threats. Unfortunately, there was a little bit of that on Facebook.

Following the Highlands event, there was, as could have been predicted,

• See WORD MATTER page 24

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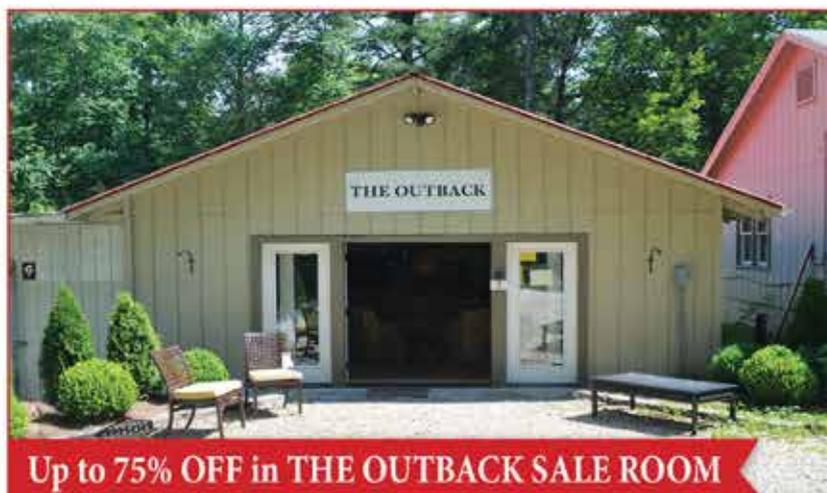
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...PLANNING continued from page 7

The Craigs are looking to convert both uses into one restaurant which is allowed under the town's UDO.

"We're changing our classification with the ABC Commission from Private Bar to Restaurant for a couple of reasons: we can be open now, and with the food cart it's easier on the rules/regulations to be a restaurant rather than a private bar," said Craig.

The issue with restaurants in Highlands is parking.

In his original SUP, Craig was granted the ability to use 12 off-site parking spaces for the restaurant portion. With the approval of 12 off-site places plus his 11 on-site spaces, there are 23 parking spaces.

Two spaces are for four em-

ployees and four spaces are for two future apartments. That leaves 17 spaces. A restaurant requires one parking space for every three seats. Consequently, The High Dive Restaurant will be allowed 51 seats. Since all other aspects of the building were approved in prior SUPs, the restaurant will comply with the town's UDO.

The Planning Board approved the SUP request and sent it on to the Zoning Board which meets Wednesday, July 8.

Finally, the Planning Board learned that on the recommendation of the Land Use Committee, the Town Board approved the hiring of Stewart Inc. for \$95,850 to help the town complete its state-required Comprehensive Plan.

Town staff will begin negotiating the contract in the coming weeks and when finalized the Planning Board will collaborate with Stewart Inc.

Stewart Inc. has more than 200 employees working in five different locations across North Carolina and South Carolina. In their 26 years of operation, the firm has assisted multiple municipalities across Western North Carolina.

Also, Stewart Inc. is a preferred partner of the NC League of Municipalities (NCLM). It operates using three sub-consultants, J.M. Teague – a transportation and infrastructure firm; Chipley – a firm specializing

• See **PLANNING** page 30

...OBITUARIES continued from page 5

John Wade Potts

John Wade Potts was born in Pulaski, MO on April 5, 1962, to Wade and Lucille Zachary Potts, and went on to Glory on June 27, 2020. He was a man who enjoyed simple mountain pleasures such as baiting a hook and hoping for a fish, or taking a trail to get to his destination. He was always a fan of taking the scenic route.

John had a great sense of humor and enjoyed cracking jokes. He took pleasure in making others laugh, but no one laughed more at the punchline than John.

John dearly loved his fam-

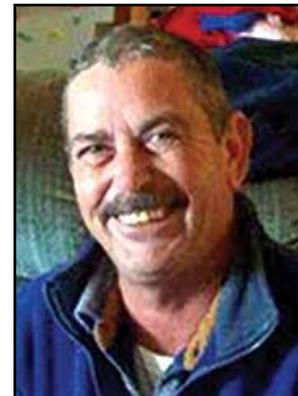
ily. Left to remember all the wonderful times are his mother, his daughter, Danielle Shetters (Ethan); his precious grandson, Colton Shetters, who was his very favorite person; his sister, Sheila Harbold (Mike); and his niece and nephew, Amanda Potts and Travis Potts.

John was preceded in death by his father, Wade Potts, and two brothers, Wayne "Rugg" Potts and Keith Potts.

No services are planned at this time.

Moffitt Family Funeral Care is honored to serve Mr. Potts' Family.

Online condolences may be made at www.moffittfamilyfuneralcare.com



...LETTERS continued from page 10

Highlands for an 8.2-mile drive to and from Buck Creek Road. This, at this time, seems to be my only feasible solution.

Possibly, the town could provide within the town limits a large-bear resistant device/container closer than Buck Creek where I and others in similar situations could deposit our trash. The banks have theft resistant tilt-out devices for deposits. Possibly something

similar and larger in an outer wall of a town building would suffice.

Another solution the Town could consider for residents who would have greater difficulty in moving the heavy and awkward BRT from house to road and back is for the Town truck to backup close to the residence to lift and empty the container.

Okay Town, how about a plan B?

NOTE: The contronym is the word "peruse". I quote Merriam (Mr. Webster) – "Peruse can mean "to read something in a relaxed way, or skim" and can also mean "to read something carefully or in detail." It is what is known as a contronym, a word having two meanings that contradict one another."

**Larry Brannan
 Highlands**

...MANDATE continued from page 6

Macon County Public Health

Daily COVID-19 Update

Today's Date and Time: June 30, 2020 at 4:00pm

Total COVID-19 Tests Reported to Macon County Public Health 3,743

This number reflects all the COVID-19 tests performed in Macon County that have been reported to Macon County Public Health by private physicians, hospitals, and other area health facilities performing COVID-19 testing.

Number Tested at Macon County Public Health Department 2,893

Pending Results 265

Reported Cases and Deaths

	Cases	Deaths
United States (CDC)	2,581,229	126,739
North Carolina (NCDHHS)	64,670	1,343
Macon County (MCPH)	282	1

Macon County COVID-19

Total Cases 282

Active Positive 146

Recovered 135

Deaths 1

WNC Confirmed COVID-19 Cases
(Cases/Deaths)
(6/30/2020)

Playgrounds, gyms, bars, museums and the like will remain closed as Phase 2 is extended by the executive order. Cooper said officials will continue to keep an eye on infection data.

Town of Highlands

On Tuesday, June 23, Highlands Town Manager Josh Ward was informed that an employee working in Town Hall tested positive for COVID-19.

Ward immediately contacted the Macon County Public Health Department. The public health officials recommended all 10 Town Hall employees be tested for COVID-19.

On Wednesday, June 24, those tests were administered at the public health department in Franklin and all tests came back negative. The mayor and his wife were part of the group tested. Ward, who was on vacation when others were tested was tested Monday, June 29 with results pending. He has had no symptoms.

The employee who originally tested positive has been symptom-free for over 10 days and has been cleared to return to work.

Town Hall will remain closed with limited public access. Call 526-2118 for

information concerning appointment for permits and other code related procedures.

As of Wednesday morning, there are 64,670 cases in NC; 282 positive cases in Macon County; 58 in the town of Highlands.

– Kim Lewicki contributed to this story

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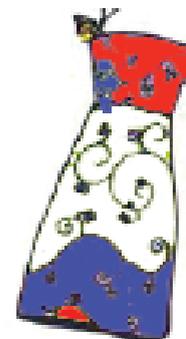
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PAC is BACK

The Highlands Performing Arts Center is planning on reopening August 1, depending on Governor Cooper's announcement on July 17. In response to the Covid-19 PAC has initiated Procedures, Precautions and Protocol:

- All audience members and PAC staff that interact with the audience will be required to wear a mask/face covering. Face coverings will be provided for those that don't have a one.
- Gloves are available for those who wish to wear them.
- Hand sanitizer and sanitizing wipes will be available.
- Hospital grade disinfectant will be used to spray the auditorium/chairs/backstage/doors, etc. before & after each event.
- All staff members and volunteers will have their temperatures taken upon arrival; and dealt with appropriately.
- A plexi glass screen has been installed at the box office.
- Number of tickets will be limited.
- Purchasing tickets online will be strongly recommended.
- Entry/exit lines will maintain appropriate social distancing.
- Concessions will be sold in a row by row fashion, as to not have lines and crowds at the bar. Or you may pre-order online and have your beverages waiting for you at your seat.
- The seating arrangement in the auditorium has been configured into a Cabaret style. There are only 60 seats available; two chairs and a small table separated 5.5 feet from the next two chair grouping, front,



Terry Barber

side and back.

As soon as possible in July PAC will begin screening the National Theatre of London encore performances. Available for viewing: Cyrano, The Lehman Trilogy, Fleabag, Hansard, Kinky Boots. Great Art on Screen will also make a return: Frida and The Hermitage; other titles will be released soon. Please check the website for titles, dates and times.

Depending

on what is allowed in Phase 3, PAC will present:

- Men are from Mars/Women are from Venus: LIVE on Saturday, August 1 at 3pm & 7:30 pm.
- Broadway to POP: Terry Barber, Countertenor with Grace Fields, soprano on Saturday, August 8 at 7:30pm and Sunday, August 9 at 3pm.

The bluegrass favorite, Seldom Scene has been rescheduled to Saturday, October 3 at 3pm & 7:30pm. All other concerts have remained scheduled on their original dates, with two concerts.

The Highlands Performing Arts Center is hopeful that we will allowed to open for concerts in August, if not we will re-schedule again. The health and well being of our patrons and community are paramount to us. Please check our websites for updates: www.highlandspac.org and www.highlandperformingarts.com. If you would like weekly updates please sign up to be on our email list on the websites or email your request to: HighlandsPACnc@gmail.com



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\$1,180,000 • MLS#93424

Lake Glenville



This 4.5+ acres is located on a quiet cove and offers amazing views of Lake Glenville and the Great Smoky Mountains. A 20-foot deeded lake access is sold with the lot and walking distance. Large building envelope in the center for privacy and views. The estate size lot located off of North Norton, not far from Highlands, Cashiers, the front gates of Trillium, Mountain Top, Old Edwards Club and Glen Cove.

\$315,000 • MLS #93741



Darlene Conley, ABR,SRS, CHMLS
Broker
darlene@patallenrealtygroup.com

Old Edwards Club



This is an easy to build on lot, as it gradually slopes up to a large flat building envelope. Buyer has the opportunity to customize their back deck to take full advantage of the view of the 12th fairway/green on the Old Edwards Club Golf Course! The property line has a soft running stream which only enhances the charm of the lot. There is a possible winter view of Shortoff Mountain. Great location within Old Edwards Club @ Highlands Cove as it will have great access the club house at OEC and Glen Cove amenities. Location of Highlands Cove is 6 miles from downtown Highlands and 4 miles from Cashiers Crossroads.

\$225,000 • MLS# 91423

Cullasaja Club



Located inside the gated community of Cullasaja Club, this lot offer long range layered view. Cullasaja Club 72 par Arnold Palmer Designed golf course integrates the natural beauty of the land, Lake Ravenel and the Cullasaja River with challenging play. The community caters to the high energy of its members with a variety of activities, tennis, croquet, fitness class, lap pool and workout facilities. Home ownership is made easy with the HOA Resident Services program. For those who work from home Cullasaja offers high speed internet. Come take a look today!

\$388,000 • MLS#93477

Old Edwards Club



This large lot offers long range layered mountain views and a view of the Glen Cove's par three golf course, The Saddle. David Bock Builders has a perfect floor plan for this lot. It offers a master on the main and porches which take in the amazing view. Terrace level with family room and guest bedrooms. As part of a planned community, Highlands Cove at Old Edwards Club offer 24/7 manned gate; high-speed internet; paved road; private water and sewer. Membership to Old Edwards Club and Glen Cove is not required. Membership is not included but may be applied for directly at OEC.

\$395,000 • MLS#93731

Scaly Mountain



This cute 3-story home lives much larger than its two bedrooms. Hard wood floors & tongue and groove ceilings only add to the charm of this home. There is a screen porch, covered sitting porch, a light filled entry sunroom, wood-burning stove, patio, 3 bathrooms and loft. For those who are looking for a home with rental potential, this home is a must see.

\$450,000 • MLS#93074



Pat Allen,
SFR, CLHMS



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Well, who could have known?

So many thoughts are going through my head that it's hard to put them all into words! Yesterday, I told several of my friends that I think we are living in the real "Twilight Zone"... Rod Serling will appear any minute and we are living in a different time and place ... perhaps outer space!

Covid 19 has panicked us all, jolting us into the reality that no one is in control of this deadly unknown organism. We are at its mercy as it will infect some and kill others. The lottery is in play and we are all vulnerable to its picking and choosing. Who would have ever thought we would become a mask-wearing society!

Then the political climate of hatred and violence ensued due to an evil policeman who murdered a man, as the scene played out in a video, seen by the entire world.

Then protesters took to the streets to honor the victim but somehow that turned into violence and destruction of innocent people's property to make a point, so they

say. Now many want to do without

policemen to make a point, and that will turn into more violence and destruction of people's livelihoods. It doesn't matter if politically you're on the left, the right, or smack-dab in the middle, our world as we knew it changed in March of 2020.

What does this have to do with real estate, you might ask?

These chaotic events have led to an unbelievable surge in buyers wanting to escape the big cities that are witnessing the results of the current state of affairs.

People are longing for some sort of peace, a respite from anger and violence, a place to feel safe, a place to let children play outside or play soccer on our ball field, a place where people are kind to one another and are sincerely grateful that you frequent their restaurants, shop in their stores, and



Pat Allen
Broker-in-charge
Cell: 828-200-9179

walk in our safe neighborhoods where dogs are petted and greeted with smiles. A place where nature is still raw and innocent and offers a safe haven and sense of calm.

What better place to escape than the Highlands and Cashiers plateau?

We are seeing full price offers and multiple offers on homes that have been sitting on the market for a while! If a new home comes on the market it may go under contract that day!

We have suddenly become a seller's market – something we haven't seen since 2008.

My firm received two full-price offers within the last two days and we were part of two sales last week when there were eight and nine offers in the same day!

If you have considered selling, it is definitely the time to do so! If you want to buy, be sure and hire a broker who is persistent, works full time at it and knows

the market well.

Where will this lead? I honestly am not sure it can be predicted. We must just make the most of every day and hope for the day when we can hug again and see each other's faces and not just someone's eyes. Be kind, be grateful, be safe.

• 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 which 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, 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 at the entrance to Wildcat Cliffs Country Club.

"The Power of Two"



Offered for \$369,000 • MLS 93035

Charming cottage in Flat Mountain Estates, at 3997 feet elevation in one of the most beautiful areas in Highlands. Lovely 3BD/2BA cottage in established subdivision with many homes priced well over \$1 million. Master & bath on main with living room, dining room, kitchen & all-season sleeping porch. Downstairs two large bedrooms, den & second bath. This home has been meticulously maintained & updated. The home has an upper deck off the all-seasons porch as well as a lower entertaining patio. Follow the gravel paths throughout the lovely .43 +/- acre low maintenance yard. New HVAC, washer/dryer & lovely furnishings throughout make this a home that awaits you for the season ahead & all that our beautiful plateau has to offer.



Offered for \$474,999 • MLS 93695

This lovely 3BD/2BA ranch with large full length front porch beckons you to enjoy the sounds of the mountain stream babbling by directly in your front yard. This home is located in the impeccably maintained Highland Gap subdivision. Vaulted living area stone with wood-burning fireplace, opens to kitchen & breakfast area. Large dining room, and 2 large guest rooms & bath. Master bath with large heated soaking tub and more. The full-size unfinished basement is stubbed for a bath. The single garage has lots of storage space. Meticulously loved & maintained with beautiful perennials, fruit trees & a wonderful creek-side stone patio. Two joined lots can be divided also a vacant, level building site & deeded clearing rights for a waterfall view.



Rick Harrison, Broker
Team Rick-Steve
404-906-5113



Pat Allen
REALTY GROUP



rick@patallrealtygroup.com • steve@patallenrealtygroup.com

295 Dillard Road, Highlands

Office: 828-526-8784

PatAllenRealtyGroup.com



Steve Sheppard, MBA, Broker
Team Rick-Steve
404-219-1349

Faith, Family, Friends and Freedom this 4th



Located in the prestigious Big Bear Pen area In-town in Highlands, this stately yet elegant home was built with attention to every detail. Solid construction is prevalent throughout and custom accents are notable in every direction.

Offered for \$1,250,000. MLS 91885



Surreal, majestic, panoramic mountain views await you at the crest of this breathtaking +/-16 acre property. Build an estate home or develop the land w/mountain cottages. A 60-gallon/minute well & underground utilities ease development angst. Seller is licensed NC real estate broker.

Offered for \$575,000. MLS 90278



This custom 2017 home is conveniently located just minutes from downtown Highlands. Take a short walk to Apple Lake, and take in the serene scenery that makes you feel like you're back at summer camp! This home has tremendous vacation rental potential with its proximity to town.

Offered for \$395,000. MLS 93612



This Mirror Lake District cottage with mountain views has been meticulously cared for & maintained. It exudes character from the hardwood floors to the vintage doorknobs! Take a step back in time & enjoy the updates that have been done for you. Priced to sell & would make a fantastic rental!

Offered for \$499,000. MLS 90625



A wonderfully designed home by Jim Fox with a sophisticated and contemporary flair located in prestigious Wildcat Cliffs Country Club! Enjoy the good life in a wonderful club atmosphere, with the clubhouse a short distance down the road. This is a very well-maintained home offered at a fantastic price!!!

Offered for \$495,000. MLS 92605



Extreme Home Makeover! This home was taken down to the studs & was meticulously remodeled with no expenses spared. Elegant & modern, the main level features an open living area with walnut floors, an updated fireplace with top of the line vented gas logs & a dream kitchen that will be the envy of all of your friends.

Offered for \$650,000. MLS 93139



Julie Osborn,
SFR, SRES, MBA
Broker-in-Charge
Wildcat CCC

5121 Cashiers Rd, Highlands



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Pat Allen,
SFR, CLHMS
Broker-in-Charge

...SCHOOLS continued from page 1

should be planning to follow in the Fall.

However, late Tuesday afternoon his office announced the July 1 press conference would occur at 3 p.m. but there would be no announcement made regarding school in the Fall. There was also no explanation given as to why.

Macon County Schools Superintendent Dr. Chris Baldwin said during Monday night's school board meeting that a lot

of the information being sent from the state centered around Plan B – moderate social distancing.

For Plan B to work for Macon County Schools, Dr. Baldwin said schools would have to develop a plan that would allow most schools to operate at 50% total capacity.

For schools in the Franklin area, that could mean separating students into two groups -- Group 1 and Group 2 -- and the

rotating days of attendance. Another option is Group 1 students going the first half of the day and Group 2 students going the second half. Once school districts have better direction from the Governor regarding which plan they will be following, the details of how to actually carry out that plan will be finalized.

Dr. Baldwin also said that for the district's smaller schools such as Nantahala and Highlands — it is possible they will have an entirely different plan as they have the ability to social distance safely compared to other schools. He specifically referenced Nantahala likely being able to hold school as normal, with minor changes such as eating inside of classrooms instead of the lunch room and adjustments to sports.

Although there is uncertainty between Plan A and Plan B – districts are more prepared for Plan C—Virtual Learning, than they were this Spring when all schools went virtual.

As required by the state, Macon County established a Remote Instruction Plan that will be used in the event all learning is virtual and/or to meet the state requirement that at least five learning days next year be virtual for all schools.

Macon County's Remote Learning

Instruction Plan addresses purchasing additional Ipad's and jetpacks to help children connect to the internet as well as complete virtual school work and ways to stagger virtual learning days' online assignments to accommodate families with multiple children in various grades needing the internet and computer at the same time.

North Carolina leaders provided specific funding to school districts across the state to improve technology for virtual learning – something that was quickly made more apparent this Spring when schools went virtual abruptly over the weekend.

Highlands Board of Education representative Stephanie McCall reiterated her stance that in-person instruction is the best option for students and said without it, children are more likely to grow up in poverty. McCall noted that she is against virtual learning options and believes in-person learning needs to continue in whatever capacity needed, as it is the most effective and safe for students.

It is unclear when the Governor and State Superintendent of Public Instruction Mark Johnson will make a decision regarding school this Fall – but one thing is certain, parents can expect it to not be business as usual.

PAC is BACK
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Saturday August 8 7:30pm
Sunday August 9 3pm

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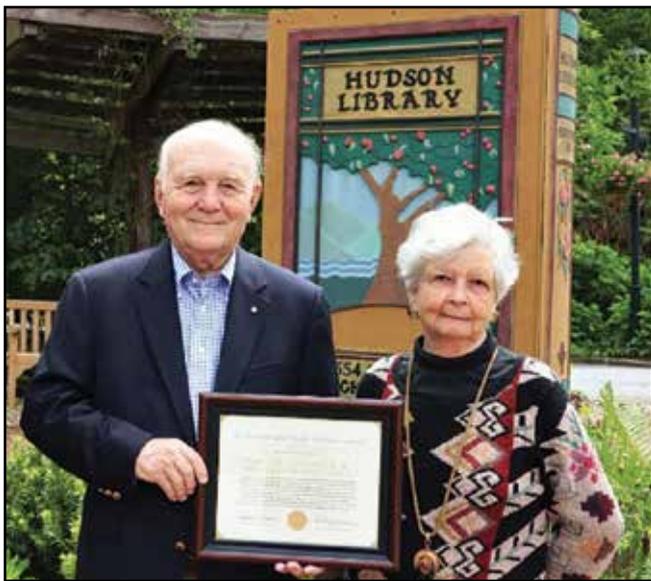
COLE FUHRMAN



DAVID LEVINE



PAM NELLIS



Stiefels recipients of Library's Harbison award

Bill and Rosemary Stiefel presented with Hudson Library's Harbison Award

At its bi-monthly meeting held on June 9, the Board of Trustees of the Hudson Library presented the Gertrude and Dolly Harbison Award to Highlands' residents William C. Stiefel, Jr. and Rosemary Clark Stiefel. The award, named for two early librarians at the Hudson Library, is the highest service award given by the Board of Trustees. As recited in the award certificate, Bill Stiefel served many years as a member of the Board of Trustees, including multiple terms as President of the Board of Trustees. Bill was also a faithful volunteer at both the Hudson Library and the Bookworm. A noted and gifted artist, Rosemary Stiefel has for many years generously graced the Hudson Library with her own artwork and creativity, including her wonderful design of the logo of the Hudson Library, which is used in the entrance sign on Main Street. As further recited in the award certificate, Bill and Rosemary have consistently exhibited the highest ideals of selfless community service.

Spice up your camp meals!

Before you head out for the Great Outdoors, stock up on your favorite spices at The Spice & Tea Exchange in Highlands!

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Historic home and guest cottage and in town!



525 Satulah Road, Highlands, North Carolina

In town historic home and guest cottage built in 1935 by Linton Young and both listed on the National Registry. Located in the historic Satulah Road district of town with panoramic mountain views and sited on 1.81 acres. Original elements of the home have been meticulously preserved, but everything else has been completely updated. 3 bedrooms 4 ½ baths in the main house with a 1 bedroom, 1 bath guest cottage and carport. Norman Askins consulted on this magnificent transformation.

Offered for \$1,790,000 MLS #92943

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• THE PAST & THE PRESENT •

This Sweet Land of Liberty

Like so many reading this, I find the 4th of July to be one of my favorite celebrations, and, yes, it's partly because I'm a veteran but also inasmuch as I love this sweet land of liberty where we all live with a novel virus. Yet like Franklin Roosevelt, I also believe that "no person, because he wore a uniform, must . . . be placed in a special class of beneficiaries" because of his service to this country. In other words, I do not think that putting on a uniform made me a better citizen, gave me a distinct virtue, or entitled me to some

special form of American-ness. I don't even need a parade or a special cap or a monument in Washington, D. C., a capitol fast becoming one of war memorials like imperial Rome that would have our Founding Fathers shaking their heads in disbelief.

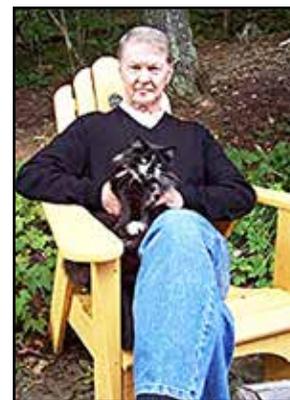
Like so many who, unlike the Clinton's, Romney's, and Trump's, didn't seek to avoid the draft or volunteered, I served during a time when, as today, our nation was not only war weary but also had vague, frequently ill-defined goals. Exactly why were we fighting Communism in some far-off, third world

country that seemingly posed no threat to us? Why still in Afghanistan today? Or endlessly training a large, surrogate army in Afghanistan or Syria that, like the South Vietnamese I knew, will soon evaporate if we leave? How do we measure success in modern warfare? By the numbers of terrorist chieftains killed by drones? By meaningless puppet elections in Afghanistan or Iraq that insure nothing? Are our wars as endless as our internal divisions?

Moreover, who fights for us now? With no draft and increasingly a society of haves and have-nots, we now have a professional military drawn mostly from lower classes, a force that distances itself from the interlocking of war and society through a common cause like fighting fascism. Rest assured that no beautiful Trump or Romney sons or Clinton or Obama daughters will ever put on a uniform or sacrifice anything no matter their posturing.

Our armed forces increasingly have become a privatized force emphasizing specialized operations run by career professional officers, an enterprise paid for by career politicians and used as their blunt instrument to be discarded after service. We are even used against our own citizens here in America.

Indeed, 22 of us commit suicide every day, one perhaps in the time it takes to read this, while scores of thousands who "took the oath" as I did haunt homeless shelters. Don't even ask about divorce rates, unemployment, opioid abuse, PTSD, VA hospitals, alcoholism, and that darned virus. The GI Bill afterward? So selfish has this nation been toward its veterans that any subsequent small blessing such as any post-1967 Viet-



Milton Ready

nam Veteran's Act should be considered a capricious gift and not enlightened policy. Lastly, this sweet land seems to have changed after the last several Presidential elections, now more divided, nativist, mean-spirited, and more racist than ever, and, no, it's not just Donald Trump's fault. It's ours.

In the process, patriotism perhaps appears a redder, whiter, bluer, and even grayer affair. Here in the Carolinas and elsewhere,

you won't see numerous blacks, Hispanics, Asians, or, unless family, the young participating in July 4th celebrations we won't have this year even as many of those who serve and die defending this sweet land of liberty have names like Hernandez, Khan, Yamaguchi, Duckworth, Brown, and Wang as well as McCain, Harrison, Biden, Kaine, and Pence.

Even without this pandemic, there would be fewer parades and community celebrations.

Still, as we have narrowed our concept of what it means to be an American, we also might have made patriotism more exclusive as well. It shouldn't be. Yet travel bans, deportations by both Trump and Obama, racial strife, and, yes, the "birther" controversy really are about that restricted idea of American-ness. In so doing, perhaps we inadvertently have promoted the decline of All-American patriotism and love of this sweet land for the many even as we enhance and enlarge it for the few who still passionately celebrate this confined 4th of July as all should.

This is our and not just my country 'tis of thee, this sweet land of liberty. Let's be worthy of it.

...WORD MATTER continued from page 12

a minor uproar over some of the messages transmitted during the protest. And, once again, there were some objectionable signs and chants. You will see none of that here, in Word Matter.

Again, if people weren't offended, put off, upset, and even angered by some of what they saw and heard, the protest would have been deemed ineffective. Since they

were, the Highlands event was not ineffective. It did its job.

People upset by the behavior of the men responsible for the death of George Floyd, and with the racial inequality that persists in our nation after four centuries, spoke out, here in Highlands. While a few may not have liked it, as far as our republic is concerned, speaking out is a good thing.

• REC PARK NEWS •



Pool Hours Starting Saturday, June 27

LAP SWIM (18+)

Monday-Friday • 6am-10am

(6 lanes, 3 lanes required circle swim lanes)

Monday-Thursday • 5pm-7pm (1-2 lanes) (Shared Pool)

Saturday • 10am-11am (6 lanes)

WATER AEROBICS

Monday-Friday 10:15am-11am

PUBLIC SWIM

Monday-Thursday 11am-7pm

Friday & Saturday 11am-6pm

Sunday 1pm-6pm

RESTRICTIONS – MASKS REQUIRED ON DECK

No Pool Parties Available until further notice

Pool will be limited to 30 swimmers at a time.

Temperatures will be taken at sign in

Front office, bathrooms, showers and dressing rooms are open. Lockers are closed.

No equipment will be available for water aerobics or lap swim

Reservations for lap swim will not be available after Friday June 26

Call the Pool at (828)526-1595 for more information.

NOTE:

The Civic Center is still closed while the town awaits Governor Roy Cooper's Phase 3 announcement.



executed by the superb team of Canty Worley and Company, led by the firm's partners Canty Worley and Sonya Carpenter. Besides extensive replacement of non-native and invasive plants with native species, the filling in of empty beds at the libraries entrance and elsewhere to replace pine straw ground cover, and the resetting of bricks along the central path, the Mountain Findings grant

also allowed for the purchase of additional seating and construction of a small gazebo near the popular front of the garden close to Main Street. As a result of Mountain Findings' generous support and Canty Worley and Company's talent and energy, the gardens will continue to be an enhancement for Hudson Library visitors to enjoy long into the future.

From left: Canty Worley and Sonya Carpenter, Principals, Canty Worley and Company, Tom Hill, President, Mountain Findings, Andy Chmar, President, Hudson Library.

Mountain Findings grant to fund garden revamp at Hudson Library

The Board Presidents of the Hudson Library of Highlands and Mountain Findings, Andy Chmar and Tom Hill, respectively, recently met in the gardens of the Hudson Library to recognize a generous

grant from Mountain Findings used to revitalize the gardens between the Library and Main Street, originally installed a decade ago. The landscape work, undertaken over the past 6 months, was expertly designed and



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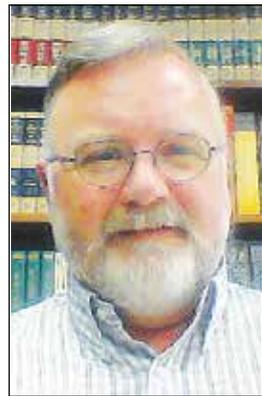
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• SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING •

A Declaration of Dependence



Pastor Mark Ford
First Baptist Church
Highlands

There is a great deal of fanfare during the Week of the 4th about our “independence.” We live in what is called a “me generation” where independence rules every facet of our lives. So much so that we are committed to nothing but ourselves and personal agendas. National, community, and church interests have shrunk to the individual. We are not here to serve our families, communities, churches, or nation, but they are here to serve us. It was Kennedy who said, “Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country.” This is a far cry from what we hear and see today.

It is this narcissistic “me-ism” of all generations that undermines family, community, and our national welfare. We are no longer dependent on God, nor need Him. A nation of “me’s” - instead of “we’s” - has declared their independence from everything. But we, our families, our community, our nation, and our world are to be “dependent” on God our Creator and ruler of all! AND let us not forget that “civil religion” can also be a form of “me-ism”. The providence and workings of God has no favorites. He is the God of all nations and cares equally about all peoples (SEE Ps. 67:1-5). God is neither Democrat or Republican, American, Russian, or Chinese. He is the God of all people (races, genders, generations) and “would that none should perish”.

It should be noted that 244 years ago, the founders of this nation said in their declaration of independence...

With a firm reliance on the protection of Divine providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor.

While declaring independence from an oppressive, authoritarian mother nation, and promoting independence and freedom, they also acknowledge equally our dependence - our reliance - on God. And they vowed commitment and faithfulness to each other and the public good. But it all begins with a clear “declaration of dependence” - our reliance on God and others.

In Deuteronomy 6, God calls Israel to notice their great, bountiful blessings - a land of many sources of water, beautiful rolling hills and valleys, abundant crops, and

• See SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING page 27

Church in the Wildwood, Horsecove Road:
No Sunday evening song services until further notice
due to Covid-19.

Questions: call 1-828-506-0125 and leave message.

Proverbs 3:5

• PLACES TO WORSHIP •

John 3:16

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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.

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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

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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

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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

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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

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Sun: School and Adult discussion group 9:30 a.m.;

Worship/Communion: 10:30; Early-Bird Christmas Eve service of

Lessons and Carols, Sunday, Dec. 22, 10:30 am.

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HEALING SERVICE on the 5th Sunday of the month.

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

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Mass: Thurs. 12:10; Fri. 9am; Sun: 11 a.m.

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Rev. Marty Kilby

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

Wednesdays: Prayer Mtg.: 7 p.m.

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

Wednesdays: Prayer & Bible Study: 6 p.m.

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Thursday: Noon Healing Service with Eucharist.

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Sunday Worship - 11 a.m.

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Sunday School: 10 am, Worship Service: 11 am

• POLICE & FIRE REPORTS •

Highlands Police entries from April 24. Only the names of persons arrested, issued a Class-3 misdemeanor or public officials have been used.

April 24

• At noon, officers received a report of damage to personal property where windows were shot out by a BB gun.

June 23

• At 12:05 p.m., officers responded to a 2-vehicle accident in the Highlands Plaza parking lot.

• At 1:30 p.m., officers responded to a 2-vehicle accident in the Town Hall parking lot.

June 24

• At 10:45 a.m., officers received a report of larceny after concealment of merchandise at 4th Street Market where someone took food items valued at \$4.

June 25

• At 1 p.m., officers received a report of someone taking wind chimes

and a metal bucket valued at a total of \$350 from in front of Tia Dana on N. 4th Street.

June 27

• At 7:10 a.m., Laura Surelle Henry, 47, of Highlands was arrested on a warrant due to an offense committed in another jurisdiction. She was issued a secured \$7,000 bond. Her trial date is July 14.

• At 8:20 a.m., officers received a report of a breaking and entering at the Episcopal church where someone was found asleep inside the building.

The Highlands Fire & Rescue log from June 25.

June 25

• At 1:06 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence in Ravenel Ridge Road.

• At 1:39 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Split Rail Road.

• At 4:42 p.m., the dept. responded to a motor vehicle accident on US 64

west.

June 26

• At 3:35 p.m., the dept. responded to a motor vehicle accident on Bull Pen Road.

• At 7:53 p.m., the dept. provided public assistance on NC 106.

June 27

• At 11:56 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Keener Road.

• At 10:53 p.m., the dept. responded to a Co2 alarm at a residence on More-

wood Road.

• At 11 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a location on Main Street.

June 29

• At 6:04 a.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Webb Branch Road.

• At 8:09 a.m., the dept. responded to a motor vehicle accident on NC 106.

• At 5:38 p.m., the dept. responded to a medical alarm at a residence on Dendy Orchard Road.

...SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING continued from 26

mineral wealth; a land of great abundance and prosperity (Vv.8-10). With this said, they were instructed to not forget God's Word – to continue to lean on it, depend on it, and never turn to their own ways or ideas. God was the giver of the blessings and the sustainer of those blessings. Therefore, obey and follow His Word (v.11)

And what happens when a nation does not? Psalm 9:17, "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God;" Proverbs 14:34, "Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people." Our nation has to any casual observer, forgotten God! His Word has been marginalized in our public domains and our personal lives. What happened to Israel? What happens to nations historically? What is happening in our nation today?

Prosperity produces spiritual amnesia, and we cease to care about the things of God or even believe in Him! (Vv.12-17). The result is that we are enslaved to sin and the consequences of those sins

across our land. The real pandemic today is our rejection and neglect of the Lord God and His clear precepts.

II Corinthians 3:17 says, "For the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty." Our Constitution may speak of liberty, our laws may assist liberty by preventing enslavement to chaos and producing order...but real liberty is not guaranteed by the Constitution or Bill of Rights. Real liberty – freedom from enslavement to sin and freedom from sin's consequences and condemnation – can only be guaranteed by the power of the Spirit of the Lord.

We will not be truly be free until we depend on the Spirit of God and not self. John 8:36, "If the Son therefore shall make you free, you shall be free indeed." Freedom is not political – freedom is not economical – freedom is not social/cultural. Freedom is Spiritual! Our real independence, our real freedom is measured in terms of our dependence on God. Everything else is a shadow, an illusion. Ours is a declaration of dependence as Christians!

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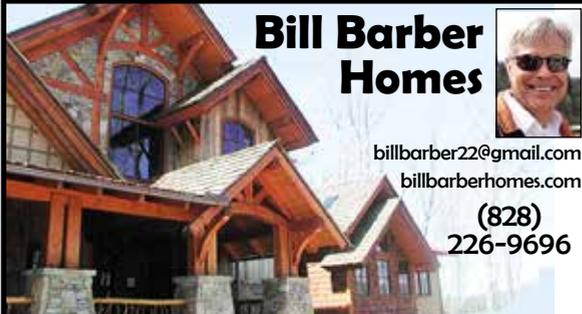
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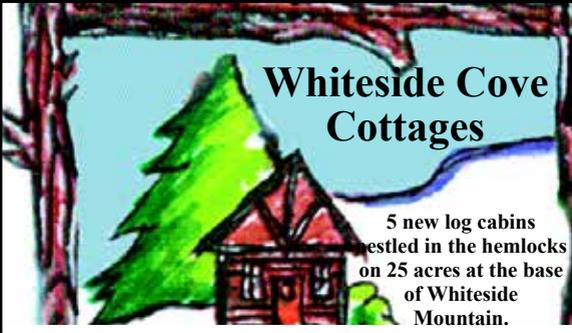
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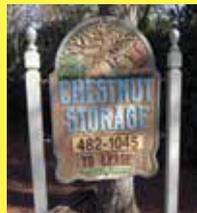
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SOLOFLEX HOME GYM with butterfly, and leg attachments. List price is \$3380, asking \$1000 OBO. 434-242-1174 (st. 5/21)

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HELP WANTED FULL-TIME, SEASONAL - 40 hours guaranteed until October 31. Employment in Highlands Falls Community Association Maintenance Department wanted for help with roads, water, sewer, etc. Could become year-round with benefits. Please Call 828-526-2203 or 828-200-9763. (7/9))

D.R. REYNOLDS COMPANY, INC., STAR, NC is soliciting qualification packages

from interested subcontractors for the construction of a new facility for Highlands Fire & Rescue, Highlands, NC. It is preferred that respondents hold experience with this type of facility and have bonding capacity. Please submit information to Scott Broome at sbroome@drreynolds.com no later than Monday July 6, 2020 Telephone 910-428-1360 (7/2))

THE LOG CABIN restaurant, downtown Highlands, is hiring all positions including sous chef, front of house manager, servers, line cooks and handyman/landscaper to start immediately. Call 828 526-5777 or email jason@logcabinhighlands.com. (st. 6/11)

FULL-TIME SECURITY GUARD Position in Highlands. Please call 706-982-5526. (6/18)

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LOCAL TREE COMPANY HIRING - Jesse's Tree Service, LLC, local to the Highlands, NC area is seeking both tree climbers and grounds/cleanup crew. Pat experience a plus but company will train. Salary is based on experience. We are looking for reliable, drug-free, hard working individuals. Driver's license and a clean driving record a plus. If interested, please call owner, Jesse Finley at 828-342-1974 to set up an interview. (st. 6/4)

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5/28)
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...PLANNING

continued from

page 14

in economic development and public engagement and Stacy J. Guffey & Associates - a local firm that specializes in planning and economic development.

Reason for a

Comprehensive Plan

Since zoning was first established in North Carolina, the state law called for zoning to be "in accordance with a comprehensive plan." However, North Carolina courts interpreted that to require a systematic approach to the zoning regulations, not a formal comprehensive plan document.

In 2006, the State mandated that local governing boards develop a plan consistency statement when considering zoning amendments - which Highlands has done.

However, it was still not required that cities and counties adopt a comprehensive plan.

Now, with the adoption of G.S. 160D, local governments must have a comprehensive plan to have zoning.

The statute says that "[a]s a condition of adopting and applying zoning regulations under this Chapter, a local government shall adopt and reasonably maintain a comprehensive plan that sets forth goals, policies, and programs intended to guide the present and future physical, social, and economic development of the jurisdiction."

According to the UNC School of Government, "most local governments already have an adopted comprehensive plan, and many are relatively recent."

Specifically, a 2018 survey conducted by the School of Government found that 68 percent of cities and 78 percent of counties have already adopted a comprehensive plan.

Highlands has had a plan in the works for years, but it was never completed.

As of now, the State has mandated that all local governments, with zoning regulations, adopt a plan by July 1, 2022

- Kim Lewicki

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