

Highlands Newspaper

FREE Every Thursday

Volume 17, Number 30 Real-Time News, Weather & WebCams: HighlandsInfo.com Thursday, July 23, 2020

Highlands Town Board mandates wearing masks in commercial areas

By Brian O'Shea
Plateau Daily News

Currently in effect, everyone must wear a face covering on com-

mercial sidewalks and inside business-

es in Highlands.
At Thursday's monthly Town Board meeting, the Highlands Board

of Commissioners unanimously approved an amendment to the Town's Emergency Ordinance that mandates

• See MASKS page 12

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Highlands is planning for all k-12 in-school, classes

Due to their size, Highlands and Nantahala Schools are re-opening Aug. 17 under different guidelines than the Franklin-area schools.

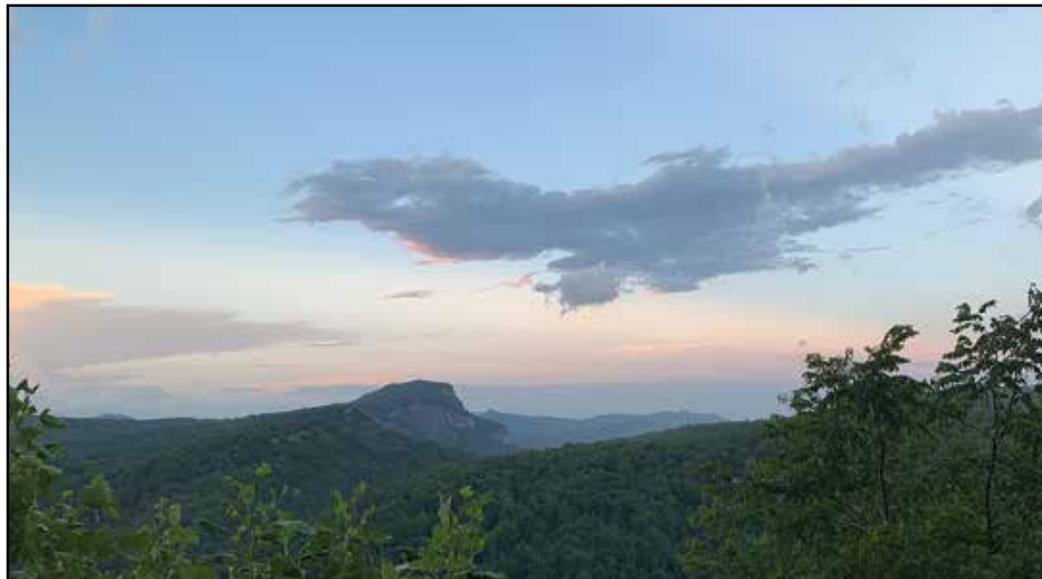
During the Monday night Macon County School Board meeting, Superintendent of Macon County Schools Dr. Chris Baldwin and staff outlined various scenarios for the nine other schools in the district which involve alternate days or alternate weeks or complete remote learning through the system's new Virtual Academy.

• See IN-SCHOOL page 10

Macon County Reports Second Death Related to COVID-19

- See story on page 15

Eagle soars over Whiteside Mountain



On July 14, Dallas Denny got a shot of this eagle soaring over Whiteside. Can you see it?

Bear-resistant toter deadline is approaching; enforcement is delayed

By Brian O'Shea, Plateau Daily News

Commissioners came to a consensus at the July Town

Board meeting on Thursday that the deadline for residential trash pickup customers to purchase bear-resistant toters remains fixed

on Aug. 1, but enforcement will not begin until the waiting list at Reeves Hardware in Highlands

• See TOTER page 11

Board of Ed outlines school start up scenarios

All students 5 days a week for Highlands & Nantahala

By Brittney Lofthouse

The Macon County Board of Education sent out a survey to all parents on Wednesday to solicit input regarding how schools will be held this Fall.

As it stands, due to the number of students Highlands School and Nantahala School should be allowed to have all students attend schools in person, five days a week.

Still, the survey sent to parents will help Highlands School and schools across the district get a better idea surrounding parents' intent for schooling this Fall.

"Parents had no say whatsoever."

• See START UP page 8

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• THE PLATEAU'S POSITION •

• MAYOR ON DUTY •

Masks and toter regulations

I was gratified to see the Town Board vote at last Thursday's meeting to require the wearing of face masks on all commercial sidewalks. Board members and I had been receiving concerns about people not wearing masks on those tight and crowded downtown sidewalks. The governor's mask order was ambiguous about whether masks could be required on outdoor sidewalks.



Highlands Mayor
Patrick Taylor

During the public comment period OEI President, Richard Delaney, made a very convincing case that the town needed to take a clear and decisive position on wearing masks on sidewalks. Richard stressed it was vital to public health and that it would send a message that Highlands was committed to the safety of our visitors and to the well-being of the business community and our residents.

The board voted unanimously to require masks or face coverings on sidewalks in our commercial zones.

Stopping the spread of COVID 19 begins at the local level. When the governor issued the mask requirement, I interpreted

the order to apply to small sidewalks like the ones we have downtown. I was advised that the town could not enforce such a requirement and signs requiring it were an incorrect interpretation of the governor's order. The language was changed on the signs. I hoped people would voluntarily wear masks on the sidewalks. Unfortunately, the opposite happened; and more people began to walk on these sidewalks with-

out masks.

The board's vote to require masks on the commercial sidewalks is a local ordinance during this state-of-emergency that is not ambiguous and is enforceable, although we all want people to voluntarily comply. Our police have increased foot patrols in the business area and model the behavior of wearing masks.

I won't be surprised to get letters and emails calling me a dictator for ordering such an onerous requirement. My response is that I didn't unilaterally do it, the entire board of elected officials voted to do it in the interest of public health and safety. I stand by the board in this decision. As I have said before, with individual freedom comes a responsibility to the public not to jeopardize other citizens' freedom. This ordinance is a responsible action in this emergency situation.

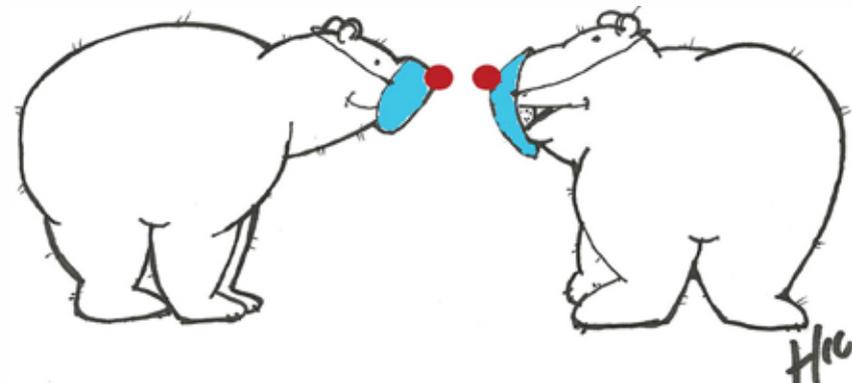
The Town Board also reviewed the situation with the August 1 requirement for residential customers to have a bear-resistant toter for garbage collection. That requirement was posted by the board a year ago after several public meetings, feedback from state wildlife experts, and reviewing several options.

Two factors drove the decision. First, there was a growing need to stop bears from trash can marauding. Second, our old system of expecting sanitation workers to lift hundreds of cans each day was an obsolete practice that safety experts had recommended changing. The bar on toters eliminates this health and safety problem.

I want to thank the nearly 70% of our residents who have already made this conversion. The Town Manager told the board

•See **MAYOR** page 19

• HIC'S VIEW •



"I reckon, if we have to wear these damn things, let's have some fun."

• 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, 23-Jul	Fri, 24-Jul	Sat, 25-Jul	Sun, 26-Jul
77°F 63°F	79°F 62°F	78°F 62°F	80°F 64°F
Variable clouds, a t-storm	An afternoon t-storm or two	Partly sunny with a t-storm	Clouds and sun with a storm
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High: 88° Low: 70°	High: 85° Low: 68°	High: 88° Low: 70°	High: 89° Low: 70°

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Highlands Newspaper

Toll Free FAX: 866-212-8913

Phone: (828) 200-1371

Email:

HighlandsEditor@aol.com

Publisher/Editor: Kim Lewicki

Reporters: Merritt Shaw

Copy Editor: Glenda Bell

Digital Media - Jim Lewicki

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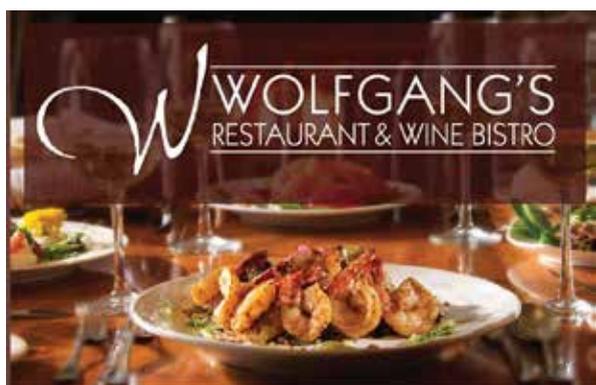
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• OBITUARIES •

Allie Sue Price Keener

Mrs. Allie Sue Price Keener, 91, passed way Tuesday, July 14, 2020. Mrs. Keener was born February 11, 1929 in Jackson County, NC to the late Raymond Jerome Price and Lora Lee Cabe Price. She was married to the late William Lee Keener who preceded her in death August 16, 2015.

Mrs. Keener was a homemaker, loving wife, mother, and grandmother. She loved sewing, housekeeping, cooking for family, friends, and the community. Most of all she loved the Lord and she loved to share the good news of Jesus. Mrs. Allie was a member of Selica United Methodist Church in Transylvania and she attended Goldmine Baptist Church.

Survivors include her six children, Katherine Lee Reece (L.C.) of Waterloo, SC, Susan Keener Holland (Mark) of Brevard, NC, Keith Allan Keener (Teresa) of Hendersonville, NC, Gary Price Keener (Sylvia) of Pisgah Forest, NC, Michael Dennis Keener (Rose) of Cedar Mountain, NC; and William Wade Keener of Highlands, NC; 12 grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren; and three great-great grandchildren.

A memorial service was held Saturday, July 18, 2020 in the Chapel of Bryant-Grant Funeral Home.

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

Bryant-Grant Funeral Home & Crematory served the Keener family.

• LETTERS •

A recipe for life

Dear Editor,

Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote it and here it is:

- To laugh often and much;
- To win the respect of intelligent people and the affection of children;

• See LETTERS page 6

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• INK PENN •

What Children's Books Do You Remember?

Leave it to the Wall Street Journal to make me think. I read their brief list of popular children's books and thought, "Gee, am I old or what?" Still, it was a pleasant trip down memory lane to read the list of 25 books excerpted from the New York Public Library's list of 100 great kids' reads. I could, however, have done without the reference to many of them being "practically antiques."

The list of 25 included books published 1926 – 2007, and I quickly realized I hadn't read any dated after 1957. Sometime in the next few years, my reading level must have moved up to chapter books like the Bobbsey Twins.

Several on the list brought back memories of trips to the library in New York City with my mom. We had to take the bus, so it was a big deal. Who remembers "Make Way for Ducklings" published in 1941? Or "Curious George" which came out the same year? Also, on the early list are "The Story of Ferdinand" and "Made-

line," both of which I read, and "The Cat in the Hat" which is still on my bookshelf.

"The Hobbit," and "Winnie-the-Pooh" both made the list. I read "The Hobbit" but was in the sixth or seventh grade by that time, and please don't judge, but I never read "Winnie-the-Pooh." I'm not sure how the WSJ chose which 25 to put in their write-up, but I was happy to find at least one more title I was familiar with when I located the complete list of 100 on the New York Public Library's website — "Pippi Longstocking." And that was it for what I'd read as a child.

I've heard of later books on the list like "Where the Wild Things Are," but never read them. I assume that those who have children and grandchildren are much more in the know about the books published in later years. The one I'm very fa-



Kathy Manos Penn

miliar with is "Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone," since I read all the Harry Potter books as an adult. Heck, I've even read J.K. Rowling's mysteries.

I wonder what happened to "Black Beauty," "Beautiful Joe," and "Big Red" — all of which are on my bookshelf of childhood books along with "Heidi" and "The Five Little Peppers" series. No matter, it seems that Frank Zappa's quote, "So many little books, so little time," holds true for children's books too.

What childhood books do you remember?

• *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/.*

...LETTERS

continued from page 5

- To earn the appreciation of honest critics and endure the betrayal of false friends;

- To appreciate beauty and find the best in others;

- To leave the world a bit better, whether by a healthy child, a garden patch, or a redeemed social condition;

- To know even one life has breathed easier because you lived.

This is to have succeeded.

Kenny Youmans
Highlands

Ultimate Vision?

Dear Editor,

I always read the weekly real estate column "Investing at 4,118 Ft." with a sense of foreboding. I realize it is the raison d'être for the real estate people to sell as many houses as possible in Highlands and its environs, just as it is the raison d'être for chamber of commerce people to sell Highlands itself.

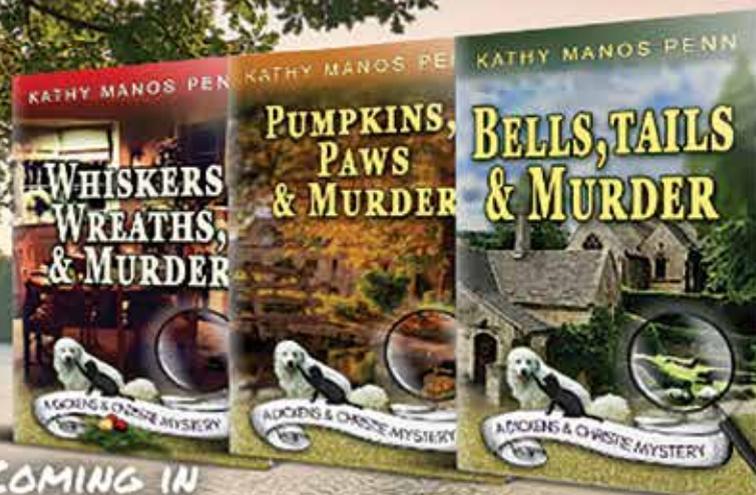
Highlands is not the only small town

• See LETTERS page 8

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...START UP continued from page 1

ever in March about what their child's education would look like, so this survey is important to give parents the opportunity to have a say," said Macon County Schools Superintendent Dr. Chris Baldwin.

During Monday night's live-streamed MC BOE meeting, emails previously sent by parents were read.

The gist was that some parents want-

ed in-person school, some wanted remote options, some even suggested year-round school to accommodate the various stipulations regarding the number of students and social distancing.

Governor Roy Cooper announced last week that all schools in North Carolina will operate under Plan B, which requires moderate social distancing for starters. While

...LETTERS continued from page 6

to periodically debate the relative merits of progress vs. preservation and how to achieve a fair balance between the two, which I personally believe is wishful thinking if not actually mutually exclusive. It's the old argument of having your cake and eating it, too. You can't really have it both ways simultaneously, can you?

But that's not the reason I am writing this letter.

Last week's "Investing at 4,118 Ft." column (July 16, 2020) was particularly disturbing to me. The author was giving us glad tidings that changes are coming to our town and they are coming "at a much faster rate than in the past..." Besides the intrinsic attractions of Highlands, he suggests that this acceleration may be due to the viral pandemic across the country and the social upheaval occurring in the cities. He is probably right.

It was the last sentence of his column that seriously disturbed me. Quote, "Even

with the growth, I think it will be a long while before we meet the requirements that the chain restaurants and box stores need to make their business models successful, which will help our town maintain the charm that makes us unique."

Maybe I am reading that sentence wrong, but it seems to imply that chain restaurants and big box stores are inevitable in Highlands and that they get to make the decision whether to establish themselves here, or not. It is my contention that it is not their decision and/or the choice of the choice of the people of Highlands. We get to decide whether we want them here or not, not the other way around.

What, exactly, is the ultimate vision of our local Realtors and our Chamber of Commerce when they are dreaming of Highlands' future?

**Alice Nelson
Highlands**

that could change before the August 17 start date, Macon County Schools is moving forward with developing operational plans based on Plan B requirements.

At Board of Education meeting the board learned that for various reasons, more children have registered for classes at Macon County Schools this year. Therefore, schools in the Franklin area have to work out a way to have fewer students in the schools at a time to adhere to the state's social distancing guidelines.

For the Franklin area schools, the Board of Education is proposing two options for parents — alternating days or alternating weeks, with half of students going either every other day, or half of students going every other week.

Under the alternating days option, group "A" of students would go to school on Monday and Wednesday, and group "B" would attend school on Tuesday and Thursday, with Friday being a remote learning day for all students.

Closing school on Fridays would also give the schools a chance to sanitize all surfaces in the buildings. In addition, Fridays would be used for remedial instruction opportunities as well as tutoring for students in need. Also, though students will not be physically in the classroom, there will be remote work and assignments to be completed at home.

The other option being presented to parents is alternating weeks. Under this plan, group "A" would attend school Monday through Thursday of one week, with group "B" attending the next week for in-person classes; again Fridays would be for remote learning and sanitizing the school buildings.

On the weeks students are not in the schools, they will still have remote assignments and work to be completed.

Dr. Baldwin told the board that whichever plan the school board chooses to open under, they will make sure that siblings will be in the same group (A or B) so parents can send their children to school at the same time.

For those families who are not comfortable attending in-person school, a third option of fully remote instruction will be offered to all parents, of all grades, in all schools.

Macon County Schools will be launching a Virtual Academy that will be staffed separately from the school system and will allow students to operate fully remotely, while still being part of the Macon County School system. Registration for the Virtual Academy is required and must be completed

by July 31.

Dr. Baldwin emphasized that the survey needs to be completed as soon as possible, in order to gather the responses and decide which plan to go with for the coming school year.

Parents should complete a survey for each child in each grade in their home by 4 p.m., Wed., July 29. The school board will be holding a special called meeting next Thursday, July 30, to decide which plan to approve for schools to re-open specifically in the Franklin area.

The link: <http://www.macon.k12.nc.us/resources/parent-resources/re-openingplansurvey/>

Reopening guidelines

Macon County Schools developed an eight-page detailed guide to reopening schools for in-person instruction which covers requirements for temperature screenings every morning once a child arrives at the school, masks required for all students and faculty and extensive sanitizing and cleaning throughout the day.

Cafeteria meals — both breakfast and lunch — will be provided in classrooms to promote social distancing and when children are not at the school for in-person instruction, meals will be sent home to students.

Transition in the halls will be limited, with one-way direction in the hallways and students remaining in the classroom whenever feasible.

Each student in Macon County, regardless of whether they elect for in-person instruction or remote instruction, will be assigned an iPad for the coming school year to use for lessons and schoolwork.

Internet hotspots and jet packs will be provided to families who don't have internet or even reliable internet at home. Various community locations such as churches and fire departments have also been solicited to help families with limited internet access.

School visitors will not be allowed, and all field trips are discontinued until further notice.

In the event of exposure for students or teachers, the MC Health Department will be the ultimate authority in deciding if a building has to close or if a classroom has to quarantine. These things will be addressed on a case-by-case basis and evaluated by the health department.

Transportation will be limited, and students will be required to wear a face mask while on the bus.

Students on buses will be seated one child per seat, or two if there are siblings

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Where There's A Will, There May Be A Way

"When it comes to divide an estate, even the politest men quarrel."

(Ralph Waldo Emerson).

Have you inherited Mom & Dad's home in the Mountains? How's that going for you? Are you the Trustee? Has the situation created a division within the family (your sister-in-law is calling you ugly names), and you weren't invited to this year's family reunion?

Increasingly, we Real Estate Brokers find ourselves playing the role of Family Counselors when property is transferred to survivors of an Estate. Navigating these transactions can be both difficult and emotional for the involved parties.

It's important to recognize the steps necessary not only to list and sell properties in these situations but also to maintain the peace amongst the family members.

Speaking personally, I was the Trustee over my late Mom's transfer of property in Minnesota a few years back and my

younger brother still isn't speaking to me. He thought he was the Trustee and Mom never communicated to him that she made the switch. Oh well, I'll invite him to Highlands to chill out a little.

I've learned in these circumstances that when I am invited in as a prospective listing Broker, asking to see and read the will to determine who actually owns the property is both helpful and essential.

I'm no attorney, so seeking wise counsel in these situations is imperative. Highlands Real Estate Attorney Scott Nuemann offers this advice: "I would encourage all married couples to review their Deeds to make sure it reflects "Tenants by the Entirety" that automatically creates "Joint Tenants with Right of Survivorship," which avoids probate upon the death of either spouse. And, make sure you have a will in place because when someone dies



Pat Gleeson
Owner, BIC
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without a will, it is referred to as dying 'intestate.' North Carolina has statutes about how property is distributed when someone dies without a will, and it can be most difficult."

If you find yourself in the role of "Executor" it can get a little dicey. Typically, wills are written to leave the property in equal shares to the surviving children. However, it is possible that a will directs an Executor to sell the property and then distribute the proceeds in a certain

way. But most of the time in cases where an Executor has a directive (per the will) to sell, all of the surviving children need to be involved.

Hopefully, prepared families have already sought the advice of an estate attorney to help with an estate and made the appropriate filings with the Clerk of Court. Get a will (which reminds me that mine

needs updating), and disclose all the information to your Broker who has a fiduciary obligation to serve you.

When it's all said and done, my hope is that everyone still loves one another and continues to communicate; it's the way Mom & Dad would have wanted it.

Of course, the easier solution is to keep that beautiful mountain residence in the family to enjoy for many years to come. Be sure to invite that sister-in-law up for a weekend in the mountains.

• Pat Gleeson, Bee, Tom, Christal, Duffy, and their dog Gemma are Owners and Brokers of White Oak Realty Group, in downtown Highlands (4th Street across from the Old Edwards Inn). White Oak Realty Group, founded in 2009 by Susie deVille, is one of the leading boutique brokerage firms on the Highlands-Cashiers Plateau. You can reach all of us at 828.526.8118.

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...IN-SCHOOL continued from page 1

Though Highlands School has more enrollees than usual, it and Nantahala still have fewer students and more useable square footage than other schools in the district so they will have in-person school at their locations for all grades K-12, five days a week.

However, there are still strict requirements that must be followed involving social-distancing, cleaning protocols and symptom checks.

“Highlands School’s ADM (Average Daily Membership) vs. square footage will allow staff to manage the social distancing requirements that more densely populated schools in the Franklin area cannot manage,” said Superintendent Baldwin. “For example, Highlands School’s projected average class size in grades K-3 is 12.8 compared to 18.5 in the Franklin-area schools. It is much easier to

space 13 children 6 feet apart than it is to socially distance 19 students in roughly the same amount of space.”

Highlands School Principal Brian Jetter said his goal is to get all students K-12 to school five days a week beginning Aug. 17 but specifics are still being worked out.

“At the moment, we think it will involve masks for anyone that enters the building whether it is an adult or student K-12; 6-foot distancing in and out of class; very limited visitors, parents or others, who will all have to wear a mask; everyone having temperatures checked before they can enter the building; desks in classrooms 6 feet apart; students and teachers washing their hands three to four times a day; rooms with hand sanitizer; all rooms wiped down with sanitizer wipes at least three times a day; every classroom sprayed

with an electrostatic sanitizer every evening when there is no one else in the building; students and teachers having scheduled breaks outside with social distancing for mask-free breaks; breakfast and lunch eaten in the classrooms for most students; and students going directly to their classrooms in the morning with no congregating in the halls or school foyer,” said Jetter.

Jetter said that scenario is a lot to do and will mean further planning, discussion and finalization to reach the ultimate goal – “Safety for students and employees first.”

Though intentions are good, Jetter said he and staff may not be able to reach their goal of all students for five days a week in school.

“If we do not, we will go
• See IN-SCHOOL page 15

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...TOTERS continued from page 1



This bear enjoys an ice cream snack at Sunset Rocks.

– Photo by

has been cleared.

Mayor Pat Taylor said he expects that to happen towards the end of the year.

Commissioner Amy Patterson said extending the deadline could lead to a similar backlog in the future and suggested maintaining the Aug. 1 deadline with delayed enforcement.

“I can’t penalize somebody if they’ve procrastinated, let’s give them an opportunity to get it,” she said. “But as soon as Reeves doesn’t have a backlog, I say we start enforcing it.”

In August 2019, the Town of Highlands required all residential trash pick-up customers to have a bear-resistant toter by Aug. 1, 2020. A major supplier of the required toters is Reeves Hardware and Town Manager Josh Ward said there’s currently a waiting list.

“They have a waiting list of about 80 people,” said Ward. “They ordered about 200, but they received only a handful and were sold out immediately. They do not know when they’ll get all 200 in, but there is definitely a backlog at Reeves.”

Commissioners are aware there are other ways to purchase a toter and there are more expensive models available but felt this was a fair way to address the issue.

The approval did not need to come to a vote, as long as the Board reached a consensus on the policy.

Mayor Pat Taylor said the requirement to purchase a toter was made last year to minimize the problem with bears getting into trash and for the health and safety of the Town’s sanitation workers. Bear resistant toters are lifted using a mechanical arm on the truck; regular trash cans force crews to lift the cans themselves which has affected the Town’s Workman’s Comp costs.

Taylor added if the Town were to purchase the toters for customers, it would cost approx. \$800,000-\$1M and sanitation rates would have to be increased.

“By people buying them, it helps us hold down our rates on residential pickup because we’d have to charge a lot more money for residential rates, and right now \$20 is a real good value for two pick-ups a week,” he said. “I appreciate the people in town who have already bought the toters and I hope the rest of the people purchase them as soon as possible.”

Public Works Director Lamar Nix said about 60%-70% of residential customers have purchased toters and that has already helped reduce problems with bears.

“The bear situation has very much improved,” said Nix. “They’re not 100% bear-proof, but they’re pretty close to it. And that situation has helped. The problem we’ve had with the bears are predominantly with the people who do not have toters. Of

• See TOTERS page 13



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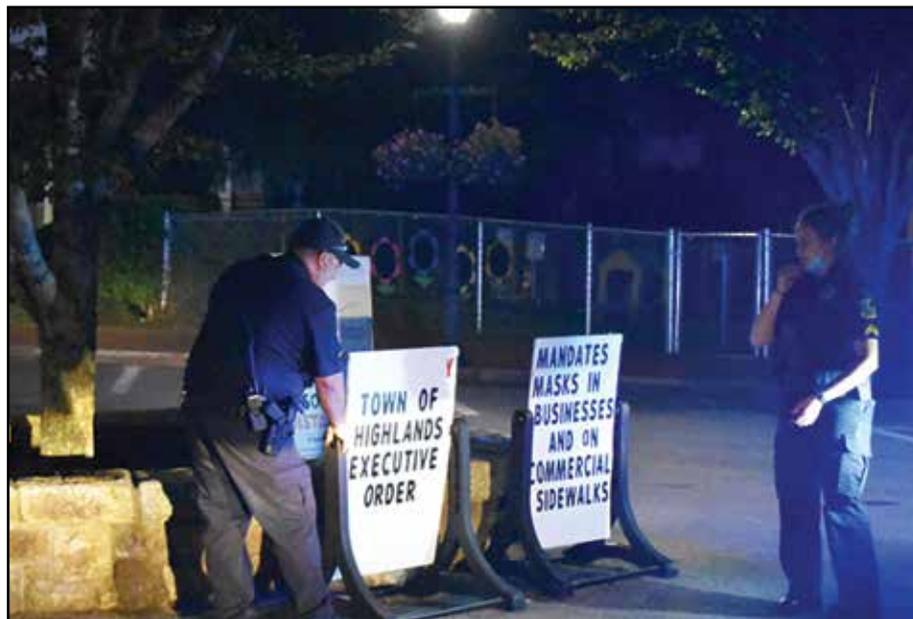
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...MASKS continued from page 1



After Thursday night's Town Board meeting, Highlands Police officers immediately put masks required signs out on the streets.
— Photo by Brian O'Shea

everyone wear face coverings on sidewalks and inside businesses.

The meeting began with public comment from the President and Managing Director of Old Edwards Hospitality Group Richard Delany, who urged the board to adopt stricter regulations than what the state has adopted.

"The Governor's mandate of mandatory face covering in public if unable to socially distance is quite bluntly, just not working," said Delany. "You are not able to safely distance on the sidewalks of B1 [zoned areas] where you're supposed to be 6 feet away from people. The sidewalks in most situations are not even 6 feet wide."

NC Governor Roy Cooper's order mandates wearing face coverings if social distancing is not possible. Delany said he sees about 50% of people on Main Street who are not social distancing and not wearing masks.

"The loophole in what the Governor puts in his mandate says, 'unless you are able to safely distance,' which gives anyone who does not want to wear a mask permission to do so," he said. "I feel this should no longer be a pretty-please request or an honor system, it should be a directive because it is clearly not working in Highlands."

Highlands Police Chief Andrea Holland said the Governor's order is unenforceable and their hands are tied in terms of what action can be taken without a mandate from the Town.

"Law enforcement cannot enforce masks, the only thing we can do is enforce it if the busi-

ness requires it of their patrons, or if patrons refuse to leave the store," said Holland. "It would definitely help us at the police department, having something that was mandated."

Commissioners agreed and felt something should be done immediately.

"I'd act on this right now," said Commissioner Brian Stiehler. "Then you can at least say it's now mandatory in Highlands to have a mask on."

Highlands Mayor Pat Taylor said signs posted along Main Street mandating people wear masks had to be taken down because without a mandate within the Governor's order, or an amendment to the Town's Emergency Ordinance, the signs were unenforceable and therefore inconsistent.

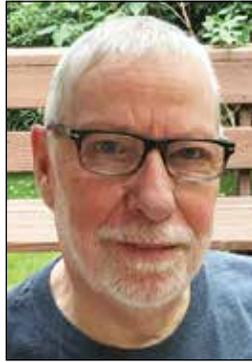
Commissioner Amy Patterson made a motion to require wearing face coverings (covering both nose and mouth) on commercial sidewalks and inside businesses. This does not include Kelsey-Hutchinson Founders Park or outside at the Highlands Rec Park where commissioners felt people could properly social distance.

"If they're not going to let us put it on the signs unless we pass the declaration or ordinance, I would say let's do that right here right now and put it back on the signs tomorrow," said Patterson.

Highlands Police officers put the signs back up on Main Street later last Thursday evening.

• WORD MATTER •

Wants, Needs, and Expectations



Bud Katz

Why we believe anything from the mouths of candidates or office holders is a mystery to me. I know we expect simple solutions to complicated problems, such as why we're not done with the coronavirus pandemic, or how were we've all suddenly been transported back to 1968 and the fight for civil rights, but these people don't earn our trust by lying to us.

What's frightening is that millions of Americans believe claptrap from all sides of the political spectrum.

Thanks to physical distancing and sheltering in place, many of us have had time to consider and perhaps reevaluate our priorities. One thing is clear to me: without our health, nothing else matters.

As I've written previously, when my daughters were young and impressionable I instilled in them a singular notion: always remember what's really important. Life for many of us is a constant quest, or struggle, for meeting needs and then, to the best of our individual ability, pursuing our wants. As we stumble through perhaps the scariest period in my lifetime, I've considered an idea: what do we, what do I, really need? And, what should I expect from society in terms of meeting those needs?

I believe society should meet the basic NEEDS of every citizen living in America. Believe it or not, for the most part, we do. Now, that's needs, not wants. And, we all should contribute, through taxes, toward the goal of creating that kind of just and compassionate society. After all, who doesn't believe in justice and compassion?

We can have a conversation about what constitutes true needs – national security, including secure borders, a safe place to live, enough to eat, basic health-care, a K-12 education, clean air and water, transportation, care for our infirm and elderly, care for our veterans, well-maintained physical infrastructure – but it should be the job of elected officials on all levels to collect taxes and invest them in OUR needs, and not just those of their donors.

As far as individual wants are concerned, we should expect every opportunity to address those on our own. That means we should all work for what we want. Smart phones? Faster cars? Bigger houses? Designer clothes? Rich food? A second home? Toys and games? Luxury

travel? You want these things? Work for them. Don't expect society to provide them.

Somehow, some of us believe that "all men are created equal" meant that everyone is entitled to have what everyone else has. Sorry, but no. First, we all don't want the same things. That's why each of us should pursue our aspirations without expectation we're going to get everything we want for nothing. Second, each of us, without regard for

race, age, religion, national origin, gender, etc., should be able to live in our nation secure in that we're not going to have to fight or beg in order to just survive.

A society like this would not be utopian, nor would it come without significant investment. But, since the majority of us are a paycheck or two from requiring assistance, we should consider some mechanism for ensuring both our national and individual survival.

Want to call me a socialist? Fine, but you'd be wrong. No one is suggesting the government take ownership of the means of our national production, which is the prime tenet of socialism. And please, don't confuse socialism with communism, and don't confuse either of these economic systems with fascism or totalitarianism. In other words, please stop comparing us to either Denmark or Venezuela.

We are a democratic republic with a capitalist economy that should work for all of us, not just those at the top. How about some compassion for the neediest among us?

None of this infringes on anyone's freedoms, but on that subject, freedom isn't free. Taxes already pay for a robust national defense, as well as border and homeland security. They also provide a variety of services such as Medicare, Medicaid, the VA, SNAP, environmental protections, social safety-net programs and emergency services. We need only track the human and economic costs of fighting this damn pandemic to understand this.

None of us need or want lies disguised as promises from elected officials and candidates for office. If something sounds too good to be true, chances are it is. Addressing our basic needs, especially for those on the margins of American society should be baked into our democracy for all of us. After all, we might find ourselves in need one day.

...TOTERS continued from page 11

course, until we get compliance with that, the guys are still picking up a lot of heavy cans, especially when we have wet weather. As soon as we get compliance with it, everybody will be better off on many levels."

Law against feeding bears in the works

Taylor and several commissioners recently met with Cynthia Strain from the B.E.A.R. (Bear Education and Resources) Task Force, and Ashley Hobbs, Biologist from the NC Wildlife and Resources Commission in charge of the BearWise program; to discuss making Highlands a BearWise Community and other bear related issues, including feeding bears.

"We discussed the feeding of bears, which has become a problem in Highlands," said Taylor. "Some VRBOs even encourage people to throw out their dinner scraps in their yard to entice bears to come and eat so they'll be able to see a bear while they're staying at a VRBO in Highlands."

Hobbs said NC Wildlife Resources does not have a law that prohibits feeding bears, it needs to be a municipal ordinance. Taylor and Patterson each wrote up drafts of ordinances with some input

from Hobbs and hoped to present it to the board at the meeting on July 15, but more work needs to be done

"I was thinking we might have something to give to the board of commissioners tonight, but we need to go back with the staff, talk with the chief of police and code enforcement officer and come up with a more specific ordinance to put before the board to consider," said Taylor.

For Highlands to become a BearWise Community, Taylor said there needs to be an educational component and a process to receive feedback from the community on bear-related issues. To set that up, more work needs to be done.

"I really think what we need is to do more work on this relationship on how we would work with B.E.A.R Task Force and others," said Taylor. For instance the idea of bear webpage that identifies bear sightings or activities was discussed, but all of these things need to be discussed further and we'll be working with staff, B.E.A.R Task Force, and BearWise Committee to come up with a more definitive structure for that relationship."

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Community says hello to loved ones

By Brian O'Shea
Plateau Daily News

Chestnut Hill of Highlands and the Eckerd Living Center recently held campus parades to give residents a chance to see family and friends since visitations are prohibited because of COVID-19.

Chestnut Executive Director Linda Tiffany said it's been difficult for residents not being able to see visitors and this was a chance to do it in a safe manner. Cars loaded with family and friends drove through the living facilities' campuses and was greatly appreciated by residents.

"They loved, they absolutely loved it," said Tiffany. "There was one lady who when she saw her daughter the expression on her face was just priceless, it was so precious. They just haven't been able to see their families in so long. Every one of them thought it was wonderful."

Tiffany said staff at Chestnut Hill have been pulling extra duties to help keep residents' minds occupied and active during the COVID-19 pandemic, and she's thankful for their efforts.

"It was a group effort to get this all together and I thought they did fabulously," she said. "And we're so thankful Captain Jolly from the [Highlands] Police Department was there showing his support."

Plans are in the works to hold visitation parades at Chestnut Hill once a month from now on.

Eckerd Living Center

ELC Activities Director Chase Nelson said giving residents a chance to see their loved ones makes a world of difference.

"It means so much to them, you can't put it into words," she said. "It's on all of their faces. When they see their people it's a different connection. They have a smile of pure joy on their face."

Cars lined the campus of the Highlands-Cashiers Hospital where the ELC is located and included members of the Highlands Police Department, Highlands Fire & Rescue, and the Mountain Garden Club.

"The Mountain Garden Club, the Police and Fire Departments, just a phone call and they were excited to do it and be a part of it," said Nelson. "That made it even more special for our residents."

She added that it takes a lot to make these parades happen, and she couldn't do it without such a dedicated staff.

"A huge shoutout to the staff, the logistics to get everyone outside safely is a lot," said Nelson. "A lot of places can't do it, but we can pull it off."



...IN-SCHOOL continued from page 10

with another goal. So, I would ask parents to wait until we officially announce the specifics of opening school for the coming year – hopefully by Aug. 3. But we still have a lot of work and planning to do,” he said.

For those families who don't want to risk in-person school, Macon County is creating a Virtual Academy for grades K-12. Any Macon County student can enroll for a minimum of nine weeks. After the nine-week period, they can choose to resume in-person school or continue with the Virtual Academy.

Meanwhile, Jetter said he doesn't know the reasons, but this year there is growth in student enrollment from local and Summit Charter School transfers.

As of Tuesday, July 21, there are 409 students enrolled but he said that number can change daily.

So far for the 2020-'21 school year there are two Kindergarten classes for 27 students; two 1st-grade classes for 34 students; two 2nd-grade classes for 21 students; two 3rd-grade classes for 29 students; one 4th grade class for 24 students; one 5th grade class for 20 students; two 6th-grade classes for 35 students; two 7th-grade sections for 47 students; two 8th-

grade sections for 32 students; four per day, 22 9th-graders; four per day, 45 10th-graders; four per day, 43 11th-graders and four per day 29 12th-graders.

Due to the number of students currently enrolled, the 4th-grade class was closed two weeks ago to discretionary students. A discretionary student is a student who lives outside the Highlands School District.

Normally, those students are considered for enrollment, but available classrooms and teachers are the issue this year.

Everyone who enters the school will pass through a temperature taking machine that looks a lot like a metal detector. All schools in the system that requested these machines were given them – Highlands asked for and received five.

A person walks through it and the machine takes the temperature. If the temperature is 100.4 degrees or higher, the attendant is alerted. The person then goes to the office where another temperature is taken for verification. If the temperature verifies at 100.4 degrees or higher, and if the person is a student, they would be isolated, and a parent called to come get them. If it is an adult (even a

teacher), the adult is removed from the building.

In both cases, the Health Department will be called, and the person's name and contact information given so the Health Department can follow-up.

Macon County Schools released another parent survey whose results will be collected until 4 p.m. Wed. July 29. This survey is site specific, therefore, parents are asked to complete it for each of their children.

The link: <http://www.macon.k12.nc.us/resources/parent-resources/reopeningplansurvey/>

Once the survey results are gathered, the Macon County Board of Education will hold at continued meeting Thursday, July 30 at 6 p.m. to announce the re-opening plans for the district – specifically in the Franklin area. – which will be based on the wishes and responses from the surveys completed by district parents.

– Kim Lewicki

Macon County Reports Second Death Related to COVID-19

A Macon County resident diagnosed with COVID-19 has died. The person was over the age of 65 and had underlying health conditions. To protect the family's privacy, no further information will be released about this patient.

“We want to express our deepest sympathies to the family and their loved ones during this difficult time,” stated Kathy McGaha, Macon County Health Director. “Our message to the community continues to be: wear a mask, wash your hands, and wait 6 feet from others. Continue to practice social distancing and limit your trip outside your home to help to slow the spread of COVID-19.”

The entire state of North Carolina is under a “Safer at Home” executive order, currently under phase two with masks required to be worn when social distancing cannot be maintained. Older adults and people of any age who have serious underlying medical conditions might be at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19; however, anyone of any age can become infected with this illness. The community is asked to strictly follow the governor's orders and continue to practice social distancing, as well as safe hygiene measures such as hand washing and frequently cleaning touched objects and surfaces.

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Bracing for by-mail voting surge like NC has never seen

Pace of NC by-mail absentee ballot requests running four times higher than at this point in 2016, as officials prep for election impact of mail-in surge

By Jordan Wilkie
Carolina Public Press

The mass surge of by-mail ballot requests in North Carolina is triggering a cascade of legal, political and procedural changes that is reshaping the November election.

So far, almost 70,000 North Carolina voters have requested absentee ballots for the November election, a four-times increase over this point in 2016, according to Catawba College politics and history professor Michael Bitzer.

Among battleground states, North Carolina historically has one of the lowest rates of using vote-by-mail. Bitzer predicts that 30%-40% of votes this year will be cast by mail, compared with 5% in the 2016 election, an increase primarily driven by the COVID-19 pandemic.

This means that county boards of election are preparing for administrative hurdles they have never faced in a year when voter turnout is predicted to break records.

"It's going to be a large undertaking, one that no county in the state has ever seen," said Durham County Director of

Elections Derek Bowens.

"It's going to take some creativity and a lot more resources than what probably have been budgeted for most counties."

Some consequences will be county-specific, like some small counties relying on the state Board of Elections to provide high-speed ballot scanners. Others will be statewide, or possibly even nationwide, like the possible delay in knowing the outcome of races for weeks after Election Day, including U.S. House, Senate and presidential tallies.

Because laws and procedures rule election administration, many of the challenges that election officials will face in the fall are predictable. With five months left before Election Day — but only six weeks until ballots are mailed to voters — whether the complex web of courts, legislature, politicians, election officials and voters act in ways to minimize those challenges, or blow them out of proportion, remains to be seen.

The results may take some time

Voter education and expectation-setting are key to a successful election, according to election officials and voting rights activists.

North Carolina voters are used to knowing most of their election results on election night. This year, due to the surge in by-mail voting, it may not be clear who won the election for at least 10 days — the time it will take for county election officials to process all the ballots. The process is normal, but North Carolinians have not seen this before.

In 2020, will politicians and the voters who support them accept legitimate outcomes in the elections, or will they use confusion over normal and expected election processes to sow doubt about the results?

President Donald Trump has tweeted misinformation about by-mail ballots for several weeks now, despite voting by mail himself, and still repeats falsehoods alleging voter fraud cost him the popular vote in the 2016 election.

North Carolina's politicians are also laying the groundwork for voter mistrust, using accusations and hypotheticals that have little grounding in reality.

In 2016, now-Gov. Roy Cooper defeated then-Gov. Pat McCrory by 10,277 votes. After a series of investigations, lawsuits and unsubstantiated accusations of fraud failed to materialize additional votes in his favor, McCrory conceded the race a month after the election.

In 2020, it is well within reason that North Carolina could have more than 10,000 outstanding votes to be counted after Election Day if 30% of voters choose to vote by mail, as is predicted.

Even in a best-case scenario, where everything goes smoothly, those votes will not be counted and results won't be reported for another 10 days — days in which politicians will know how much they are winning or losing their election by and how many of those outstanding votes they will need to gain or to hold on to power.

How it works

By state law, counties are required to accept absentee ballots up until 5 p.m. on the Friday after the election, as long as the ballots are postmarked for before 5 p.m. Election Day.

Those legitimate by-mail ballots received on Election Day and the three days after are not counted — and the results are not reported — for another week after that.

In the past, both in North Carolina and around the country, voters returned their

by-mail ballots in a large wave in the final days of the election and in the few days after.

The more ballots counted after Election Day, the more likely it is that those ballots can change the ultimate outcome of the various races — for local, county and state contests. It is even possible that the presidential election could come down to ballots counted after Election Day in North Carolina and other pivotal states.

"It goes with what you're saying that if you have a tremendous number show up, that could be a difference statewide and countywide in a particular race," said Michael Dickerson, Mecklenburg County's director of elections.

The result comes down to a matter of margins. If there is a huge victory on election night in a given race, the outstanding votes will be less likely to change the outcome. But the more ballots that remain left to count, the more likely election outcomes in some close races will hang in the balance.

This possibility is well known to elections officials, politicians and voting rights activists. Tomas Lopez, the director of the voting rights group Democracy NC, is also worried about what could go wrong.

"I think the public should just start getting comfortable with the notion that we may not know the winners of certain races or all races on election night, whether those are local races, statewide or the presidential election," Lopez said.

More (legitimate) delays

County boards of elections, despite best efforts, may not be able to count all the outstanding ballots during the 10 days that the law allows them. If that happens, they can ask for an extension.

"If, despite due diligence by election officials, the initial counting of all the votes has not been completed by that time, the county board may hold the canvass meeting a reasonable time thereafter," state election law reads.

A real chance exists that many counties could need an extension. By-mail ballots are onerous to process, and large counties will likely have thousands to go through, in addition to the normal postelection processes they are expected to complete.

To review and count a mail ballot, technically called a "mail-in absentee ballot" in

• See VOTING page 17

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...VOTING continued from page 16

North Carolina, county boards of election need to review the ballot envelope to make sure all the required information is filled out, debate any questionable ballots, sort them into accepted and rejected piles, vote on their decisions, then have elections staff remove the ballots from the envelopes and scan them.

Some ballots will not scan — like wrinkled dollar bills unusable at vending machines — and officials will need to duplicate these onto fresh ballots by three-person teams. This takes a lot of time.

Small counties will have the benefit of reviewing fewer ballots. On the back end, though, they do not have the high-speed scanners needed to count hundreds of ballots in short order and cannot afford to buy them. Instead, all but the biggest counties will hand-feed ballots through a scanner one at a time.

To help, the state Board of Elections bought 13 high-speed scanners that “can be deployed and used by counties across the state,” according to Pat Gannon, a state board spokesperson. That could set up a never-before-seen juggling act whereby counties use a scanner then send it off to another county.

What could go wrong

By-mail ballots are canceled or rejected at far greater rates than North Carolina ballots submitted in any other type of voting, especially for Black and Latinx-identified voters, according to Bitzer’s research.

A rejected ballot does not mean a voter did not ultimately get to vote, though Bitzer said his findings show that 11% of voters who requested a by-mail ballot in 2016 did not have a vote counted in that election.

A number of administrative hurdles put a special onus on the voter and are not present in other types of voting. The obvious example is needing to mail the ballot in on time.

This year, with the U.S. Postal Service facing budget-

ary shortfalls before COVID-19 further complicated mail delivery, voting rights advocates fear slow, misdelivered or undelivered mail service could disenfranchise many voters through no fault of their own.

North Carolina also requires the envelopes carrying by-mail ballots to be signed by a witness and by the voter, and to have certain information included by the voter on the envelopes. If any of that is missing, the ballot will be rejected by state law. Those kinds of rejections are ripe for legal challenges, especially in close or contested elections.

Lopez worries about a situation where more rejected ballots exist than the margin in an election.

“What we would really want to avoid is a scenario where people are confused over ... the outcome of an election because of a protracted struggle over absentee ballots,” Lopez said.

U.S. history is littered with examples of power struggles over which ballots to count and which to discard. The best-known recent example comes from Florida in the 2000 general election. Poorly designed ballots and voting machines left more ballots in doubt than the margin of victory, keeping the presidential election from being decided for weeks until the U.S. Supreme Court intervened and halted recounts, giving the victory to George W. Bush.

Lopez’s group, Democracy NC, is suing the state, seeking a broad range of election reforms that he says will help the election run more smoothly on the front end and will help avoid confusion after Election Day.

The state legislature passed a law that addressed some of the concerns in the litigation and helps fund the state’s efforts to run a major election during a pandemic. The state board is taking somewhat controversial steps to address others.

Running the hurdles

For voters, voting by mail requires a two-step process — assum-

ing everything goes right the first time.

First, request a ballot.

Second, after receiving the ballot, vote and return it.

On the administrative side, the first hurdle is for county elections offices to get the 70,000-and-counting requested ballots out to voters starting on Sept. 4.

Counties across the state are hiring more staff earlier than they normally would just to pack the ballot envelopes for mailing. The real strain on elections staff and budgets will come when voters start mailing ballots back.

“We haven’t even seen the peak of requests (that will be) coming in,” Bowens said. “And then you’ve got to balance that against all the ballots that will be coming back.”

In Mecklenburg, the county is hiring 25 staff members to stuff envelopes, compared with its usual 10. In Pitt County, Elections Director Dave Davis budgeted for a call center but will have to redirect those funds to staff processing by-mail ballots.

There is some good news to this.

“The absentee for us here is going to be extra work, but the benefit will be helping to take the weight off for the voters and the workers during One-Stop and Election Day,” Davis said.

A recent change in election law gives counties more time to process the ballots that come in. Boards of election now have five meetings prior to Election Day when they can process absentee ballots and run them through a scanner. The results are not printed until Election Day.

Though there is no statewide process for dealing with the rejected ballots, the state board plans on releasing guidance soon, according to Gannon.

As it stands, counties can decide whether to notify a voter automatically if a ballot is rejected. Many county boards of election, including all those interviewed for this story, automatically mail the voter a new ballot with a letter explaining why the previous ballot

was rejected.

However, this process takes time. Every election, a wave of ballot returns arrives within a week of Election Day. If those ballots have problems, officials don’t have enough time to mail new ballots to voters.

The state board is working on a new online system allowing voters to track their ballots, but election directors do not know yet what that system, set to launch Sept. 1, will look like.

“The onus, to some extent, is going to have to be on the voter to follow up on ballot returns,” Bowens said.

That means checking their ballot status online, calling their county’s board of elections or voting in person. As long as a by-mail ballot has not been accepted, voters can still go to a polling place, ask that their mail-in ballot be spoiled and cast a ballot.

Elections directors are asking

two things of voters this fall. For those using the absentee-by-mail option, vote early. That will give the county more time to process the ballot before Election Day and, should there be a problem with the ballot envelope, to contact the voter.

For voters mailing their ballots, send them at least a week before Election Day and make sure they are clearly postmarked with the date and time. Voters can also drop absentee ballots off in-person at the Board of Elections office.

Election directors are also asking for patience.

“Voters, bear with us,” Bowens said. “Your elections administrators in the state are working around the clock, literally, to try to make this thing be as successful as it can be for our state. ... We’re in new territory but we’re working hard to make sure everybody stays healthy and votes.”

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• SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING •

Proverbs 3:5

• PLACES TO WORSHIP •

John 3:16



Reaching for Hope

Pastor Randy Lucas
Highlands United Methodist
Church

A frightened child in a world of woe
seeks to find, desires to know
that maybe somewhere someone sees
and so she prays, upon her knees.

A widower kneels by the graveside, alone
tracing the name of his wife in the stone.

And wonders if time will lesson the pain,
praying quietly there in the steady rain.

And the wife who wakes with swollen black eye,
and stays in the marriage, but isn't sure why.

Closing the door so her husband won't hear
prays to the God, she longs will draw near.

The world can be harsh, and life can be cruel,
and creation itself, cries out for renewal.

• See SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING page 19

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Pastor Steve Ridenhour will officiate

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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

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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

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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.

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706.746.3144 • 696 Sky Valley Way #447,

Pastor Gary Hewins

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

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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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Hwy 107N. • Glensville, 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

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Pastor Zane Talley

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

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743-2583 • Independent Bible Church

Sun: 10:30 a.m. at Big Ridge Baptist Church,

4224 Big Ridge Road (4.5 miles from NC 107)

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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.

SCALY MOUNTAIN CHURCH OF GOD

290 Buck Knob Road; Pastor Donald G. Bates • 526-3212

Sun.: School: 10 a.m.; Worship: 10:45 a.m.; Worship: 6 p.m.

SHORTOFF BAPTIST CHURCH

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

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

ST. JUDE'S CATHOLIC CHURCH

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Thursday: Noon Healing Service with Eucharist.

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WHITESIDE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Rev. Sam Forrester/Cashiers

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• POLICE & FIRE REPORTS •

Highlands Police entries from July 7. Only the names of persons arrested, issued a Class-3 misdemeanor or public officials have been used.

July 7

• At 11:56 a.m., officers responded to a 2-vehicle accident in Highlands Plaza parking lot.

July 9

• At 1:30 p.m., officers received a report of cyber stalking on a fake Facebook Account.

July 10

• At 7:38 a.m., officers responded to a two-vehicle accident on US 64 west at Mirror Lake.

July 13

• At 5:47 p.m., Joshua William Fagg, 30, of Franklin, NC, was arrested on a warrant from another jurisdiction.

July 15

• At 5:34 p.m., officers received a report of larceny of an iPhone 8, credit and debit cards and a drivers license.

July 16

• At 10:10 a.m., officers responded to a

two-vehicle accident in the Town of Highlands Parking lot.

July 19

• At 1:55 p.m., officers received a report of shoplifting at Potpourri on Main Street.

The Highlands Fire & Rescue log from July 15.

July 15

• At noon, the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Whiteside Mountain Road.

July 16

• At 5:51 a.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Wilson Road.

July 17

• At 9:45 a.m., the dept. was first-re-

sponders to a residence on Ed. Henry Road.

• At 1:25 p.m., the dept. responded to a Co2 alarm at a residence on Red Bird Lane.

July 18

• At 2:18 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Horse Cove Road.

July 19

• At 6:55 p.m., the dept. was called to investigate the source of smoke in the vicinity of US 64 west.

July 20

• At 9:27 a.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Cottage Lane.

Highlands Police Department is Seeking Information

The Highlands Police Department is requesting information in the following cases:

A Dewalt table saw and a Dewalt chop saw were reported stolen from a job site on Holt Circle during the weekend of July 10. The Police Department is looking for any information on the location of these tools, or any suspicious activity observed in the area of Holt Circle during the July 10 weekend.

The Police Department is also looking for information on vandalism which occurred at the Highlands Skate Park at the Highlands Civic Center. During the evening hours of July 19 the park was vandalized by graffiti painted on the concrete.

If you have any information on either of these crimes, please contact Highlands Police Department at (828) 526-9431 or email Investigator Tim Broughton at tim.broughton@highlandscnc.org

– Notice –

Due to COVID-19, the Highlands Fire & Rescue Department will not be having its annual Open House this year. The event may be scheduled for later in the fall, but no plans have been made as of yet.

...SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING continued from 18

And the broken and battered, in trying to cope
are desperately praying and reaching for hope.

And hope is not fickle, nor hidden away
but found in the open, and in light of day.

A gesture, a nod, a smile, a word,
and quietly its soft, gentle whisper is heard.

And comfort caresses, and faith is restored
when the pleas of the hurting have not been ignored.

So, listen dear friend, tie a knot in that rope.
And please keep on praying, and reaching for hope.

...MAYOR continued from 2

there is a backlog of orders for toters at the local hardware store. The board decided to keep the August 1 deadline for the toters but will delay enforcement of the requirement until the backlog of orders is gone. That plan means folks still have some time to convert to bear-resistant toters. In the meantime, the town will continue to advertise about the requirement in the newspaper. I will keep writing and talking about it.

• 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.



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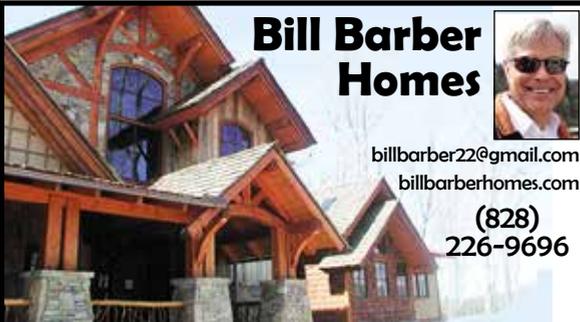
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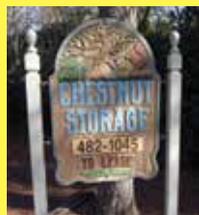
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Items are priced to go! Good quality home furnishings and accessories! 132 Strawberry Lane | Flat Mountain Estates, Highlands, NC. MASK REQUIRED ITEMS.

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CATS/KITTENS – \$5 each. orange & white or Tan & white. Text 828-200-0397

PROCAM INFARED HEATER, new in box, 15000 BTU. \$125.00 941-920-6016 (cell). (6/18)

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

E-Z UP 10X10 VENDOR TENT with sidewalls & weights. Excellent condition. \$170. 828-526-1031 (st. 1/30)

FIREWOOD FOR SALE. Call or text Matt at 706-239-0880. (st. 9/26)

WANTED

COMIC BOOKS – Buy / Sell. Call Bob @ 302-530-1109 (9/24)

TO BUY COLT PYTHON. THE OLDER THE BETTER. Call 526-9803. (st. 7/2)

FULL HOUSE GALLERY in Highlands Plaza is now open and accepting CONSIGNMENT FURNITURE. Please call or text Susan at 828-526-6004. (st. 3/19)

WANTED TO BUY: US & Foreign COINS & CURRENCY. Top prices paid, free appraisals, call Dan at 828-421-1616 or email danhazzer@gmail.com (8/13)

HARLEY DAVIDSON MOTORCYCLE MEMORA-

BILIA. Call Sandra La Jeunesse at 828-371-2214.

HELP WANTED FULL TIME COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT MANAGER -- Pisgah Legal Services provides free civil legal assistance to low-income people in Western North Carolina. This position will coordinate fundraising efforts, manage volunteers, conduct outreach events and build and maintain relationships in Highlands/Cashiers. Full job description and application instructions: <https://www.pisgahlegal.org/engagementmanager/> (7/23)

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)

LUXURY LODGE MANAGER needed for live in position. Prefer a local couple/individual to entertain, offer cooking classes and maintain facility while enjoying living in an exceptional facility. Must have impeccable references and some experience in hospitality/maintenance. mrpaulkrk@yahoo.com. (st. 6/11)

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)

NOW HIRING PART-TIME AND FULL-TIME ASSOCIATES FOR RETAIL STORE. Must be willing to work week-ends and holidays. Call Shannon at 526-8864 or email Shannon@dutchmansdesigns.com (st. 6/4)

NOW HIRING AT WILD THYME. We are looking for a sous chef, waitstaff, dishwasher and hostess. Must have positive attitude and reliable transportation. Apply in person at Wild Thyme Gourmet in Town Square on Main Street in Highlands. Please no phone calls. (st. 5/28)

WOLFGANGS is looking for a Sous Chef with a solid track record. for dinner prep and service. Need to be creative. Also waitstaff, backer. Best award of Wine Spectator. Please email mindygreen@me.com for either position. (st. 5/28)

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JOIN OUR TEAM! Nectar Juice Bar (located inside Whole Life Market) is now hiring! Are you looking for a fun, healthy-minded individual looking for full-time, year-round work? Experience is not necessary, but kitchen or barista skills a plus. Competitive pay! Apply at Whole Life Market, 680 N. 4th St., Highlands.

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