

Highlands Newspaper

FREE Every Thursday

Volume 17, Number 26 Real-Time News, Weather & WebCams: HighlandsInfo.com Thursday, June 25, 2020

TB OKs requests for outdoor activities

Rec Park Pool and Farmers Market are open now with restrictions

Staying afloat amidst COVID restrictions, has meant thinking outside-the-box for nonprofits across Highlands and Cashiers.

Many have offered "virtual" programing which while a nice gesture, hasn't done anything to bolster the bottom line.

Thursday night commissioners heard requests and made decisions to help several nonprofits

• See **ACTIVITIES** page 14

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Highlands' nonprofits face major cutbacks

By Andie Chilson

COVID-19 has hit nonprofits across the country harder than most other professional sectors, and Highlands is no exception. Mass layoffs and economic devastation have been especially common among nonprofits that rely heavily on close physical contact, such as museums, theaters and childcare programs.

Nonprofits have also been adversely affected by the pandemic in the marked decrease in their donor-based funding. Businesses are less able to donate freely when they are struggling to keep their own staff on board, and individuals and families across the country are having to tighten their belts as the unemployment rate reaches staggering heights.

• See **NONPROFITS** page 16



Highlands' new Police Chief Andrea Holland (center) surrounded by her family, her department members and others from the Macon County law enforcement community after her swearing-in to office on Thursday, June 18 at the Community Building in Highlands.

Holland named Highlands Police Chief

On Thursday, June 18, friends, family and co-workers from across the law enforcement spectrum turned out to celebrate the swearing-in of Highlands' new

Police Chief, Lt. Detective Andrea Holland.

In a statement provided prior to the swearing in, the mayor said after a thorough search for the

new police chief and following comprehensive interviews and the vetting of 13 candidates by the public safety committee consist-

• See **HOLLAND** page 12

Census 2020 matters!

By Brittney Lofthouse

The unprecedented challenges presented by COVID-19 could have far reaching implications affecting communities across the country for the next 10 years. Stay-at-home orders were issued around the same time that the 2020 Census was gearing up to reach the masses, an effort that has clearly failed based on the numbers thus far.

The U.S. Constitution mandates that a census be taken ev-

• See **CENSUS** page 10

Cawthorn to face off with Davis

By Brittney Lofthouse

Voters across Western North Carolina spoke volumes during the Republican Primary run-off by casting 65 percent (30,000+) votes for a 24-year old 8th genera-

• See **CAWTHORN** page 10

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• THE PLATEAU'S POSITION •

• MAYOR ON DUTY •

Highlands is on the upswing

It was a good weekend for me, and I suspect for many Highlanders. At this beginning of summer, we finally got a break from the cloudy days.

I have been visiting the downtown and merchants on Saturday morning since the beginning of Phase 2. At my first visits I met with merchants who were very cautious and concerned about sales versus Covid 19 protocols.

This past Saturday I noticed the business folks were more upbeat. While every Main Street merchant I talk with always wants and thinks they should have more business, I got the impression that folks were optimistic that Highlands was now making a comeback. As I walked around Main Street and 4th at about 10:30a I would look into the stores and see merchants busily getting ready for customers. I loved it, what a major change from the gloom and doom of March, April and most of May.

Let's hope Governor Cooper sees good numbers on Friday and moves the



Highlands Mayor
Patrick Taylor

state into a full Phase 3. While I am optimistic, it is no time to let our guards down. This damn COVID 19 could be with us for a long time.

Some folks believe Governor Cooper may institute across the state a mandatory mask or face covering requirement while inside public spaces. If he does, I will be supportive. In Macon County and Highlands we need to do everything possible to stop

the spread and create, as much as possible, a safe environment for our residents and visitors. That effort will be a win for all of us, especially our business community.

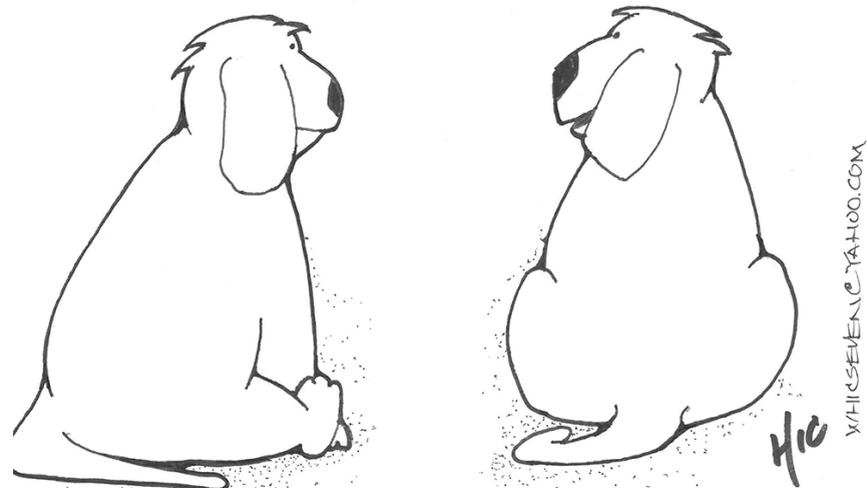
I also want to congratulate and give my full support for our new police chief, Andrea Holland. She garnered unanimous support from all who were involved in the search for the new chief. At her swearing-in ceremony representatives from the highway patrol, sheriff's department and the district attorney were present to show their support.

Chief Holland has the diverse experience, training, and education to make her an outstanding police chief. But more than all those accomplishments, Andrea has a deep commitment to this town and county that will be so important for her leadership and success.

At the Town Board meeting last Thursday night, I urged everyone to respond to the U.S. Census. Macon County and Highlands currently have very low response rates. If we have an undercount in the census, it will hurt our financial, and yes, our political position. State and federal funding are driven by census numbers.

I urge permanent residents to please make sure they respond to the census. There are three ways to respond. Go to 2020Census.gov and file, or call (844) 330-2020 for the telephone option. Finally, there is the old mail-in option. Many of us will see a census packet on our door knobs that a census worker has delivered. Simply fill out the form and put it in the mail. The important thing is that every resident and all households respond.

• HIC'S VIEW •



"Have you ever considered how much our lives would be different if we had pockets."

• 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, 25-Jun	Fri, 26-Jun	Sat, 27-Jun	Sun, 28-Jun
 72°F 58°F	 73°F 60°F	 75°F 61°F	 77°F 63°F
Sunshine and patchy clouds	A stray afternoon t-storm	A thunderstorm in spots	Cloudy
RealFeel® High: 81° Low: 64°	RealFeel® High: 83° Low: 63°	RealFeel® High: 81° Low: 65°	RealFeel® High: 81° Low: 66°

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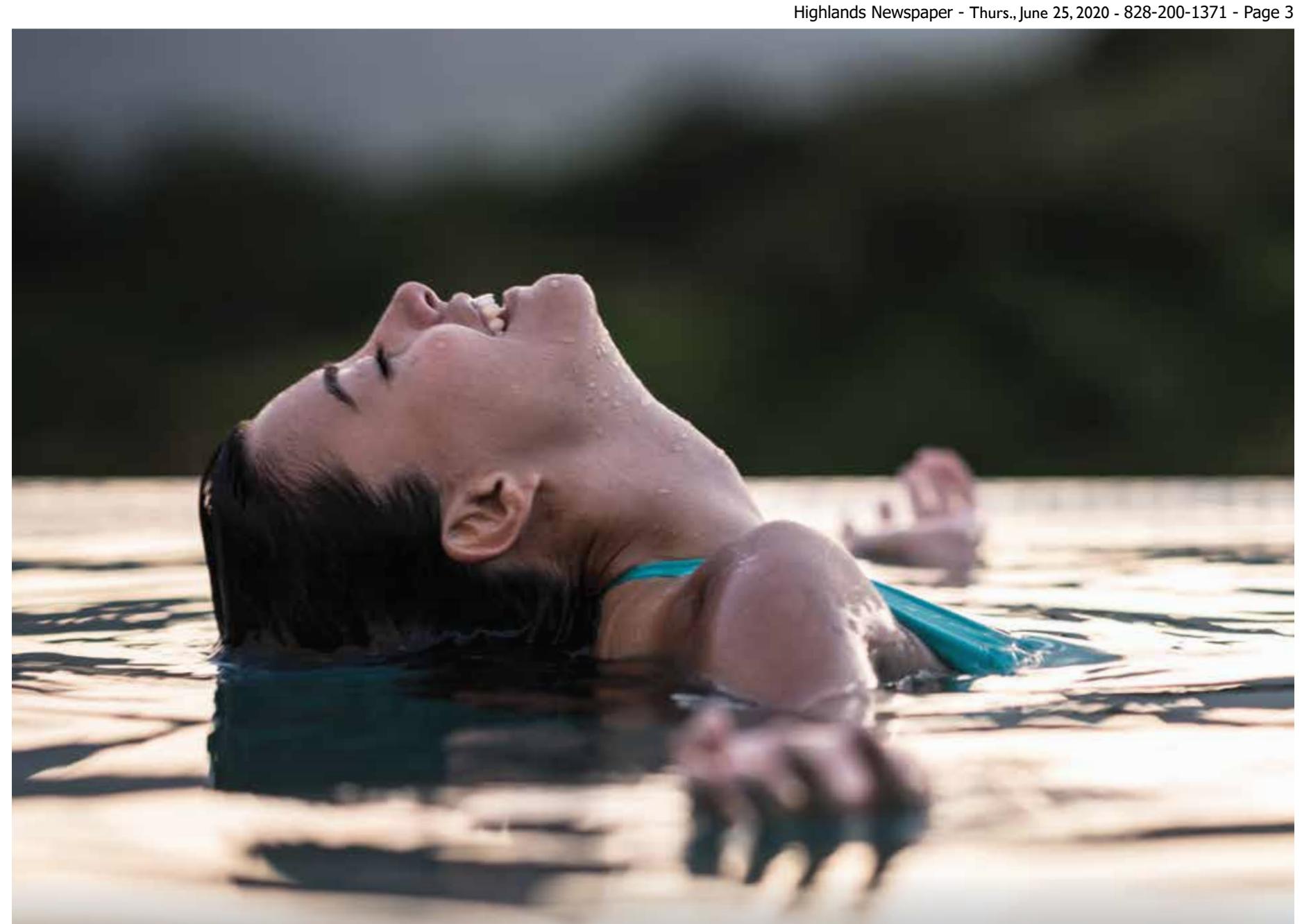
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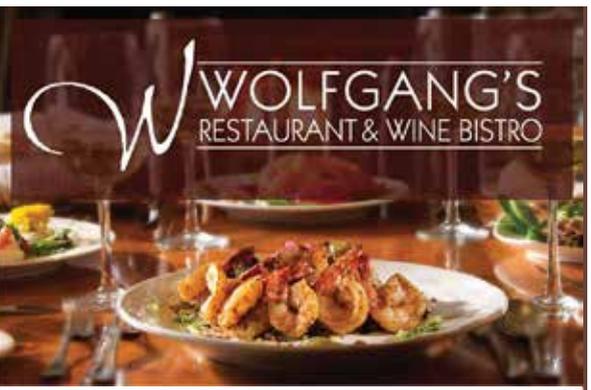
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• OBITUARIES •

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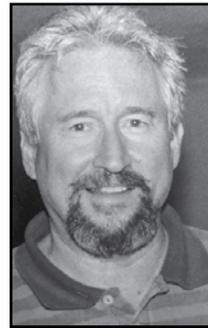
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David Jordan Johnston

David Jordan Johnston, 75, has breathed his last breath. Born on April 18, 1944, in Erie, PA, he died on November 29, 2019, in Asheville, NC. His four sons survive him - Jordan of Flagler Beach, FL, Matthew of Grass Valley, CA, Derrick of Sausalito, CA, and Alex of Highlands, NC.

He is also survived by Toni who was his longtime partner and mother to his children, and six grandchildren, younger brother, sister, nieces, and nephews.

He left his physical body as it succumbed to gastrointestinal issues. Known for his compassion, creativity, optimism, and curiosity. He was a dreamer and a creator.

He graduated from the University of Florida, completing a Master's degree in Business and was an entrepreneur by heart. He helped create many businesses in Macon and Jackson counties, including a cable company that brought cable TV to Highlands, a Glenville lake marina, a real estate organization, and bakery.

His love was land, and he was always looking for a deal, loving to buy and less accustomed to selling.

David was known by many, and his eccentricity was both endearing and humorous. He was happy to bring laughter, even at his own expense. He taught without praise. He inspired to explore. He faced and persevered through many trials, always with a glimmer of hope. He treated all with equal respect and supported many who had nowhere else to go. He cared for those who took advantage of him. He was loved and an individualist at heart, much more likely to help others than ask for help.

We love you forever, Dad, you co-created a life for us, and we are grateful for the full expression of you.

A gathering of gratitude will be taking place at Kelsey-Hutchinson Founders Park in Highlands on July 12, 2020, at 4 PM. Food and drink will be provided. All are welcome.

You can contact us at: caeser22@gmail.com if you have questions.

Patricia 'Patty' Marsh

Patricia "Patty" Marsh, 87, passed away Monday, June 22, 2020 in Highlands, NC. She was born August 24, 1932 in New Kensington, PA and moved to St. Petersburg, FL when she was 9 years old. Patty graduated from St. Petersburg High School and shortly after married her "Sweetie," Alan Marsh. They were married for 68 years before his passing on Feb. 21, 2020.



• See OBITUARIES page 6



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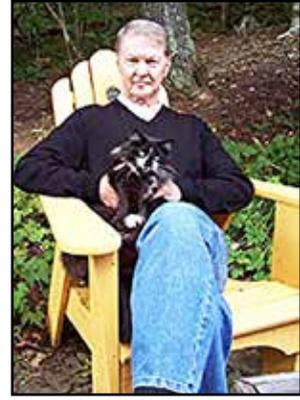
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• THE PAST & THE PRESENT •

Just Getting By



Milton Ready

or lowered much by life's ups and downs. We somehow just got by.

Today we live in a society that celebrates success by wealth, materialism, degrees, titles, recognition, and by all the "stuff" we have whether sports cars, expensive homes, market portfolios, or country club memberships.

Yet let me suggest that we honor as proud examples those who are just doing OK, just getting by somehow in an increasingly complicated, messy, unstable economic and human environment.

Like my parents, their lives probably involve intensive, even exhausting labor, uncertain outcomes, constant misfortune, shifting circumstances, and adaptive, individual abilities that shape that effort. They're somehow just getting by.

Theirs is a remarkable achievement that endures from generation to generation.

As my mother once said, "What matters in life is that you did the best you could with the tools you had" even though qualitatively the "tools" you're given aren't as good as those of a lot of other folks.

These days, just getting by should be celebrated as a success, one that makes us all proud.

• Milton Ready is a retired history professor and author of many books, both non-fiction and fiction, including *The Tar Heel State: A History of North Carolina*, *Snake Eyes*, a southern crime thriller, and *Oh Carolina*, a series of short stories about early North Carolina.

The present time we live, the "now" of our existence, surely must be a very thin place indeed, one made more so by an unimagined pandemic we still don't fully understand.

So what happens when life seems to turn against you, when things go wrong and all our markers of success suddenly dissipate?

What happens if you follow all the rules, work hard, get the best education you can, stay out of trouble, save a little yet face a future made more uncertain each day?

What if you now live in a world that, by present standards, can't be fixed?

Wouldn't it be nice to have a Forever stamp we could have used in a great yesterday now seemingly not returnable?

What if you're a mountaineer who lives in western North Carolina where your hardscrabble life hasn't been easy in the best of times?

Or a young person working in Highlands in a restaurant or retail store that may never operate like before?

Or just graduating and wondering if college or work will exist for you in the future?

You could be overwhelmed by a sense of hopelessness in your life but, if you're a mountaineer who matches our surrounding majestic mountains, you'll somehow find a way to just get by.

Let me start by not offering myself as a model for success in this brave new covaid world. Instead, let me recommend my parents or perhaps your grand-

parents as better ones.

Yes, I did grow up in Texas in what USA Today described as two of the most miserable places in America to live, Willis and Pasadena.

My family of five or six shared a single bathroom in an 800 square-foot home, all my brothers piled into one bedroom with me, no air conditioning until well after I left.

My mother only went to the sixth grade and Dad to the seventh grade, and, through inconstant, temporary work like slapdash painting, bad carpentry, working on road crews where asphalt melted in the Texas heat, waitressing, and taking in laundry we cobbled together a life that forever resembled a Greek tragedy that never happened.

Even with so many markers of deprivation and a claim to relative poverty, our circumstances were no worse and even a bit better than everyone else around us.

We were the precarity class, our existence forever precarious and threatened, neither middle

...OBITUARIES continued from page 5

Patty and Alan purchased their first home in Highlands in the early 1970s. She enjoyed playing bridge, tennis, and gardening. Patty attended Highlands United Methodist Church where she enjoyed the Wednesday night din-

ners and being part of the Joy Club.

Patty is survived by her children, Alan Marsh, Jr. and his wife Varsy, Sue Crawford and her husband Rick, and Mitchell Marsh and his wife Leslie;

8 grandchildren; and 2 great-grandchildren.

There will be a private graveside service on Saturday, June 27, 2020.

Online condolences can be sent to www.bryantgrantfuneralhome.com

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North side view of the Hospice House, currently under construction in Franklin.

Construction of SECU Hospice House of WNC in Franklin crosses the 50% mark

Construction of SECU Hospice House in Franklin has crossed the 50% mark. It is anticipated that our region's new hospice inpatient facility will be operational this coming fall. Four Season, The Care you Trust, a hospice care provider currently serving western North Carolina, will operate within SECU Hospice House once construction is complete.

Fundraising for SECU Hospice House continues to move forward as well. Through the continued generous support of our community, Hospice House Foundation of WNC (HHFWNC) has raised \$4.2 million, including a \$1 million grant from the State Employees' Credit Union (SECU). HHFWNC needs to raise an additional \$300,000 to reach its \$4.5

million Campaign goal.

About Hospice House Foundation of WNC:

HHFWNC is a 501(c)3 organization whose mission is to raise funds for a 6-bed hospice inpatient facility for the far western region of North Carolina (Cherokee, Clay, Graham, Jackson, Macon, and Swain counties) and northeast Georgia. The demographics in this geographic area speak volumes to the need for a hospice inpatient facility... roughly 25% of this area's population is 65 or older (over 50,000 individuals!); the age group most served by hospice; yet there are no Hospice Houses in this region. Currently, the closest Hospice Houses are over an hour's drive for most people. SECU Hospice House in Franklin will become

the only free-standing inpatient hospice facility in North Carolina west of Asheville.

Hospice Houses provide relief from physical, emotional, and spiritual suffering of people who are facing life's final journey and respite care so that caregivers can get the rest they need to stay well.

To learn more about this important regional initiative, an invaluable community resource that will fuel the local economy and touch the lives of many people, contact:

Contact:

Michele R. Alderson, President
Hospice House Foundation of
WNC

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• HOSPITAL NEWS •

Figuring out what the future looks like for Highlands-Cashiers Hospital and our community requires thoughtful protocol and careful consideration

Our community has navigated this first phase of COVID-19 in the United States, and I'm grateful we did not end up seeing the patient surge at the hospital we were prepared for. We're proceeding with caution at Highlands-Cashiers Hospital, as we know there is still a risk.

Now we're entering a challenging new phase of grappling with this invisible opponent, and although we remain hungry for more information on how to identify and treat this virus, we're using that knowledge we do have to dictate how we care for patients, their families, and our staff. As we take steps to reopen certain segments of our society, the hospital is resuming expanded clinic hours, outpatient testing for lab and X-ray,

and endoscopy. As we have prepared to reopen, we have taken necessary steps to assure a safe environment for our patients and staff.

Even though it's natural not to want to think about this right now, it's important to remember that there's a real possibility that things could pick up again in three months, or six, with a COVID-19 resurgence. The very fact that COVID-19 is a pandemic — a worldwide health crisis — makes it necessary for us to analyze it not just as the small mountain community that we are, but as members of the global community.

My message now is that, despite the fact that COVID-19 is a constantly moving target, our hospital and clinics are safe. We've instituted protocols at all of our facilities — as well as across all HCA Healthcare systems — that should reassure you that you're safe if you come to us for treatment. We have put a screening process into place for all who enter any of our facilities, whether they're patients, staff, or vendors. In short, before you are allowed access to the hospital, you will have been screened and found to be clear of fever and risk factors for COVID-19.

We've also instituted universal masking, meaning that everyone who works at HCH and any patients who enter must wear what's called a "Level 1" mask when social distancing cannot be exercised. You see these worn by staff in doctors' offices when they're performing routine work, and certain fabric ones that you can make or buy also



Tom Neal,
CEO, CNO
Highlands-Cashiers Hospital

qualify. The goal of these masks, and the homemade ones community members are wearing out in public, is to protect others, as you can be sick with the virus before you show any symptoms of illness.

A worrisome trend we're seeing countrywide is individuals delaying care or not calling 911 when they feel symptoms of serious illnesses, like heart attack and stroke. It's absolutely critical to be timely in addressing your symptoms, particularly for these conditions. During each precious minute that you delay getting care for a heart attack, muscle loss is permanent, and if you experience a stroke, every second counts because brain cells that die are lost forever. It's nothing short of tragic when we learn of patients we could have helped or saved, had they just come to HCH.

If you are having chest pain or symptoms of a stroke, immediately call 911. For symptoms of stroke, remember BEFAST and call 911 if you have:

- Sudden loss of BALANCE
- Loss of vision in one or both EYES
- FACE that looks uneven
- ARM or leg weak/hanging down
- SLURRED speech or trouble speaking or seem confused
- Thunder clap HEADACHE or the worst headache of your life

I also urge you not to delay seeing us for needed care like endoscopy procedures, colonoscopy screenings, and other preventive or

diagnostic care.

As we make our way toward visiting with each other again socially, meeting a friend for coffee, and going grocery shopping without worry, we must take a cautious, gradual approach, but no matter what the trajectory of COVID-19 ends up being in our community, I and everyone at HCH will always be dedicated to earning your trust and confidence.

• Tom Neal, RN, MBA, MHA, is the Chief Executive Officer and Chief Nursing Officer (CNO) of Highlands-Cashiers Hospital. Neal is a proven leader with more than 30 years of progressive healthcare experience. Prior to his role at Highlands-Cashiers Hospital, he held the position of Chief Executive Officer of Community Health Systems (CHS) and served as Chief Executive Officer of both Bernick Hospital Center in Bernick, Pennsylvania, and Greenbrier Valley Medical Center, Ronceverte, West Virginia. Tom has an MBA from the University of Louisville, MHA from the California College of Health Sciences, BSN from Regents College of New York and an ADN from Jefferson Community College.

ABOUT H-C HOSPITAL

H-C Hospital, a member of Mission Health, an operating division of HCA Healthcare, is a community hospital serving Macon, Jackson and the surrounding counties. Located on Highway 64 between the towns of Highlands and Cashiers, the hospital offers 24/7 emergency care, acute inpatient care, rehabilitation, as well as long-term care through Eckerd Living Center. The hospital has 24 beds for acute care services and 80 beds in the Eckerd Living Center. For more information, please visit missionhealth.org/highlandscashiers.

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• WORD MATTER •

Be Kind, and Wear a Mask

Approximately nine weeks ago there were no reported cases of Covid-19 on the Highlands Cashiers plateau. It's likely there were some asymptomatic people here; after all, seasonal folks were returning and much of our labor force commutes from off the plateau.

At this writing, according to health department sources in Macon and Jackson counties, there are over 250 reported cases, most of which will self-resolve. Some, however, may require hospitalization, perhaps ventilation, and might even result in someone's death.

Amidst this speculation, there's a single universal truth. Coronavirus infection, and the spreading of Covid-19 from one person to other people, has not stopped, and likely won't for a while.

Some folks who enjoy everything the plateau has to offer unfortunately lack even a small degree of understanding that not everyone can afford to be cavalier when interacting with others. Not now.

Part of opening up our community involves guidance from the Macon and Jackson County Health Departments, the North Carolina Health Department, and the Centers for Disease Control. The guidance involves matters of physical distancing, as well as the wearing of masks.

The men and women who keep things running in Highlands and Cashiers for the benefit of all of us – servers in our restaurants, retail sales folks in our shops, the supermarket check-out and shelf-stock people – all these folks are there to serve. You don't need to invite them home for dinner, although that would be awesome. But, neither should you give in to the urge to marginalize, get aggressive with, or make judgements about someone who is wearing a face covering, or a pair of gloves,



Bud Katz

while doing their jobs. You don't get that way with the people at your dentist's office, why would you get that way with your server, your stylist, your salesclerk? It doesn't reflect on them. It reflects on you.

If you take exception to required protocols, or say things like, 'I'm not going to tip a server who wears a face mask,' you might want to consider, if his/her choice is to wear a mask or stay home, who's

going to serve you your meal?

I wear a mask when I go out because you have no way of knowing with whom I've interacted and whether or not I'm infected, but asymptomatic. That's why, even though you can't see it, I smile and am grateful when you choose to treat us similarly and with equal respect.

We all appreciate it when you wear a mask. It means you care not only about yourself but about us and our community.

Despite what you may think or believe, wearing a mask, washing your hands (often, and in hot, soapy water), and maintaining a couple of yards of physical distance is NOT a political statement. If it is political to you, that's your thing, not ours. You might ask yourself whether you want to increase your risk of getting sick because someone else, who you don't know, who doesn't know you and who really doesn't care if you get sick or not, chooses to behave in a casual manner in the face of this pandemic.

A couple of times each week we leave our 'Covid cocoon' and drive into town to deposit something at the drop box outside the post office. It's extremely disheartening to see the number of people in town milling around without face covering. To us, it means one of two things; you believe yourself immune from, or impervious to the virus, or, you don't care about us or our community.

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...CENSUS continued from page 1

ery 10 years to count all people — both citizens and noncitizens — living in the United States. Responding to the census is mandatory because getting a complete and accurate count of the population is critically important.

The self-response rate for Macon County was just 36 percent as of June 11 in terms of completing the census. Macon ranked 93 out of 100 counties with other WNC counties such as Jackson, Swain and Graham experiencing an even worse response rate. With such a low response rate during the pandemic, the final deadline to complete the 2020 Census has been extended to Oct. 31.

The decennial census is a simple 10-question form that, upon completion,

determines how more than \$675 billion in federal funds will be distributed in communities across the nation.

Federal funds spent using the data developed during the Census include funds spent on schools, hospitals, roads, public works and other vital programs such as Medicaid, Head Start, block grants for community mental health services, and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, also known as SNAP.

Of that \$675 billion, the Census directly affects the allocation of \$23.8 billion annually in federal resources to North Carolina.

Beyond federal funding, which is often calculated on a population basis, additionally the Census provides key decision-makers with the information they need to ensure that government resources are directed strategically to the states' communities.

Federal funds, grants and support to states, counties and communities are based on population totals and breakdowns by sex, age, race and other factors. Individual communities benefit the most when the census counts everyone.

Businesses use census data to decide where to build factories, offices and stores, and this creates jobs. Developers use the census to build new homes and revitalize old neighborhoods. Local governments use the census for public safety and emergency preparedness. Residents use the census to support community initiatives involving leg-

islation, quality-of-life and consumer advocacy.

If response rates across the state aren't increased, North Carolina stands to potentially lose voting representation in Congress as the Census ensures that communities are appropriately represented in the statehouse and in Congress based on the reported population.

With an accurate 2020 Census count, North Carolina is projected to gain a seat in the House of Representatives, increasing its representation from 13 to 14 representatives, without an accurate county, North Carolina could actually lose representation.

The 2020 Census began in North Carolina on March 12, 2020, right as the COVID-19 pandemic was taking hold of the country.

As of June 22, 2020, 57.9% of households had self-responded to the Census which is well below the national average of 61.6%. North Carolina is ranked 34 out of 50 states and Washington DC — for Census self-response participation.

More than just federal funding decided by the Census, state and local governments will use the data derived by the census for the next decade for grant programs, business developments, infrastructure program focuses and more.

The 2020 Census can be completed online, by phone, or by mail. For more information as to how to respond to the 2020 Census, visit my2020census.gov.

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...CAWTHORN continued from page 1

tion resident of North Carolina's 11th Congressional district who will reach the minimum age to serve in the House August 1 on his birthday. Madison Cawthorn doubled the votes of his opponent, Haywood County Republican Lynda Bennett who received just over 15,000 votes despite being endorsed by President Trump, Mark Meadows, and even Sen. Ted Cruz.

"Tonight, the voters of the 11th district of North Carolina said they're ready for a new generation of leadership in Washington," Madison said during his victory speech. "You turned our message of hope, opportunity and freedom into a movement. While the far left is lighting our cities on fire, we are lifting the light of liberty. Nancy Pelosi and Joe Biden may not be able to control where the Democrats are going but, together, we can.

"Ours is not just a 'grass roots' campaign," Cawthorn added. "Together, we are

creating the deep roots of a solid oak tree which Abraham Lincoln compared to pillars of freedom. We can build new pillars all across this nation and prove Lincoln right when he said, 'that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom — and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.'"

Even with the outside support from the political arms of the House Freedom Caucus, which Meadows once led, didn't stack up to Cawthorn's grass roots efforts to spend every day of the campaign trail meeting with voters across the 18-county district.

Despite President Trump throwing support behind Bennett, Cawthorn said he still supports him.

"I want to make something clear; I support our great president. I do not be-

• See CAWTHORN page 19



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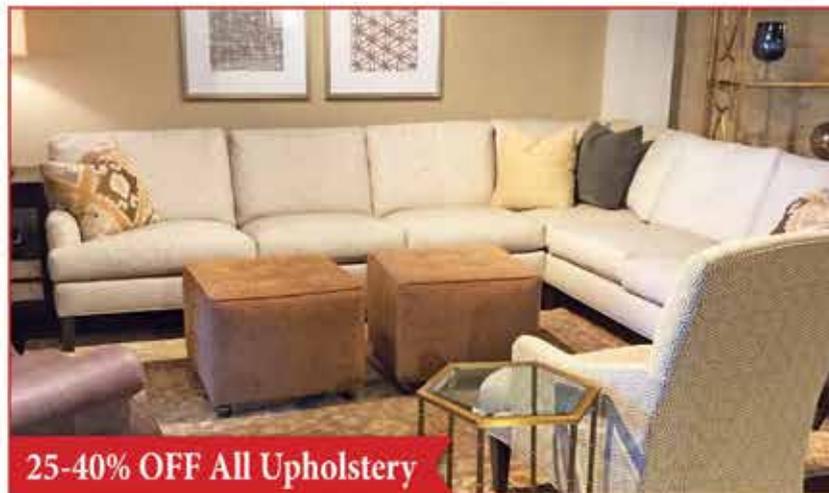
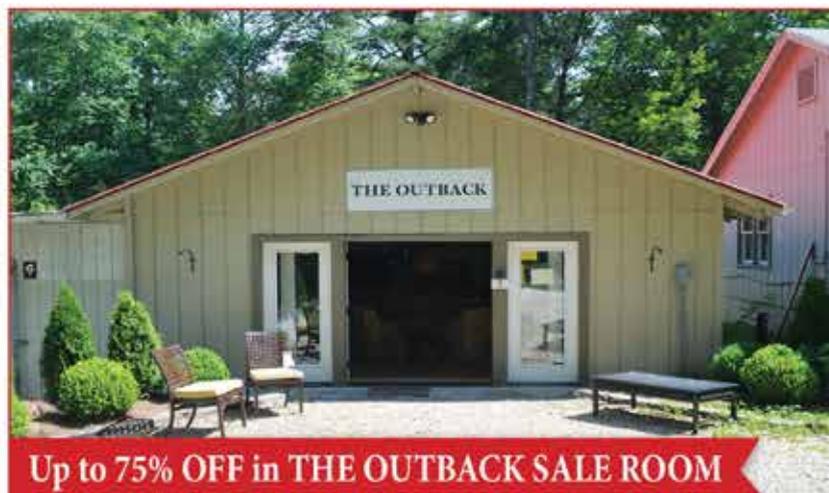
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...HOLLAND continued from page 1



Chief Andrea Holland took the oath of office last Thursday in the Highlands Community Building. Mayor Pat Taylor looks on. Christy Browning holds the Bible for her.



Town Manager Josh Ward congratulates Chief Holland as he hands her the "Chief" badge.



Members from across the state and county law enforcement family turned out for the swearing-in ceremony – NC Highway Patrol, MC Sheriff's Office, Franklin PD, the D.A. office and the Highlands PD.

ing of Commissioners John Dotson, Donnie Calloway and Brian Stiehler, the Town Manager Josh Ward, as well as two consultants from the NC League of Municipalities, with unanimous support, the Town Manager concluded that the best qualified candidate was already a member of the Highlands Police Department.

"Lt./Detective Andrea Holland's education, training and experience qualifies her to be the new leader of the police department," said Mayor Pat Taylor. "Because she has been a police officer in Highlands for 13 years and has additional experience with other county agencies, we can expect a smooth transition in administrative leadership within the department," he said.

Holland is a native of Macon County and has served with the Highlands Police Department for the past 13 years, 10 years full-time.

Before working with the Highlands Police Department, Andrea worked six years as a bailiff/detention officer with the Macon County Sheriff's Office. Due to her past experience, she has a close relationship with the Macon County Sheriff's Office and the Macon County District Attorney's Office that of Ashley Welch.

Andrea obtained her Associate Degree in criminal justice from Southwestern Community College and her B.S. in criminal justice from Western Carolina University. She has also completed various leadership, management, media and public relations courses administered by the FBI and State of

North Carolina.

"Andrea's hard work has propelled her through the ranks at the Highlands Police Department from Patrol Officer to Sergeant/Detective to Lieutenant. She has developed a strong relationship with the Highlands community during her tenure. Andrea's connection with the citizens of Highlands will greatly assist her as Chief of Police at Highlands Police Department," said Ward.

Present at the swearing in ceremony was Holland's family and friends from a number of law enforcement agencies – NC Highway Patrol, MC Sheriff Office, D.A. Ashley Welch and staff, the Franklin Police Department and the Highlands Police Department.

"Law enforcement and police departments in this country are facing a lot of changes and they will be making a lot of adjustments in the context of what has happened with demonstrations in the last several weeks. It's important that we have great leadership in our law enforcement agencies," said Mayor Pat Taylor at the ceremony. "Highlands has been in transition looking for a new police chief and we believe we have found the right person."

Taylor said Town Manager Ward, the Public Safety Committee of commissioners, Personnel Director Emily Nickerson, and two consultants from the NC League of Municipalities all were involved in helping the town make this critical decision.

"I also want to thank the candidates who applied – we had

some very qualified people who applied for this position and we are very excited about finding someone within our own ranks," said Taylor. "We went through the process and the interviewing and we realized the right person was right among us and that is Detective Andrea Holland."

Following the swearing-in, Ward said the town is excited for Holland and knows she is going to do a great job.

"As everyone knows a leader has to have a great staff and we know you have that and you all are going to do great things," he said.

Holland said she was grateful for the support of law enforcement at the ceremony – folks from every sector.

Holland introduced her parents Edna and Joe Morgan saying Morgan instilled in her a life-long premise that "if you're not going to it right, don't do it at all – don't waste your time."

"I never thought this was a path I would take, as far as the Chief position is concerned, but the opportunity came and I talked to my great friends, and family and went for it. I love this community; I have wonderful support – without the mayor and the town of Highlands I wouldn't have had the opportunities I have had – opportunities we have up here may not be afforded in other agencies of the state. People look up to us for what we are able to do and acquire with the support of the board, the Town Manager and the mayor," she said.

She thanked everyone involved in her journey and also noted that D.A. Ashley Welch allowed her to use her as a reference for this position.

"We are going to move this department forward into a whole new generation. A lot of changes are going to be made; though we have a great department already. So now we are just going to move forward as one team – we are all one person," she said.

Chief Holland said her first

NC House Bill 1105 passes; heads to the Senate

\$30 million is on the table for rural broadband

By **Brittney Lofthouse**

The House of Representatives unanimously passed House Bill 1105 on Monday, which will allocate \$30 million in additional funding for rural broadband.

“The NC House unanimously approved legislation to provide an additional \$30 million to expand broadband in rural North Carolina,” said House District 120 Representative Kevin Corbin. “Under this legislation which I supported, every county in my district will be eligible for the funds.”

The COVID/Supplementary G.R.E.A.T. Grant Period (HB 1105) was introduced in the House on May 14 and would provide an additional \$30 million to the NC Division of Information Technology’s Growing Rural Economies with Access to Technology (GREAT) grant program, which expands access to broadband infrastructure in the state’s rural counties.

These supplemental funds are intended for applications submitted on or before September 15, 2020 and funds would be awarded on or before Decem-

ber 30, 2020.

Since its inception, the state has added funding to the GREAT program for economically distressed counties. As a result of COVID19, state leaders unanimously approved an additional \$9 million, beyond the budgeted amount as part of the first COVID relief package passed. House Bill 1105 will add an additional \$30 million on top of that.

The first go-round application for the GREAT program after it was created included funding for Morris Broadband to specifically improve access in Macon County. The Morris expansion will ideally provide internet access to 226 homes within Macon County. The project was estimated to cost \$667,000 which included \$433,550 in-state grant money along with a \$233,450 investment from Morris. Morris is finishing up the project and will have the more than 220 homes connected to the new infrastructure by the end of 2020.

Not only does House Bill 1105 provide additional funding for the GREAT program, but it also expands eligibility requirements from solely Tier One counties, the most economically distressed, to also

include Tier two counties, which includes most counties in WNC such as Macon.

The GREAT program is specifically designed to address underserved areas and expand on existing infrastructure. Companies such as Morris Broadband or Frontier Communications are eligible to apply for the grants to expand their current network to either bring new customers on in areas not previously served, or update equipment and infrastructure to improve internet in existing locations.

COVID19 highlighted a need for immediate attention to address the lack of connectivity across the state when people were forced to work from home and children turned to virtual learning. With the possibility of virtual learning still very much on the table for the fall school year, addressing connectivity shortfalls across the state now is more important than ever.

After unanimous approval in the House, the bill was sent to the Senate where it is currently in the Rules and Operations of the Senate Committee. It has tremendous support so it’s likely be approved by the Senate and then sent to Governor Roy Cooper for final approval.

H-C Hospital moves to Level 2 visitation

As always Highlands Cashiers Hospital is working continually to ensure we remain a safe place to work and provide care.

To protect our patients and staff, Highlands Cashiers Hospital has been screening all patients and visitors to all of our hospitals and hospital access has been limited. In addition to those restrictions already in place, today all Mission Health hospitals are updating visitation to all of our facilities to Level 2. We will allow 1 adult (age 18 or older) patient advocate (a family member or friend designated by the patient) per patient during the hours of 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. Exceptions to this will be pediatrics and end of life services. In these cases only, 1 person may remain overnight. All visitors will be screened and required to wear a mask. Of importance, visitors will NOT be allowed in the Eckerd Living Center. We will continue to comply with Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) and Center for Disease Control (CDC) guidance.

There is no change in visitation policy regarding COVID-19 patients: visitors will not be allowed for COVID-19 positive patients or for patients awaiting a COVID-19

test result.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, we have been learning more and more about how to keep both patients and staff safe. These uncertain times have been tough on our patients, their families and our colleagues and we cannot emphasize enough our compassion for everyone during these uncertain times.

Having a family member or loved one with our patients when they are in our care is important as is our responsibility to keep our patients and families, as well as our colleagues and the communities we serve, safe.

Hospital staff have been supplied with iPads to facilitate FaceTime and Skype visits to help connect families and loved ones with our patients during this extremely challenging time. Staff have gone above and beyond to try and connect families while continuing to keep everyone safe.

We would like to remind our community members that our hospitals and facilities are safe, so please do not delay your care.

Screenings and access restrictions are in place at all Mission Health locations, regional hospitals and CarePartners. We want to ensure that we remain a continual resource

for the communities we serve and are committed to delivering the most effective care with the best possible results.

As a reminder to protect yourself and prevent the spread of illnesses, please practice the three Ws: Wear a mask, Wait 6 feet apart and Wash your hands frequently using either soap and water or alcohol-based hand gel for at least 20 seconds.

...HOLLAND from 12

role as chief is to get settled into her new position and look at what will be beneficial for our department.

“As far as the future of the Highlands Police Department, I plan to make a few minor changes, one change that has already taken place is to move Master Officer I Timothy Broughton into the role of investigations until we can seek to fill that position, but overall for the most part we will remain as we are.

“It is a great honor to be named chief of the Highlands Police Department. I feel humbled and blessed to work with such a tremendous department and be able to serve such a wonderful community.

“I believe that I have assisted in paving the way for all officers to start from an entry level position and rise through the ranks of becoming command of a department. I feel this decision will show all of my fellow officers how hard work and determination truly prevails.

“I look forward to getting more involved with our community and being able to listen to the needs and concerns of the citizens of Highlands.

“I would like to take the opportunity to thank the Town of Highlands, Highlands Police Department, and the citizens of Macon County for the outpouring of love and support as I transition into my new role,” she said.

Holland said she will be looking to promote within the department for the Detective position, which she vacated, and she will then be posting a position for a patrol officer.

– **Kim Lewicki**




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...ACTIVITIES continued from page 1



If all goes as planned, this year's Highlands Food & Wine Festival will be a ticketed Music Festival in K-H Founders Park, Nov. 13-14, 12:30 to 5p each day.

navigate town rules – allowing ticketed events in the K-H Founders Park -- and state restrictions – as to crowd size – so they can hopefully make a little money in this “unusual year.

Highlands Festivals, Inc.

First up was David Bock with Highlands Festivals, Inc., who outlined the organization's plans for its annual Highlands Food & Wine Festival to be held Thursday-Saturday, Nov.12 -14.

Bock said this year the festival will be a music festival, much like the one planned for Mother's Day weekend which was can-

celed due to COVID restrictions.

Bock requested permission to have a ticketed event in K-H Founders Park and said they hope to sell 1,000 tickets for afternoon concerts each day, Friday and Saturday, and are hoping area restaurants will offer wine dinners and seminars the evenings Thursday-Saturday.

These will be open-air events in the park featuring music instead of food and wine. There won't be any open vendors or tastings and packaged foods and beverages will be available.

“We want permission so we can start

planning, but with the complete understanding that the town and governor may not allow us to have the event because we don't know where we will be regarding COVID,” said Bock. “If the governor says we can't have these kind of gatherings, we will refund everyone's money.”

Bock said selling 1,000 tickets would enable them to break even and maintain the required social distancing.

“We have to have that number of tickets to cover the cost of the talent, security and to set-up the event,” he said.

The entire park will be used, including the skate rink area which is where food will be disbursed. A large stage and sound system will be set up at the 4th Street entrance to the park.

Bock said they won't know until October if the event can take place.

“It's a big unknown right now. We are just trying to get people in place, get talent hired get planning going in hopes that we can do it knowing very well that this might not happen,” he said.

Commissioners voted 4-1 with Commissioner Marc Hehn voting no to give conditional approval for planning purposes which will be based on government officials and COVID restrictions.

The Performing Arts Center

The Performing Arts Center Director Mary Adair Trumbly also requested permission to use the park for ticketed events – one the Sunday of Labor Day weekend – Sept. 6 and one Sunday Sept. 27.

“This is a really unusual once-in-a-lifetime request -- to use the park for two ticketed events and one on a holiday weekend which I realize is not typically allowed,” she said.

She said they have reformulated the PAC auditorium to seat 60 people with social distancing but that only gives her one-third of an audience – based on typically selling 220 tickets.

“If the governor says we can have 30% capacity moving into phase 3 we will do that, but a 30% audience isn't going to get us any profit so we would very much like to use the park for the two Sundays – these regularly scheduled concerts,” said Trumbly. “I view it as an opportunity to glean a little profit. We have been closed since March and our bottom line is really suffering.”

She said PAC usually sells 220 tickets for these two particular concerts but envisions selling 400-500 if she can use the park. One concert is a Neil Diamond tribute and the other is a Fleetwood Mac tribute and both groups do outdoor concerts all the time, she said.

Though the town doesn't typically allow ticketed events in the park or events at all on holiday weekends, commissioners agreed this year was an exception.

“I don't have any problem with a concert on Labor Day weekend simply because this is an unusual year,” said Commissioner Patterson. “We can go back to not allowing this later. And depending on where we are with the pandemic and how we can limit the number of people and do social distancing depending on situation at the time, I'm OK with this.”

Trumbly said if she can make money on these two concerts it would be great because she is going to lose money on everything else put on in the PAC due to the 30% rule.

Again, the vote was 4-1 with Commissioner Hehn voting no.

Village Square Art Show

Next up was the Village Square Art Show scheduled for Friday and Saturday, Aug. 28 and 29.

Tucker Chambers discussed the plans that have been made to adhere to the town's and the governor's rules as they stand now and into Phase 3.

The layout of the park for the event has been designed for social distancing – 16 sq. ft. around each 3-sided tent for social distancing – with a 12-foot lane between rows of tents, as per the fire marshal.

He anticipates 70-80 tents and 200-300 people flowing in and out.

Face masks will be required, so upon entrance participants will be offered face masks and shields if they don't have any and artists will have hand-sanitizer for those who visit their tents.

Commissioner Patterson suggested a one-way traffic flow, so people aren't passing each other.

Commissioners voted to allow the show contingent upon the Rec Committee recommendation as to traffic flow and depending on the status of the pandemic in Highlands and Macon County.

Twilight 5K Run

The Twilight 5K Run is planned for August 15 with a backup date of the Saturday after Thanksgiving if COVID restrictions curtail plans.

Commissioner John Dotson expressed concern with the clustering of runners in the beginning of the race so suggested a staggered start – even suggesting planning it for the November date.

“It starts out tight and opens up later, but at the starting gun it's tight. I would prefer moving it to the November date or

• See ACTIVITIES page 15

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...ACTIVITIES continued from page 14

a staggered start in August 15 without that mass of people at one time," he said.

Commissioners agree to allow the race contingent upon the Rec Park Committee's recommendation with a 4-1 vote with Commissioner Hehn voting no.

Farmer's Market & Saturday Music on Pine

The Farmers Market and Saturday Music on Pine are two events that are on the calendar through October.

The town disallowed activities like the

Farmer's Market in the K-H Founders Park with the COVID outbreak, but the governor considered the markets an essential business, so they have been allowed to be open across the state.

Commissioner Dotson said Highlands should allow the market because it's been dictated by Raleigh.

"This is a low-density event, so I don't have a problem with picking up the ball and running with that," he said.

However, Commissioner Patterson

said she wants to go with what is best for Highlands so she suggested vendors and participants be required to wear masks.

"Raleigh is playing politics with my hometown. So, we are going to do what is good in Highlands. We need to require masks for these events where people are close together.

"We want them to be able to sell, but I am not going to compromise people's safety. People have the right to come or not to come, but I am trying to make it as safe as possible," she said.

But Commissioner Dotson noted that retail businesses are up and running so he didn't see why the Farmer's Market should be more stringent.

"Retailers make their own decisions. Some require masks and some don't. But this is our venue, so it's up to us as to what we allow or not; we make the rules," said Patterson.

So, as soon as they are ready, the Farmer's Market can open Saturdays 8a to noon as long as masks are required of vendors

and participants and people adhere to social distancing. Whoever is in charge of the market will be responsible for making people who come in wear masks and if there is a problem, the police can be called.

Saturday Music in the Park is scheduled for each Saturday at 6p through October. Obviously, with the outside limit at 25 for groups, the event has been on hold.

However, for July 4th there will be a live-streaming concert with the Wobblers "to help bring a celebratory but safe atmosphere in Highlands," said Kaye McHan, president of the Chamber of Commerce.

Also, set for July 4th will be musicians in the bed of a pickup truck tooling around town to lend a festive air.

Concerts will start up with restrictions as soon as the outside gathering limit is increased.

Rec Park Pool

Since pools were allowed to open with restrictions in Phase 2, Highlands commissioners agreed to loosen restric-

• See ACTIVITIES page 16

• 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

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PUBLIC SWIM

Monday-Thursday 11am-7pm

Friday & Saturday 11am-6pm

Sunday 1pm-6pm

RESTRICTIONS

No Pool Parties Available until further notice

Pool will be limited to 30 swimmers at a time.

No Showers or Changing stalls available

Masks are recommended on deck

Temperatures will be taken at sign in

Front office and bathrooms will be open starting Saturday, June 27

No equipment will be available for water aerobics or lap swim

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

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NOTE:

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

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...ACTIVITIES from 15

tions at the pool, which during Phase 2 only allowed adults to lap swim from 6a to noon Monday through Friday.

According to Rec Park Director Lester Norris, pools are already open elsewhere and he encouraged Highlands to follow suit.

So, starting Saturday, June 27 the pool will be open to everyone, daily but with restrictions.

Changing rooms and showers will be off limits, but the bathrooms will be open. Deck furniture will be available and will be decontaminated as people leave.

With three parts per million of chlorine in the pool water, Commissioner Brian Stiehler said the solution "will kill just about anything."

Commissioners agreed that people will basically be sanitized when they get out of the pool so sitting on deck furniture shouldn't be a problem. For those who don't swim, their furniture will be sanitized once they leave. The bathrooms will be sanitized every 30 minutes.

Norris said according to the State and Macon County Health Dept. COVID can't be transmitted in the pool itself.

Commissioners voted 4-1 to open the pool full bore. Commissioner Hehn voted no.

— Kim Lewicki

...NONPROFITS continued from page 1

Spring is a the time for fundraising events like galas, and with physical distancing measures firmly in place, many nonprofits were unable to host these events or were forced to move them to a virtual platform.

During a time when donors are stretched thin and people are demanding more than usual from charitable organizations, nonprofits across the United States and in Highlands are struggling to stay afloat.

The Highlands Playhouse has had to cancel its summer season, the most lucrative time of year for the theater. Managing director of the Playhouse, Lance Matzke, said it takes a while to put [the season] together.

"There's a lot of moving pieces. And it wasn't a situation where we could wait and see what happens," Matzke said.

The cinema portion of the Playhouse, however, will likely be able to resume operation as soon as the state moves into Phase 3 of reopening. Matzke said they are hoping people haven't seen all the new releases via Prime or Netflix when they finally open!

Events at the Highlands Performing Arts Center (PAC) have also taken a hit. The Highlands Cashiers Chamber Music Festival canceled their entire season and the Highlands Cashiers Players canceled their March and May productions – a considerable blow to the PAC's rental income.

The Chamber Music Festival is offering free virtual concerts in lieu of their live events. Executive director Nancy Gould-Aaron said that the virtual concerts serve as a way to keep the festival at the forefront of peoples' minds while they can't be there in person.

"It's just a free concert to keep people engaged in music and remembering our festival and our musicians," Gould-Aaron said.

Some of the featured musicians include David and Julie Coucheron, Helen Kim, Yinzi Kong and the festival's artistic director, William Ransom.

They are trying to get some virtual concerts on YouTube during the scheduled dates of the festival, from July 3 – August 9.

According to PAC Executive Director Mary Adair Trumbly, the PAC's membership revenue has also seen a marked decrease, projected to be around \$30,000, taking their original goal for 2020 from \$90,000 to \$60,000 in membership revenue. As a result, the PAC has cut back on advertising and staffing.

Some of the concerts have been rescheduled to later dates this summer, and in the meantime, they are offering virtual streaming of some of events, primarily as

a way to keep the PAC on the forefront of peoples' minds.

Adair Trumbly said that the PAC is taking precautions including requiring that all staff members wear a mask, providing gloves and hand sanitizer to patrons and limiting the number of tickets sold.

"Hopefully by the beginning of 2021 we'll be back on track, but we have to plan not to be," Adair Trumbly said.

According to President Ed Mawyer, the Center for Life Enrichment (CLE) has had to reschedule their May and June lectures and has faced a decline in membership as a result of COVID-19.

"It isn't practical for us to have an event with a limit of only 10 people, so we're holding our breath waiting for Gov. Cooper to make his decision about when we can have groups of 25 or more in our lecture hall," Mawyer said.

Mawyer is hopeful that the CLE will be able to resume lectures on July 6 with the necessary sanitary and social distancing measures in place.

At the Cashiers Highlands Humane Society, executive director David Stroud said that COVID-19 has been both a positive and a negative. With stay-at-home orders, more people are willing and able to take in a new pet, which has resulted in a 24% increase in adoptions.

"We have more animals in foster care than ever had before, more animals finding forever homes, and a lot of it has to do with the fact that folks are at home," he said.

On the down-side, the society's funding has taken a significant blow. Two events, one in June and one in August, account for more than 50% of the Humane Society's annual revenue. Both of those events have been canceled due to COVID-19.

The Highlands Biological Station has had to deal with considerable cutbacks to their in-person activities, including summer programming at the Highlands Nature Center, according to executive director Dr. James Costa. However, the Station is offering a number of virtual events. The virtual events help folks stay connected to the Station and help to bring science programming to schools in the area that they could not visit in person. According to Costa, the virtual events have been very successful and have garnered a large number of "likes" and views.

The Biological Station will not be hosting any summer courses or summer camps and the museum will be closed. However, outdoor activities like garden tours will likely be available to the public.

Spice up your camp meals!

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CATSPEAK

• PRINCESS PUDDIN' •

A Cat's Life in Quarantine

I am an indoor kitty, so my life hasn't changed all that much in regards to where I get to go. My exposure to the outdoors is limited to the screened porch, occasional forays to the deck—under supervision—and watching the birdfeeder outside the living room window.



Princess Puddin'

It's my pet parents who have changed. I mean they hardly leave the house, and since I'm in charge of my domain, I consider their constant presence an infringement of my rights. Picture me in Dad's office, or the men's room as he refers to it. Usually, I have my pick of lounging spots—his desk chair, his recliner, the floor next to the recliner, a spot beneath the desk, or sometimes his lap.

These days, I find myself constantly being run out of one of his chairs. It's enough to make a girl crazy. Why must he spend so much time in that room? Times were he'd sit at his desk briefly to look at the computer and then be gone for at least eight hours. Now? He can be found spending hours in his desk chair, lounging in his recliner watching the Military Channel or napping. It's too noisy in there for a good catnap.

Now, Mum's office is very quiet as usual. The only disturbance is her tapping on her keyboard, which I'm accustomed to. Still, she's in there an awful lot lately—no midday trips to her gym or lunch. My routine was to accompany her to her office after breakfast, leap on the desk to get multiple treats, and then retire to the Dad's office or to the bedroom to snooze—on the bed or in the easy chair near the window.

But, and this a big but, any time Dad walks into Mum's office or Mum comes and goes from the office, I feel dutybound to visit for a few treats. If I don't, she may

be require re-training. The problem is that Dad pops in and out of her office all day long now. I am forever having to be alert—okay, that may be a stretch—so I don't miss an opportunity for a treat. It used to be Dad made only a few visits to Mum's head-

quarters. These days? He is in and out constantly. I think he has a severe case of the fidgets, and Mum agrees with me.

Mum and I think he interrupts way too much. So much so that Mum has begun referring to me as Tubby Cat because I'm eating too many treats. Of course, she's one to talk, since she says the virus has shrunk her jeans.

The good news is it's summertime and Dad is spending more time on the screened porch, so Mum and I are getting some quiet time up here on the second floor. And yesterday, he ventured out to the shooting range. That meant Mum and I got to relax on the porch in peace. She pondered who the victim would be in her next book, and I chirped at the hummingbirds visiting the feeder.

Are you wondering why the porch isn't peaceful when Dad's on it? The answer is he listens to all those silly videos people send him no matter what room he's in, and it drives me and Mum nuts. We two are big believers in silence. Can you hear me purring Ohm? And do you see Mum right next to me doing the same? Repeat after me: This too shall pass. A girl can dream, right?

• Princess Puddin' Penn resides in Georgia with her dad, her mom Kathy Manos Penn, and her canine brother Lord Banjo. Please send comments, compliments, and questions to inkpenn119@gmail.com. She appears in "Lord Banjo the Royal Pooch," a book that can be found on Amazon, at Books Unlimited in Franklin, and Mountain Paws.



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**.

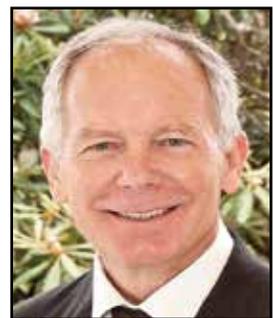
• If you would like to **volunteer** your time and services, sign up with the Highlands Chamber of Commerce initiative **Neighbors Helping Neighbors** at highlandschamber.org/neighbors-helping-neighbors/

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.

• SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING •

Can God count on you?



Pastor Curtis Fussell
First Presbyterian Church
of Highlands

The United States is conducting a census. The Bible, too, records the taking of censuses. Jesus was born in Bethlehem, rather than in Nazareth, due to a census mandated by Caesar Augustus. The “joke” in Luke’s Gospel is Jesus didn’t come to “take our number” but to give us genuine life.

The Old Testament book of Numbers receives its name because it begins with a numbering, a census, of the people. Another census occurs in chapter 26, with two previous censuses having occurred in Exodus.

These four censuses took place as Israel escaped Egyptian slavery. Later, Rabbis exclaimed the reason the people were counted was because the children of Israel were precious to the Almighty. Counting the people expressed God’s love for them.

However, Rabbi Jonathan Sacks notes a problem in Scripture with taking a census of the people. When King David took a census, his action enraged God. David repented for the sin of census-taking. What was the difference? David took a census in order to round up men, to use the people of Israel, for war.

God detested this form of counting. God counts, because God cares for every person. That kind of counting is how Jesus describes God’s counting as well. Jesus said, “Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet, not one of them falls to the ground apart from your Father’s knowing. And even the hairs of your head are all counted. So, do not be afraid; you are of more value than many sparrows.”

Well, Jesus doesn’t say how many sparrows. If it were 100 sparrows, you would only be worth 50 cents! What a paltry number! But the claim Jesus makes is this: if God attends to the plight of such paltry creatures, then how much more God attends to us and our fears in life.

Jesus says God has even counted the number of hairs on our heads. Jesus uses this metaphor to make the point that God has a relationship with us in the deepest of ways. God has a relationship with us in ways that we cannot fathom. God values us in ways we cannot even imagine. What a blessed counting – a blessed census! God values us, “counts” us, with unimaginable thoroughness.

Of course, such a blessed counting by God is not limited. Jesus suggests that if God counts us with such a blessing, then we too are to count others with the same value. No matter who you are, no matter what you’ve done, no matter who you’ve become; God still loves you. God values you! How wonderful for you! But, how is your “counting” of others going today? Can God “count” on you to love others as God loves you?

Proverbs 3:5

• PLACES TO WORSHIP •

John 3:16

BLUE VALLEY BAPTIST CHURCH

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

BUCK CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH

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

CASHIERS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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

CHAPEL OF THE SKY

Sky Valley, GA • 706-746-2999
Sundays: 10 a.m.; Worship

Holy Communion 1st & 3rd Sundays

CHRIST ANGLICAN CHURCH

Rector: Jim Murphy, 252-671-4011
464 US Hwy 64 east, Cashiers
9:30a Early Service; 11a Worship Service;

CHRIST CHURCH OF THE VALLEY, CASHIERS

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

CLEAR CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH

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

COMMUNITY BIBLE CHURCH

www.cbchighlands.com • 526-4685
3645 Cashiers Rd, Highlands, NC
Sr. Pastor Gary Hewins
Sun.: 9:30am: Sunday School 10:30am: Middle & High School;
10:45am: Child. Program, 10: 45am: Worship
Wed.: 5pm Dinner (\$7 adult, \$2 child), 6pm CBC U.

COMMUNITY BIBLE CHURCH OF SKY VALLEY

706.746.3144 • 696 Sky Valley Way #447,
Pastor Gary Hewins
Worship: Sun. 9 a.m., with Holy Communion the 1st & 3rd
Sun.; Tues: Community Supper 5:30 followed by Bible Study.

EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF THE INCARNATION

Rev. W. Bentley Manning • 526-2968
Monday-Friday: Morning Prayer at 8:15a. Sundays: 8 am
Holy Eucharist Rite I; 9 am Sunday School; 10:30 am Holy
Eucharist Rite II. Childcare available at 10:30

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH HIGHLANDS

828-526-4153 • www.fbchighlands.org
Dr. Mark Ford, Pastor • 220 Main Street, Highlands
Sun.: Worship 10:45 am; Sun.: Bible Study 9:30 am
Wed.: Men’s Bible Study 8:30 am; Choir 5p; Prayer Mtg 6:15p

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Curtis Fussell & Emily Wilmarth, pastors
526-3175 • fpchighlands.org
Sun.: Worship 8:30a Adult Ed.: 9:30a.m.; Worship 11 a.m.
Mondays: Men’s Prayer Group & Breakfast 8 a.m.
Wed: Choir: 6p

GOLDMINE BAPTIST CHURCH

(Off Franklin/Highlands Rd)
Sunday School: 10 am, Worship Service: 11 am

GRACE COMMUNITY CHURCH OF CASHIERS

Non-Denominational-Contemporary Worship
242 Hwy 107N, 1/4 miles from Crossroads in Cashiers
www.gracecashiers.com • Pastor Steve Doerter: 743-9814
Services: Sundays 10am - Wed. - 7pm; Dinner - Wed. 6pm

HAMBURG BAPTIST CHURCH

Hwy 107N. • Glenville, NC • 743-2729 • Nathan Johnson
Sunday: School 9:45a, Worship 11a & 7p, Bible Study 6p
Wed. Kidsquest 6p; Worship 7p.

HIGHLANDS ASSEMBLY OF GOD

Randy Reed, Pastor 828-421-9172 • 165 S. Sixth Street
Sundays: Worship: 11

HIGHLANDS CENTRAL BAPTIST CHURCH

Pastor Dan Robinson
670 N. 4th Street (next to the Highlands Civic Center)
Sun.: Morning Worship 10:45a., Evening Worship, 6p.
Wednesday: Prayer Service, 6:30 p.

HIGHLANDS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Pastor Randy Lucas 526-3376
Sun: School 9:45a.; Worship 9:09, 10:50.; Youth 5:30 p.
Wed: Supper: 5:15; youth, & adults activities: 6; Handbell
rehearsal, 6:15; Choir Rehearsal 7. (nursery provided); 7pm
Intercessory Prayer Ministry

HOLY FAMILY LUTHERAN CHURCH: ELCA

Chaplain Margaret Howell • 2152 Dillard Road • 526-9741
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.
All are welcome.

HEALING SERVICE on the 5th Sunday of the month.

MACEDONIA BAPTIST CHURCH

8 miles south of Highlands on N.C. 28 S in Satolah
Pastor Zane Talley
Sundays: School: 10 a.m.; Worship: 11, Choir: 6 p.m.
Wed: Bible Study and Youth Mtg.: 7 p.m.

MOUNTAIN SYNAGOGUE

at St. Cyprian’s Episcopal Church, Franklin • 828-524-9463

MOUNTAIN BIBLE CHURCH

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)
Weds: Bible Study 6:30 p.m.; Youth Group 6 p.m.

OUR LADY OF THE MOUNTAINS

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Rev. Fr. Jason K. Barone – 526-2418
Mass: Thurs. 12:10; Fri. 9am; Sun: 11 a.m.

SCALY MOUNTAIN BAPTIST CHURCH

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

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

ST. JUDE’S CATHOLIC CHURCH

Mass: Thurs. 9am, Fri., 11am; Sun. 9am

THE CHURCH OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD

1448 Highway 107 S., Office: 743-2359 • Rev. Rob Wood
June-Sept: Sunday Services: Rite I, 8a, Rite II, 9:15 & 11a
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Sept 6-Oct 25- Informal Evening Eucharist-5:30 p.m.

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Sunday Worship - 11 a.m.

WHITESIDE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Rev. Sam Forrester/Cashiers
Sunday School: 10 am, Worship Service: 11 am

• POLICE & FIRE REPORTS •

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

June 7

• At 8:20 p.m., officers were called about someone cutting cables and taking a canoe at a canoe dock on Riverwalk Drive.

June 11

• At 11:48 p.m., Kelly Ty Parker, 49, of Ponte Verda Beach FL, was arrested for DUI. He was issued a \$500 secured bond. His trial date is Oct. 5, 2020.

June 14

• At 3:16 p.m., officers were called about someone communicating threats at a residence on Chowan Drive.

June 15

• A little past midnight, officers received a call about intoxicated people at Cottage Lane in Highlands.

June 17

• At 1:14 p.m., officers received a call about someone cutting phone lines to a restaurant on the Dillard Road.

June 18

• At 8:20 p.m., officers received a call about someone walking out of the

Ugly Dog Pub without paying for food and beverages.

June 20

• At 7:59 p.m., Harlem Gonzalez, 37, of Highlands, was arrested for DUI. He was issued a \$1,500 unsecured bond. His trial date is July 27.

The Highlands Fire & Rescue log from June 16.

June 16

• At 12:54 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Wingina Lane.

June 17

• At 9:44 p.m., the dept. responded to a fires alarm at a residence on Strawberry Lane.

June 18

• At 11:30 p.m., the dept. responded to a Co2 alarm at a residence on Mt. Lori Drive.

June 20

• At 8:43 a.m., the dept. responded to a call of a possible gas leak at a residence on Falls Drive west.

• At 4:08 p.m., the dept. was called to help with a search on Hickory Hill Road. But it was cancelled.

• LETTER •

Neighbors truly help neighbors

Dear Editor,

I truly cannot find the words of gratitude that I feel for our community over the last few months. The generosity of spirit, the willingness to step out and assist people we do not know, the concern shown for supporting our businesses and the businesses care in protecting their customers and staff as we have reopened.

The Highlands Chamber of Commerce started the Neighbors Helping Neighbors program back in March and it is still going today with 50 plus volunteers.

A huge thank you to all the individuals who have given their time without asking to be thanked or recognized. Matt Eberz, Robin King Austin, Debre Berlin, Christina Briggs, Anna Bring, Sandra Carlton, Lisa Carrig, Courtney Chappell, Codie Couch, Lynn Delgado, Susan Duncan, Jim and Deb Dyal, Page Engelbrektsson, Kevin Fitzpatrick, Gail Flynn, Cindy Foster, Rachael Friday, Andrea Gabbard, Dale Gatson, Elizabeth Gordon, Melanie Ham, Florence Holmes, Bambi Famous Kaine, Mary Lou Harris, Jody Lovell, Diane McPhail, Kelli Moody, David Moore, Ricky Morales, Ian Newekk, Ann Newhouse, Cynthia Peterson, Donna Phillips, Julie Potts, Massimiialo Proietti, Janoah Rehmer, Juan Reyes, Cassie Ross, Susan Schwiering, Tod Sherwood, Robert Smith, Lauren Stallings, Carol Taylor, Julie Upshaw, Karen Vizza, Viola Westbrook, Peggy Pepper Wilkinson.

It is this spirit in our community that helps everyone as we move through these unprecedented times. Sincerely, thank you my community!

Kaye McHan
Director, Highlands Chamber of Commerce

D.A. Welch encourages lawmakers to close loophole in law

Speaking in Raleigh, District Attorney Ashley Hornsby Welch this week urged members of the N.C. Senate Judiciary Committee to close a legal loophole that, at the expense of victims, sometimes benefits those convicted of drunken driving.

Currently, if a person is driving on a revoked license for impaired driving and kills someone, he or she faces a charge of misdemeanor death by vehicle. The maximum prison sentence allowed is 150 days.

Lawmakers are weighing whether to raise the crime from a misdemeanor to a class F felony, carrying a minimum active term of not less than 12 months in prison.

“That many days – for someone who is not even supposed to be on the road – is an insult,” said Welch, who oversees the 43rd Prosecutorial District, made up of the seven westernmost counties.

Sens. Chuck Edwards, R-Flat Rock, and Sen. Jim Davis, R-Franklin, are among the bill’s sponsors.

“The Senate Judiciary Committee chairs and members are still considering the bill and reviewing the case to determine the best solution,” Edwards said Thursday of the legislation’s progress through the committee.

Kimberly Carnes, 43, suffered mortal injuries in a Feb. 22, 2017, head-on collision in Macon County as she drove from

home to work. Scott Marchant, 56, also a Macon County resident, crossed the two-lane center line on N.C. 28 and smashed into Carnes’ car.

Marchant had been drinking. He did not meet the .08 legal impairment standard, however. His blood alcohol content measured .045.

“It’s one of the worst things we have had to do, to explain to Kimberly’s mother that he faced only a misdemeanor death by vehicle,” Welch said.

Marchant pleaded guilty to misdemeanor death by vehicle on July 27, 2017, in Macon County District Court. The judge imposed 75 days, based on his sentencing level.

Kimberly Carnes’ mother, Karen, provided emotional testimony to committee members, pleading with them to increase the penalty.

“As a misdemeanor, it says, ‘He didn’t intentionally set out to kill somebody.’ You know what? My daughter didn’t want to be intentionally hit and killed,” she said.

Mothers Against Drunk Driving, the Western North Carolina DWI Task Force and the N.C. Fraternal Order of Police all support changing the law. Ellen Pitt, a member of MADD and the task force, also spoke to the committee.

...CAWTHORN continued from page 10

lieve this election has been a referendum on the president’s influence. The people of western North Carolina are wise and discerning. You observed both candidates and simply made the choice you believed is best for our district. I look forward to fighting alongside our president after I’m elected in November,” Cawthorn said.

Cawthorn’s victory will send him to the ballots in November to face Moe Davis, a Buncombe County Democrat Veteran who previously served as a prosecutor at Guantanamo Bay.

Despite winning by a landslide throughout the District, in Macon County, the race was closer with Cawthorn receiving 1,846 votes to Bennett’s 1,139. Just 15 percent of eligible voters cast their ballots in Macon County for the runoff. Cawthorn even upset Bennett in her home county of Haywood County, securing 2,112 votes to Bennett’s 1,559. Madison beat Bennett in all but one county in the District, Rutherford County where Bennett won with 714 to

389. The county with the closest match up was Clay County, where Cawthorn was still victorious with 474 votes, but by a margin of only three votes.

Madison was homeschooled in Hendersonville and was nominated to the U.S. Naval Academy by Rep. Mark Meadows in 2014. However, Madison’s plans were derailed that year after he nearly died in a tragic automobile accident that left him partially paralyzed and in a wheelchair.

Madison’s ordeal built his faith, made him a fighter, helped him appreciate every day, and inspired him to help everyone he encounters overcome whatever adversity they face in their daily lives.

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



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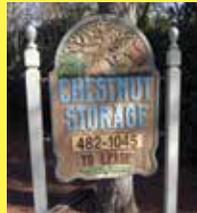
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E-Z UP 10X10 VENDOR TENT with sidewalls & weights. Excellent condition. \$170. 828-526-1031 (st. 1/30)

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

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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 danhazazer@gmail.com (8/13)

HARLEY DAVIDSON MOTORCYCLE MEMORABILIA. Call Sandra La Jeunesse at 828-371-2214.

HELP WANTED

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)
NEEDED AN EXPERIENCED HEALTH CARETAKER for a very sweet female Alzheimer's patient for limited time each day not during normal working hours in exchange for free lodging and utilities in a fully furnished cottage located in Highlands Country Club. For additional information call 828 526-0469. (st. 5/21)

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

NOW HIRING AT WILD THYME. We are looking for bussers 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.

CHESTNUT HILL is an upscale Assisted Living Community in search of a Dietary Cook, CNAs, Med Techs, Wait Staff and Housekeeping. Send resume to Lindabuff@aol.com or call 828-526-5251. (st. 2/13)

RANDEVU now hiring line cooks, hostess, and waitstaff. Call 828-743-0190. (st. 2/27)

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SALES ASSOCIATE HIGH END RETAIL CLOTHING STORE IN HIGHLANDS AND CASHIERS, NC. Full time, part time and seasonal. Inquire to 828-200-0928. (st. 3/38)

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HIGH COUNTRY PHOTO/KEVIN VINSON: scanning photos, slides & negatives to CD or DVD for easier viewing. Video transfer to DVD. Everything done in house. Leave message at 828-526-5208. (st. 6/4)

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