

Highlands Newspaper

Happy St. Patrick's Day!

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Volume 19, Number 11 Real-Time News, Weather & WebCams: HighlandsInfo.com Thurs., March 17, 2022

Hehn threatens litigation against town

On Friday, March 11, Town Manager Josh Ward received a request for pre-litigation mediation for the release of public records from Macon County Superior Court.

ongoing dispute between the town, the Board of Commissioners, Town Manager Josh Ward and Commissioner Marc Hehn concerning the Hotwire contract's red-line documents

At the Feb. 17 Town Board meeting, with a vote of 4-1, the board of commissioners thought they put the red-line document request to bed, but Hehn is still demanding the documents, which the

Background

• See HEHN page 8

Operation Medicine Drop is March 23 in Highlands & Franklin

Law Enforcement across Macon County is hosting Operation Medicine Drop events for National Poison Prevention Week March 20-26.

Operation Medicine Drop (OMD) is a FREE drug take-back program that gives people a safe and secure way to dispose of unwanted over-the counter and prescription medications. Safely disposing of old medications through Operation Medicine Drop events instead of flushing them down the drain prevents chemicals from ending up in the water supply.

The Macon County Sheriff's
• See MEDICINE page 10



Ukrainian born and raised American citizen Alex Kravetz speaks to the evil that is Putin as he works to destroy his homeland. – Photo by Kim Lewicki

Ukraine's war is a fight for freedom

Slava Ukraini! Heroiam slava! (Glory to Ukraine! Glory to the Heroes!) is the way conversations begin and end in Ukraine. Now with Putin doing his best to destroy a country and its people it's

become a battle cry in a fight for good over evil; a fight for freedom.

The world has rallied and now the names of cities like Kyiv, Odesa and Mariupol roll off the tongue
• See UKRAINE page 12

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Citizens are ready to revive Mirror Lake

It's been decades since a concerted effort has been made to "Save Mirror Lake."

When Buck Trott was mayor, a solution was close – even going as far as Washington D.C. – but in the end plans fell apart.

Now the President of the Mirror Lake Improvement Association, (MLIA) Pat Gleeson has taken on the fight.

For starters, a MLIA Dredging Fund has been set up to finance the \$4.2 million project which is expected to take 2-3 years.

"The MLIA, has developed a long-range plan to dredge Mirror Lake, returning it to its depth and flows in order to benefit the Town of Highlands and its residents," said Gleeson.

Planned giving from the community, major donors, and environmental grants is being sought by the MLIA whose goal is to dredge Mirror Lake and its primary tributaries in three phases.

"The MLIA hopes to reach

its intermediate goal of \$400,000 which will fully fund Phase 1 of the project – a 250-foot dredge on both sides of the Mirror Lake Bridge," said Gleeson. "Once Phase 1 is completed, Phase 2 will begin which includes the Mill Creek section of Mirror Lake bordering Cullasaja Drive."

Thanks to Lew Pollack, who has made a significant donation of \$100,000, the fundraising effort for Phase 1 has launched.

Additional projects under consideration include funding to clean up the canoe storage area at the bridge, and a Parkway Landing area across the lake which Gleeson hopes will encourage canoe rallies, picnics on the lake, and an eventually a common area that includes two waterfalls that feed the lake.

"We do not deny that Mirror Lake is privately owned. However, the entire upstream section from the bridge is owned by MLIA — a

•See MIRROR LAKE page 14

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• THE PLATEAU'S POSITION •

• MAYOR ON DUTY •

Here we go again ... trash

I was ready to write about the town retreat, and then about tonight's board meeting. But then I drove to Founders Park on Monday to begin a road-running workout. I came upon depressing site. The photo shows trash bag stuffed in the top of a bear resistant street can.



Highlands Mayor
Patrick Taylor

Realizing that someone had carelessly attempted to place that household trash bag in the street can was distressing. What the photograph does not show is a half eaten lunch plate that was left on top of the can.

What are some people thinking? Are they unthinking slobs that simply do not care about this beautiful community? The mayor was crushed to know such reckless behavior is still afoot in Highlands.

I rationalized why someone would do such a dastardly deed. I thought maybe the trash crews didn't empty the cans after weekend activities. Even if they hadn't, there's no excuse for such behavior. So, I went around the park



and checked the other street cans. They were not full, and all had been emptied that day.

The painful truth is that someone decided to dispose of their household garbage by just stuffing the bag in a street can that is designed to handle only small amounts of garbage, fast food trash or coffee and ice cream cups. Several years ago when we first deployed the street cans I caught a woman trying to put her household trash bags in a street can near Reeves. I confronted her and she stopped. I wish I had seen the person stuffing this can.

Since implementing the BearWise program, we have removed those ugly shared dumpsters that used to be on public streets. These dumpsters that were rented by businesses became magnets for people depositing their household garbage and overflowing the dumpsters. The new roll cart system has greatly reduced that problem.

If you see someone stuffing a street can take a photo and send it to Askmayorpat.com. We will investigate, and I will at least photo shame the offender. I know some may think their mayor is over reacting, but I not going to let these kinds of trashy behaviors become the norm in Highlands.

Also, a citizen recently sent me a photo of a bear resistant roll cart in a neighborhood that had been overfilled to where the lid could not be closed. There were additional bags of garbage on the side of the cart. I urged the person to contact the police at 526-9341. Our code enforcement officer will investigate those violations. In addition, our sanitation crews have been directed to report these violations to the code enforcement officer.

As for the offending neighborhood residence, those folks may need to acquire an additional bear resistant trash can, especially if they are operating an STR.

We do have a town board meeting tonight with a full agenda. It starts at 7 pm at the Highlands Community Building. The board had a productive retreat last Thursday. More information to come.

• HIC'S VIEW •



• WEATHER •

Thu, 17-Mar	Fri 18-Mar	Sat 19-Mar	Sun 20-Mar
 63°F 41°F	 55°F 47°F	 57°F 35°F	 57°F 34°F
Partly sunny and warmer RealFeel® High: 70° Low: 44°	A shower and thunderstorm RealFeel® High: 57° Low: 46°	Breezy in the afternoon RealFeel® High: 62° Low: 40°	Mostly sunny RealFeel® High: 60° Low: 33°

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The Godfather – Sopressa salami, shaved ham, pepperoni, red onion, smoked provolone, shredded lettuce, banana peppers, onions with Italian dressing on baguette. \$13

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The Porker – Shaved ham, Jarlsberg cheese, DJs pickles with homemade honey mustard on ciabatta. \$12

The Hudson – Turkey, Provolone cheese (Have it your way - cucumber, lettuce, onion, banana peppers, black olives, DJs pickles). \$13



The Secret Garden is on Oak Street in the courtyard right beside Kelsey-Hutchinson Park



Work on Quin's Loop will finish the legacy

Join the Greenway workers on Saturday, March 19. The focus will be on Quin's Loop on the Kelsey Trail.

With some extra help get this trail can be ready for the 2022 season.

Meet in the back parking lot of the Rec park at 9 am.

The plan is to finish at noon and go to lunch at 4118.

Please let Jim Chance know if you plan to attend. Call 337-344-800 or email jamesallenchance@gmail.com



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(See menu on page 4)

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• LETTERS •

Attacking Commissioner Hehn is shameful

Dear Editor,

I was disappointed to read the letter that you published from Larry Brannan in the paper this week. I've known Marc Hehn since he and Betsy moved to Highlands a few years ago. Marc is an outstanding human being with extensive experience in small-town management. He desires only the best for Highlands and its' citizens. To publish a letter that attacks Mr. Hehn is shameful.

Douglas Olmsted
Highlands NC

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...HEHN continued from page 1

town and its attorney Jay Coward say they don't have. Now Hehn's pulled the courts into the dispute.

The term "redlining" commonly refers to the editing and negotiation process during document and business contract management when contributors mark text and track changes collaboratively.

At a previous meeting, Town Attorney Jay Coward said the red-line version of contract negotiations aren't public documents because they aren't the final version of the contract and as such parties don't usually keep them.

According to Coward, these are transitory documents. Regarding the Hotwire contract, Coward said he has not retained the red-lined documents.

However, Commissioner Hehn was not satisfied.

"Jay, you said the red-line version is not a public document, I don't dispute that. But you got the email that says the town commissioners have the right to ask the Town Board to ask the Town Manager to share the red-line version," said Commissioner Hehn. "So, I make the motion that the board ask the Town Manager to see if he can find -- through the attorneys in Washington or attorneys in Raleigh or on the server -- the red-line version of the contract. I foresee another problem on the horizon, and I want to be prepared."

For clarification, Commissioner Amy Patterson asked for verification concerning the contract with Hotwire.

"We've already signed the contract with Hotwire, and it was not the red-lined version, right?" she asked.

Mayor Pat Taylor said "yes."

"Those are transient documents -- drafts -- and they do not have to be retained and we don't retain them, and we don't even know if the lawyers retained them," said the mayor.

But Commissioner Hehn persisted.

"I have the right to ask for them," he said. "The red-line version is the negotiation between the lawyers. And I am trying to see what the conversation was because there are some things in the contract that I have questions about."

There wasn't a second to Hehn's motion to request Town Manager Josh Ward to track down the red-line version of the Hotwire negotiations which usually means a motion dies for lack of a second.

However, Mayor Taylor said the rules of North Carolina still allow a vote without

a second if the board of commissioners is inclined to do so. So, he called the question anyway and the vote was 4-1 to not make that request of the Town Manager.

"So that's a no," said Taylor.

In the court request, Hehn explains his stance.

"I requested the red-line version of the contract with Hotwire from the Town Manager. His only verbal response is that I would "pick it apart." I appealed to the Highlands Town Board to direct the Town Manager to provide the red-line version of the contract and they voted February 17 to deny my request.

"This follows a long pattern of delays regarding my requests for documents about the Town of Highlands Fiber Project," said Hehn.

However, during the February Town Board meeting in a blow-by-blow explanation Town Manager Ward detailed how town employees and he complied with each of Hehn's requests regarding documents.

Hehn's explanation in the request continues:

"When I have been able to read documents, I discovered problems.

"For example, I was given the first draft of a contract with Wide Open Networks the night before I was asked to vote on it. Later it was learned that the contract was designed to circumvent requesting proposals for an operator.

"When Wide Open Networks backed out, the Town Manager denied access to their formal reply until the Mayor intervened. When we actually took proposals, the Town realized an additional \$7.38M. The Town Manager is interfering with my fiduciary duties," wrote Hehn.

However, in February, Commissioners were quick to remind Hehn that the two contracts regarding the lease terms of Hotwire and Wide Open were completely different -- like comparing apples to oranges -- so of course the Hotwire contract would net more money to the town.

In accordance with G.S. 7A.38.3E, the parties shall have 21 days from the date of the filing of the request in which to select a mediator. The mediator may be a certified mediator selected from the list maintained by the Dispute Resolution Commission and available through the Clerk. If the parties cannot agree on a mediator, the party filing this request shall make that fact known to the clerk. In the absence of

• See HEHN page 10

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...MEDICINE continued from page 1

Office, in partnership with the Franklin Police Department & Highlands Police Department will host a prescription drug take back event on Wednesday, March 23 from 10am-2pm. There will be two locations in the county in support of Operation Medicine Drop and observance of National Poison Prevention Week.

Bring your unwanted, expired over-the-counter and prescription medications to the Robert C. Carpenter Community Building Center (1288 Georgia Road, Franklin, NC) or the Highlands Police Department (372 Oak Street, Highlands, NC) from 10am-2pm on Wednesday, March 23, 2022.

An average of four people a day are

dying from overdose in NC with 79 percent of those deaths involving some type of opioid. Drugs not properly disposed of may end up getting into the wrong hands or end up in our water system. Since 2010 Operation Medicine Drop (OMD) has collected more than 266 million pills and supported over 4,332 pill take-back events across North Carolina.

The Franklin Police Department, the Highlands Police Department, and the Macon County Sheriff's Office also each have permanent drop boxes within their facilities for unwanted medications to be safely disposed of throughout the year.

• BIZ/ORG NEWS •



From left: Bill Edwards, Col. Paul Schowalter and Rotary President Tom Graham.

Rotarian hear about combat mission in Phue Vinh, Vietnam

Rotarian Bill Edwards introduced Colonel Paul Schowalter as the guest speaker for the March 7, Rotary Club of Highlands meeting. Schowalter presented on his time as a fighter pilot in the Vietnam War.

He completed 135 total combat missions successfully and explained the different types of planes that were flown, plane formations, and what a typical day may have looked like. Schowalter also went into detail about a particular mission which involved flying to Phuc Vinh, a city just north of Hanoi, on October 24, 1967.

The mission was different than many others, as it had been planned entirely in Vietnam, rather than in Washington as many of the others were. Using a "pop up maneuver" and the clouds for cover, the mission was extremely successful and led to all the fighter pilots receiving distinguished flying crosses.

...HEHN continued from page 8

a designation of a mediator within the time prescribed, a mediator shall be appointed by the senior resident superior court judge.

A mediator selected by the parties shall be compensated at a rate agreed on between the parties and the mediator. Unless otherwise agreed to by the parties, all mediator fees shall be paid directly to the mediator at the conclusion of the mediation.

It shall be the responsibility of the mediator to schedule the mediation; to notify the parties of the date, time and location of the mediation; to conduct the mediation; and to prepare a certificate stating the results

of the mediation which the mediator shall file with the clerk and serve on the parties.

Pursuant to GS. 7A-38.3E, the parties may agree to waive prelitigation mediation of their dispute by informing the mediator in writing of the waivers. No mediator fee shall be assessed against any party if all parties waive mediation prior to the initial mediation meeting.

The issue is again on the Town Board agenda, this time for March 17 and specifically regarding the request for mediation.

– Kim Lewicki



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The mountains are calling and I must go!

John Muir, also known as “John of the Mountains” and “Father of the National Parks,” sure got it right when he uttered these infamous words back in 1873, after having returned from the longest and hardest trips he had ever made in the mountains of Yosemite Valley.

I’m in love...once again, not with the boy next door, not with my favorite dish at one of our great local restaurants, or my favorite college basketball team (Go Green). I’m in love with our stunning mountains that we co-exist with here on the Highlands-Cashiers Plateau.

Every day it happens to me, or perhaps for me. I get a sense of time simply standing still. I am reminded daily as I make the trek to my real estate office in Cashiers when I drive by the Whiteside Overlook and look out at one of the oldest mountains in the world, sitting so silently and majestically before me to take in its essence. I look out over the vast landscape that showcases many more peaks beyond and at Cashiers Valley below, wrapped in the arms of these old mountains. I think about how “Old Whiteside,” this grand dame has looked exactly the same way for a very long time. On this blessed place we fondly call the Plateau, time seems to slow down and settle all around me, grounding me. It serves me well in my fast-paced real estate career and assists me in slowing down, stopping to smell the delicious, fresh mountain air and appreciate the purity of it all. I bask daily in gratitude that I am able to live here full time and have a career that allows me to work and be “one with the land.”

There are times, like today, while walking a property that I think to myself, “I’m hiking (one of my favorite outdoor activities) for a living.” I feel the earth beneath my feet as I traverse the old logging road that sits on this property, leaning into the hills and angles that tell me more about this land. I look up into the Carolina blue sky and watch the sacred red-tailed hawk swirl and dive as it comes in for a landing in one of the tall hickory trees off in



Lorna Alexander
Berkshire Hathaway
HomeServices Meadows
Mountain Realty

the distance. It’s coming on spring, a time of rebirth and the terrain is waking up with the forsythia now in partial bloom and buds on trees everywhere. Makes it easy to be in a state of gratitude and welcome in yet another stunning season in the mountains.

Stated so beautifully by author Victoria Erikson, “Although I deeply love the oceans, deserts and other wild landscapes, it’s only the mountains that beckons me with the sort of painful majestic pull to walk deeper and deeper into their beauty.”

I have lived in many different places and time and time again I have returned to the old mountains of western North Carolina. That painfully good majestic pull that Victoria speaks so highly of.

I’ve been a resident here on the Plateau for many years, having left the big city as a means to connect with my love for the great outdoors. Whether I’m hiking one of the mountain trails with a friend or just simply walking a lot with a client as part of my daily routine as a Realtor, this connection with nature helps to right-size me and leaves me to appreciate just how small I am. It’s the mountains, as they are truly humbling, but in such a good way, as they give me perspective on life. Being here on the Plateau, enables me to appreciate all that I have. With all the things going on in our world today, being 4,118 feet in the air, I look out and realize just how amazing our world really is, and all of its people - you and I.

I am an explorer at heart and the mountains implore me to explore a new path to travel each day, and they remind me that I have many to choose from. I mean this metaphorically, too. Which path should I take today and that includes figuratively as well as how I choose to think; my attitude and how I approach my daily routines. Whether I’m hiking trails in the Nantahala Forest or Panthertown Valley, or working a challenging deal in real estate, I ask the Great Spirit who resides at the tallest peak, for direction.

All of us full-timers live in a place

• See **INVESTING** page 15

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...UKRAINE continued from 1

like New York or Chicago.

The last time we heard from Ukrainian/American Alex Kravetz, 37, owner of Dry Crawl Space in Highlands and Cashiers, was in 2014 during Ukraine's presidential election when the Ukrainian people were trying to oust their fourth president – hailed as Putin's puppet president – Viktor Fedorovych Yanukovych.

After rejecting the Ukrainian-European Association Agreement, Yanukovych was ousted from office in the Revolution of Dignity. He currently lives in exile in Russia.

Petro Poroshenko won the election to become the country's fifth president from 2014 to 2019. He can now be seen on daily news imploring the United States to keep up the sanctions against Russia and to send missiles and ammunition.

During his presidency, Poroshenko led the country through the first phase of the Russo-Ukrainian War, pushing the insurgent rebel forces deeper into the Donbas Region on the eastern border of Ukraine. He began the process of integration with the European Union by signing the European Union-Ukraine Association Agreement.

Volodymyr Zelenskiy beat Poroshenko in the 2019 election to become the country's sixth president. He was seen as an anti-establishment and anti-corruption figure. Now worldwide he is the man who isn't afraid to take on Putin even though Russian forces and Chechnya mercenaries are out to assassinate him.

Zelenskiy promised to end Ukraine's protracted conflict with Russia as part of his presidential campaign and attempted to engage in dialogue with Russian president Vladimir Putin.

He and his administration faced an escalation of tensions with Russia in 2021 which culminated in the launch of an ongoing full-scale Russian invasion February 2022 – now in its 22nd day.

Putin says the "special military operation" in Ukraine is es-

sential to ensure Russia's security after the United States expanded NATO up to its borders and supported pro-Western leaders in Kyiv.

But as Vladimir Putin has learned, the Ukrainian people are tough, hardened fighters and they will not give up.

Ukraine only has 196,000 active military personnel which splits into 125,600 ground troops, 35,000 air personnel and 15,000 naval troops, but it can also call upon 900,000 reservists.

Compare that to Russia's 900,000 active military personnel across land, sea and air and the two million reservists it claims to have so it would appear Ukraine's odds are insurmountable.

Kravetz has been in America for 18 years and is an American citizen. His hometown is Voznesensk in southern Ukraine. It's

about 30 miles south of a nuclear plant Russian forces were recently heading for until Ukrainian forces drove them back south of Voznesensk.

"We love America and we love Ukraine," he said. "Ukraine will win and cannot lose. But losing our people daily, that hurts."

"We cannot lose this war. If Putin, somehow -- but I am sure it's not going to happen -- takes control, we will never be free not for a long time," said Kravetz. "So, we are afraid to lose our freedom, our ways of living and our democracy."

Video and photos of Ukraine evacuees dressed in warm coats and toting luggage show that the Ukrainian people are thriving in a free nation – a nation they intend to keep.

"Russians and Ukrainians mentality is different. We are part

of free Europe. Russians they don't know what freedom is. They don't know what freedom tastes like. They were told what to do since they were born. And this is what's been happening – not just when Putin is in power – for hundreds of years," said Kravetz.

He said even when Ukraine was part of the U.S.S.R., mentally it was always independent.

Ukraine was part of the U.S.S.R. during the Chernobyl meltdown in 1986 but according to Kravetz, the U.S.S.R. was 15 countries not just Russia and Ukraine was an unwillingly part of the U.S.S.R.

"Ukraine has always been a free nation and it more than anybody deserves to be a part of the European Union which is a different alliance than NATO," he said.

Ukraine has submitted a request to the European Union and

have had meetings.

"We want to be part of the EU, part of the free world and what we see today and what the world is seeing is that Ukrainians will fight and will defend their freedom," he said.

Kravetz said what Putin has actually done is unite the Ukrainian people.

"Putin miscalculated. Back in 2014 eastern and northeastern Ukraine was predominately a Russian-speaking area. So back in 2014 they were like – we don't mind being part of Russia – but today it doesn't matter where you are from – east, west, south – people are finally united and that's what Putin got wrong, what he miscalculated. The entire nation will stand and defend their villages and towns," he said.

Kravetz said the people's

• See UKRAINE page 13



...UKRAINE continued from 12

stance was a surprise for Putin, but also to President Joe Biden and Chancellor of Germany Olaf Scholz as well as the Prime Minister of the UK, Boris Johnson.

“They had no idea that Ukrainians can resist hard. On day number two and three of the war, Germany tuned 180 degrees. Initially, they were completely against supplying Ukraine with military equipment such as missiles for air defense, now they said we will give you 500 of this, give you that, will give you this.

“It has surprised the entire world that the Ukrainian army can resist that much. I want to give credit to the civilians as well. There are a lot of towns occupied and people come into areas with the Ukrainian flag, and they sing the Ukrainian national anthem and tell the Russians they aren’t welcome here.”

Kravetz said the world should know that Putin is killing Russians, not just Ukrainians.

“What people have to understand is Putin doesn’t care about the Russian-speaking community in Ukraine, he really doesn’t care about Ukrainians who speak Ukrainian and most of all he doesn’t care about Russians,” he said. “He doesn’t care about his own people. Not a single bit. What he cares about is restoring former Russian empire, restoring U.S.S.R. which is impossible without Ukraine. Ukraine is the breadbasket but it’s also a huge territory that he wants as a buffer between Russia and the west.”

By now everyone has heard about the propaganda Putin is spinning, that Ukraine is a fascist Nazi-controlled state.

“This is completely not true,” said Kravetz. “A lot of Russian soldiers invading Ukraine are 18-19 years old who just graduated high school who are fighting the war and they are dying fast. They have no idea why they are fighting. They just fight because they were told to fight.”

Currently, NATO allies are sending Ukraine shoulder-fired Javelin anti-tank missiles, ammu-

munition, and highly sensitive items such as shoulder-fired missiles called man-portable air defense systems (MANPADS) that can take down aircraft.

Kravetz said Ukraine could use the aircraft originally offered by Poland even though they are older versions and need longer runways than contemporary jets and planes.

He said Russia does have the upper hand in the air and is trying to completely destroy the Ukraine air force.

“I believe we are going to get some planes and it will be good because I am sure there are some places where they can land and take off,” he said. “The Ukrainian ingenuity is really unlimited – they are creative and will figure things out. As long as we have Ukrainian planes and jets in the skies it will

help.”

According to Kravetz, Ukraine wanted to be part of NATO for years and suspects NATO didn’t think Ukraine was committed.

“Maybe NATO wants Ukraine now. As soon as the conflict is over, I think NATO will strongly consider taking in Ukrainians because they see now Ukrainians are the best in the world in military and in fighting,” he said.

But Kravetz said Putin is a cornered rat which means he’s extra dangerous.

“He doesn’t know what to do. Sooner or later the dead bodies of Russian soldiers that were killed in Ukraine will show up in the entire country – the Russian people – will see that they will not be able to support this war due to the casualties, so he needs more soldiers who

aren’t related to Russia.”

Enter 14,000 Syrian mercenaries.

“Just like Russians and Ukrainians, Putin won’t care how many Syrians will get killed,” said Kravetz.

He said enlisting Syrians isn’t going to help Russia and he doesn’t think it will make an impact for Russia.

“It’s going to make it worse for him. He is in a corner right now. When you corner a rat that rat is twice as dangerous as usual. So now we can’t predict what he is going to do. I think he is desperate. He is very angry. Over the past several days two Russian high command officers were killed by Ukrainians so he is very angry and unpredictable, and I am sure he will try to bring mercenaries from all around the world.

“As far as making an impact? Probably not because they will be executed. They will be very obvious. They don’t know the area and the climate is different. Cities are different. People are different. They have no idea what they will be doing, who they are shooting, so I think it is going to backfire,” he said.

As far as chemical weapons go, Kravetz said he hopes not.

“If he uses it, part of Russia will be nuked as well so, if he does it, then he is hurting himself, too, and his people, but he doesn’t care about them. I am hoping not but there is always a chance.”

Communication is spotty but there are applications the Ukrainians are using to communicate amongst themselves and with the world, but the Russians are

• See UKRAINE page 22



...MIRROR LAKE continued from page 1

non-profit 501c3. Through MLIA the lake is open to the public for canoeing, kayaking, and fly fishing,” said Gleeson.

MLIA hopes that now that there is a bona fide plan to dredge the lake the Town of Highlands will help.

“We are hoping that if we work together, we can get the job done,” he said.

Gleeson said during Phase 1, dredged dirt will be carted to the part of the lake that is already silted over which will likely require a permit.

“It’s critical for us to dredge Mirror Lake and make a lasting

difference for the health of this shared watershed, the betterment of our town, and the environmental values of the entire Highlands community,” he said.

The MLIA truly believes it can “Save Mirror Lake” the battle cry it has coined for the community.

Gleeson is presenting MLIA’s plan at the Town Board meeting tonight in the Community Building at 7 p.m.

For more information, call the Mirror Lake hot line is 828-200-3857. There is also a GoFundMe page.

– Kim Lewicki



Mirror Lake residents from left: Lew Pollack, Managing Partner, Reliant Real Estate Management, LLC. Pat Gleeson, President, Mirror Lake Improvement Association, and Mike King, Vice President, Mirror Lake Improvement Association.

– Photo by Colleen Kerrigan

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SAVE MIRROR LAKE



MIRROR LAKE IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION
HIGHLANDS, NC • ELEV 4118'



828.200.3857



...INVESTING continued from page 11

deeply loved by us and coveted as well by the many visitors attracted to this special land, including part-time residents and vacationers alike. We have a common bond: we are all in awe of what surrounds us and hold the same level of appreciation and respect for this area. A day does not go by that I take for granted all that I have and am blessed with including a career in "real" estate that allows for me to share this love and knowledge of the land with others. Old timers did it for me when I made my first trek to the Highlands-Cashiers Plateau way back in 1997. I am more than happy to pass it on. I consider myself a "Brand Ambassador" for the Plateau. I don't have to be paid to endorse this special place. It comes naturally to share the love.

I will close with this quote by Dr. Seuss:

"Today is your day! Your mountain is waiting. So...get on your way!"

• *Lorna Alexander is a Realtor/Broker Associate with Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Meadows Mountain Realty. Visit her on the web at www.LornaAlexanderProperties.com or reach her at 828-526-*



Lorna with Emma, her 6-month old lab.

1717 or by cell at 828-200-2463. Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Meadows Mountain Realty has 3 convenient offices serving the Highlands-Cashier Plateau: 488 Main Street in Highlands, 2334 Cashiers Road across

from the Highlands Falls Country Club and in Cashiers at 196 Burns St.

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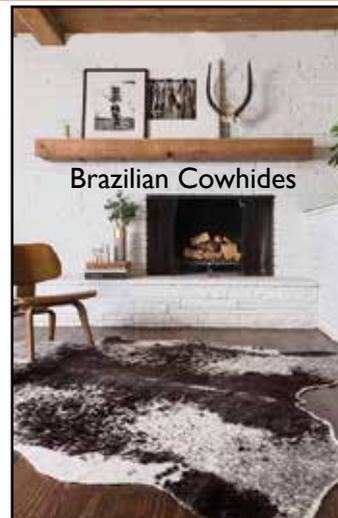


The garden ladies were at it again ... they dressed JB up for St. Patty's Day. - Photo by Kim Lewicki

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• HIGHLANDS SCHOOL SPORTS •

Lady Highlanders take down Franklin on the road



Highlands Addie Westendorf scans Franklin's defense before sending the ball down field



Highlands Brandy Zagal heads the ball on the road against Franklin.



Highlands Abbie Doerter keeps the pressure on Franklin's offense.

By Brian O'Shea

Plateau Daily News

Highlands varsity girls soccer team took on Franklin on Friday and took the win with a final of 4-1.

The win comes after Highlands lost a tough season opener in Waynesville on March 9 against Tuscola that ended 4-2.

The Lady Highlanders next play against Swain at home at 6 p.m. on March 17.



Left: Highlands Mac Woods makes her way to Franklin's goal.



Right: Highlands Caroline Woods picks off a Franklin pass and sends the ball down the field.

*Growing old is mandatory,
but looking old is optional...*



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• HIGHLANDS AREA EVENTS •

Rec Pool Schedule:

• Lap Swim Monday-Friday 6am-10am, Monday and Thursday 11:15am-7pm and Tuesday and Wednesday 11:15am-3:30pm 6 lanes AND 3:30-7 (shared Pool) and Saturday 10-11am 6 lanes. Adult Swim Monday-Thursday 11:15am-7pm.

Call ahead for Public Swim Weekend schedule due to staff shortages. 828-526-1595.

• Tickets for Bear Shadow Music Festival are on sale now. For more information, visit <https://bearshadownc.com/information/>.

Mondays

• ESL classes are held at the Presbyterian Church in Highlands from 5:30-6:30pm. No registration required – just show up and participate. Questions? Visit www.maconncliteracy.org, call 828-526-0863 or email info@maconncliteracy.org

Second Mondays

• The local chapter of PEO, an off-campus sorority founded in the 1800s that provides grants and loans to women who want to return to school or further their education and have a financial need, meets at 10 a.m. If interested, please call president Paula McDonald at 706-372-3004 for meeting places.

Mon-Fri

• Water Aerobics 18 years plus 10:15-11am.

Mon., Tues., Thurs.

• The Food Pantry behind the Methodist Church on Spring Street is open from 10a to 6p.

Mon. & Wed.

• Cardio Kickboxing with Crystal Corbin 5:30-6:30 p.m. A full body workout that engages every muscle in the body.

• New Mobility Class with Anna Norton It's all about movement. 5:30-6:30pm and Wednesday 6:45-7:45. For more information, call Anna 267-825-0716.

Mon. & Thurs.

• Drive-thru flu clinics at the Public Health Center at 1830 Lakeside Dr. in Franklin from 1-4 pm \$36 for the regular dose and the \$73 for the high dose (recommended for those 65+). Insurances will be filed; please bring your insurance card with you. Questions? Call 828.349.2081.

Mon, Wed, Thurs

• Indoor and outdoor Pickle Ball 10:30 am-1 pm.

Mon, Wed, Fri

• Heart Healthy Exercise Class 8:30-

9:30am. \$25 a month, The class is led by Cathy Hodgson. Contact the Recreation Department at 828-526-3556 for more information.

• Aerobics with Tina Rogers 8-9 am.

Tues. & Thurs.

• Pilates-Strength and Stretch with Autumn Lucas

• New Zumba class with Gay Chalpin from 4:30-5:30p.

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

1st Tuesdays

• Indivisible Highlands from 5-6:30 pm at the Hudson Library.

Tuesdays

• Strength Training 8:15-9:15am. Aim for strong, lean muscles using light weights, body weight, and high repetition to shape and tone.

First Wednesdays

• Highlands-Cashiers Hospital is featuring "Walk-in Wednesdays" Hiring Event. Interviewing for RNs, CNAs, Allied Health Professionals and Support Services Professionals, 1-3:30 pm. 190 Hospital Drive, front entrance. On the spot offers, Sign-on bonuses offered for select positions, Bring updated resume. Casual wear.

Thursdays

• Kickboxing 8:15-9:15am. An exhilarating and fun mix of martial arts for a calorie-burning workout.

• Free Covid vaccination clinics – 9 am to 5pm at the Rec Park. (Closed for a half-hour lunch break) Location subject to change. please check <https://myspot.nc.gov/> for the latest location information. Walk-ins are accepted, however we encourage residents to pre-register and schedule an appointment at <https://myoptumserve.com/covid19> or by calling (877) 505-6723 if you do not have internet.

2nd Saturdays

• The Western North Carolina Woodturners Club meets in Highlands at The Bascom at 10 a.m. March and November.

3rd Saturdays

• The American Legion Post 370 meets on the 3rd Saturday of every month at the First Methodist Church at 315 Main Street in their Community Room/ 909 Chapel. We serve breakfast at 9AM and hold our monthly meeting at 10AM We invite ALL Veterans to attend. Contact Ed McCloskey, Commander for any information @828-787-1660

Fri - Sun, March 18-20

• Movie at The Playhouse: The Batman. Showing Fri, Sat, Sun, 1p.m. and 4 p.m. www.mountaintheatre.com

Fri., March 18

• The Jackson County GOP Convention is at 5 PM at the Comfort Inn which is location at 1235 E. Main Street in Sylva! Food and refreshments will be available courtesy of the Jackson County Republican Party.

Sat., March 19

• The March 2022 meeting of the Western North Carolina Woodturners Club

Inc. will be on Saturday at 10 AM at the Bascom in Highlands The Bascom is located at 323 Franklin Rd, Highlands, NC, just north of Downtown Highlands, NC (heading toward Franklin). Drive across the covered bridge into the parking lot and come into the main entrance near the covered patio. There will be directions on how to get to the wood turning studio.

• See EVENTS page 22



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• SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING •

Eastern Catholicism



Fr. Jason Barone
Our Lady of the Mountains
Catholic Church

When the vast majority of people think about the Catholic Church, they assume there is only one and it is the exact same throughout the globe. In a way, they are correct.

There is one Catholic church that enjoys perfect unity and equality; however, it is also true that in addition to the Roman Catholic Church (aka Latin rite Catholics), there are 23 other (eastern) Catholic churches.

The reason most people in the Western Hemisphere or Western Europe rarely consider the other churches is because there are very few of them inhabiting these regions. The other Catholic churches can be found in Eastern Europe, the Middle East, and as far east as India. Some of the larger churches include: the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, the Chaldean Catholic Church of Iraq, the Maronite Church of Lebanon, and the Syro-Malabar Church of India.

What is the reason for so many Catholic churches? In a word, 2,000 years of history.

As Christianity spread throughout the Middle East, North Africa, Asia Minor, and parts of Europe during and immediately following the Apostolic Age, different regions and cities, while sharing the common faith, worship, and morality of the Apostles, nonetheless experienced growth and development of their own traditions, liturgies, customs, and laws. One could liken this reality to the common species of dog over time developing into different breeds that are both distinct yet the same.

Roman Catholicism and Eastern Catholicism are common yet distinct. What they believe regarding faith and morals is absolutely the same. How the respective Churches operate, however, is distinct with each having their own codes of canon (or ecclesial) law. Lastly, their worship looks markedly different. Eastern Catholics retained the liturgy of the Orthodox. This worship posed no problem for Roman Catholics as it was a worship used when all Christians were united. In fact, their liturgy, as well as the Traditional Latin Mass, enjoys an antiquity dating back to the earliest Christian centuries.

Formal unity was enjoyed (with occasional and usually short-lived exceptions) for the first Christian millennium until the regrettable Great Schism of 1054 AD resulting in the formal separation of the Catholic and Orthodox Churches. Simultaneously, with the exception of the Maronite Church, all the other modern-day Eastern

• See SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING page 19

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. Aryn Williams-Reubel, 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

828-743-1701 • 464 Hwy 64E, Cashiers, NC 28717

www.christanglicancashiers.com

Sun. - 9:30am Worship (no music); 10:30am Sunday

School; 10:30am Worship Service.

Mon. Night Bible Study & Dinner: 6pm. call for details.

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 - Adult Sunday School; Worship Service 10:45am;

10:45am Children's Program. Youth-12:15 - 2:30pm Tues:

Women's Bible Study 10am-noon

Thurs: Men's Bible Study 7:30-8:30 a.m.

COMMUNITY BIBLE CHURCH OF SKY VALLEY

706. 746.3144 • 696 Sky Valley Way #447

Pastor Steve Kerhoulas

Worship: Sun. 10:30 a.m. Holy Communion 2nd Sunday

EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF THE INCARNATION

Rev. W. Bentley Manning, Rector • 526-2968

5th and Main streets • www.incarnationwnc.org

Sunday Services in the Chapel: 8 am Rite I spoken, 10:30 Rite II

with Choir; Morning Prayer Mon-Thurs 8:30 am in the Chapel

Ash Wed. services March 2, 12 p.m., & 5 p.m.

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

828-526-3175 • fpchighlands.org

Sun.: Adult Ed.: 10 a.m.; Worship 11 a.m.

Tues: Men's Group 10 a.m. Wed: Bell Choir 4 p.m.. 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

Wed. Bible Study: 6 p.m.; Sundays: Worship: 11

HIGHLANDS CENTRAL BAPTIST CHURCH

Pastor Dan Robinson • 11339 Buck Creek Road

The Highlands Central Baptist Church is temporarily

sharing the facilities of the Shortoff Baptist Church.

Sunday Worship is at 9a. Wednesday Worship is 6:30p

HIGHLANDS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Rev. Dr. Randy Lucas, Pastor 526-3376

In-Person and live-streamed Worship Services

909 Bluegrass and 10:50 Traditional

www.highlandsmethodist.org

HOLY FAMILY LUTHERAN CHURCH: ELCA

Rev. Angie Ballard • 2152 Dillard Road • 526-9741

Worship/Communion: 10:30 All are welcome.

We wear masks and social distance.

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

Franklin • 828-634-1312

Services 2x/month May-Sept.; 1x/month Oct. -April

mountainsynagoguewnc.com.

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.

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CATHOLIC CHURCH

Rev. Fr. Jason K. Barone - 526-2418

Mass: Wed. noon (Latin); Thurs. noon; Sun. 11a

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: Tues. noon (Latin). Thurs. 9a.; Fri.. noon;

Sat. 5:30p; Sun. 9a

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

Nursery available for Rite II services

Thursday: Noon Healing Service with Eucharist.

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP

85 Sierra Drive, Franklin • ufranklin.org

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 March 11. Only the names of persons arrested, issued a Class-3 misdemeanor or public officials have been used.

March 11

• Officers responded to a call of theft from a motor vehicle in the Highland Hiker parking lot where someone entered the vehicle and took a \$50 bill.

March 13

• At 7:16 p.m., Madison Briana Owenby, 21, of Franklin was arrested for DWI when pulled over on Hospital Drive.

The Highlands Fire & Rescue log from March 8

March 8

• At 4:46 p.m., the dept. responded to a motor vehicle accident US 64 west.

• At 5:35 p.m., the dept. provided public assistance on US 64 west.

March 9

• At 10:32 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to at location on Main Street.

March 11

• At 12:28 p.m., responded to a motor vehicle accident on NC 106.

• At 2:22 p.m., the dept. provided public assistance VZ Top Road.

March 12

• At 1:48 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Ron Sanders Lane.

• At 5:24 p.m. the dept. responded to a motor vehicle accident on US 64 west.

March 13

• At 8:18 a.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm on Main Street.

March 14

• At 3:56 p.m., the dept. investigated the source of smoke on Blue Valley Road.

March 15

• At 2:27 a.m., the dept. provided mutual aid to Cashiers FD.

• BIZ/ORG NEWS •



From left: Andy Chmar, President, Hudson Library; Carol Misner, President, Mountain Findings; Carlyn Morenus, Hudson Librarian

...SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING continued from page 18

Catholics split from Rome and remained in league with the Eastern Orthodox.

These rifts however were slowly healed one-by-one as groups, large and small, sought reunion with Rome over the centuries. Perhaps the highest concentration of returns came during the renewed

missionary zeal of the Counter-Reformation period.

Today, Roman Catholics and Eastern Catholics are in full unity and see themselves as constituting two lungs in the Body of Christ.

Piping the afternoon away

National Bagpipers Day was celebrated in Highlands last Thursday in Town Square on Main Street.

– Photo by Colleen Kerrigan

Donation funds renovations to the Hudson Library

Along with the Hudson Librarian Carlyn Morenus, the Board Presidents of Mountain Findings and the Hudson Library of Highlands, NC, Inc., Carol Misner and Andy Chmar, respectively, recently gathered to recognize a generous grant from Mountain Findings in 2021.

The funds are being used to significantly underwrite the recent design, fabrication and installation of new signage and wayfinding throughout the inside of the library and over the two entrances.

A yearlong project involving members of the board, Highlands resident and artist Rosemary Stiefel, and the Hudson Library staff, the signage was expertly designed by Greenville-based McMillan Pazdan Smith, LLC and fabricated by 2/90 Sign Systems from Michigan.

“With Mountain Findings’ generous support and the talent brought to bear both in Highlands and through our outside contractors, the improvements in the Library’s overall appearance and the users’ experience are incalculable. We hope as visitors come in the Hudson Library, they’ll pause to enjoy these enhancements. We are most thankful for Mountain Findings great support across the community and their partnership in making this project a reality,” said Chmar.

The Hudson Library of Highlands, NC Inc. is a 501(c)(3) non-profit foundation with the sole mission to support the Hudson Library through ownership & stewardship of the building and grounds, fundraising, volunteering, and advocacy.





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HIGHLANDS EXCURSION is hiring guides/drivers. Email us at adventure4118@gmail.com. (st. 3/10)

WOLFGANGS RESTAURANT Looking for full-time hostess (great pay) dishwasher, prep cook, pantry and waitstaff. PM shift only. Call Jacque at 828.526.3807 or email wom2@me.com. (st. 2/17)

HIGHLANDS-CASHIERS CHAMBER MUSIC FESTIVAL has an immediate opening for a part time administrative assistant for their 41st season in their Highlands office. Music knowledge is not required. Email hccmfnc@gmail.com or call 828-200-3882 for an appointment. (2/24-3/10)

HIGHLANDER MOUNTAIN HOUSE DINING ROOM SUPERVISOR - HMH is seeking a full time shift supervisor to coordinate reservations and oversee all aspects of service in the front of the house at TRG. This role will act as Maitre' D to the dining room, work service for lunch, dinner and brunch and be responsible for the proper execution of each service period. This position will begin as an hourly position and has the potential to grow into a salaried position based upon performance. This candidate should be positive, reliable, hard working, have a love of people, service and have aspirations to lead and grow with the company. (st. 12/16)

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...UKRAINE continued from page 1

confiscating civilian phones and following the messages, so the people are being very careful about what they say, especially as to locations and delivery points for weapons.

“This group I am following said there are a lot of captive Russian soldiers who were told that Ukrainians will greet them with flowers and bread. Like, ‘Thank you for coming.’ No, No, that is not happening. Even in Eastern Ukraine on the border of Russia is the same way. The entire country is resisting the invasion,” he said.

As far as off-ramps are concerned, Kravetz doesn’t think there are any Putin will take.

“He is surrounded by oligarchs who are under sanctions, but they have billions and billions of dollars that they don’t keep in Russia -- no one wants to keep their money in Russia because if you keep your money in Russia, it means they can take it from you.

“There is no way out. It’s his way or no way. He is going to keep pushing forward, he is going to keep the territories that he currently occupies.

“But there is no victory for Russia in this war, regardless of what happens. There will be no victory. It is going to be the collapse of Russia. There is no way he can walk clean out of this. It’s way too late. Too many people have gotten killed. Too many Russian soldiers have gotten killed. For him there is no way out. Even if he freezes the conflict, the sanctions being imposed on Russia, they aren’t going away,” Kravetz said.

Though the collapse of Russia would be enormous with rich Russian’s assets worthless due to sanctions, Kravetz believes the only people who can stop the war are the Russian citizens. He acknowledges the brave Russian people who have gone to the Kremlin to protest even though they are brutally beaten and taken by the police.

“They live in a police state. They have no power. They are slaves in the 21st century. They live in fear.

“Even the oligarchs will lose regardless of the off-shore accounts everywhere – in the US, Germany, little islands in Caribbean. Everywhere.

...EVENTS continued from page 17

Visitors are always welcome.

Tues.-Thurs., March 22-24

Portrait artist Morgan Johnston art exhibit at The Highlander Mountain House 10a til close.

Thurs., March 24



Highlanders show their support for Ukraine.

“They will likely lose their assets so something will happen, but Putin still has a grip, and everyone is afraid of him. Everyone. He has no boundaries. He will do whatever he needs to do. He never cared about human life and especially now that he is in a corner it’s going to get worse,” he said.

Kravetz said Putin is evil “He is the devil 100%. He doesn’t care.”

In fact, Ukrainians liken Putin to Mordor in Lord of the Rings and his soldiers to Orcs.

In J. R. R. Tolkien’s fictional world of Middle-earth, Mordor is the realm and base of the evil Sauron. Orcs were the primary foot soldiers of the Dark Lord’s armies.

Kravetz said captured Russian soldiers are encouraged to call home and tell their mothers they are alive and OK. He said they are floored about the standard of living in Ukraine.

He said one soldier told his mother that in the smallest villages in the middle of nowhere in Ukraine there are paved roads that you can drive on and people have central water and electricity.

Kravetz said 30 miles outside Moscow

• Performer Duquette Johnston at the Ruffed Grouse at the Highlander Mountain House at 9 p.m. Tickets are \$25. Call 828-526-2590

Fri., March 25

• Portrait Sitzings with Morgan John-

ston 10a to noon by appointment. Email morgan@ruggedandfancy.com

Thurs. April 14

• Italian Inspired Spring Fling at The Farm with Executive Chef, Craig Richards. Book online at OldEdwardsInn.com

it’s a totally different Russia. The roads are dirt, people have no central water, and they use outhouses for the bathroom.

“They say Moscow is its own country and proceeds from everything goes to Moscow – oil, gas, diamonds, and gold,” he said. “The Russian soldiers are very demoralized; they don’t know what they are fighting for. They are dying every day for something they don’t know what for.”

In addition, from what Kravetz has heard, the Russians don’t collect bodies.

“When fighting was in my hometown, they left the bodies there. They don’t care unlike Ukrainians who bury their bodies.

“Just imagine you grow up somewhere in Central Russia. You go to school, and you have this mandatory military service. All of a sudden you get killed in southern Ukraine and they leave your body there. We allow them to take them, but they don’t know what to do with them. They are taking some to Belarus but if you are in southern Ukraine that is far, far, far away.”

What can the allies, particularly America do?

“Just keep it coming. Support Ukraine,

donate to organizations and the Ukrainian military, kids, refugees and just give us what we need, and we will do the job,” said Kravetz. “This is a fight between the light and the dark. It’s a fight against freedom and the soldiers of light versus tyranny.”

To the American people Kravetz says “Thank You.”

“Thank you so much for your support. According to polls people are saying we should shut down the skies. They may not understand what the consequences of that would be, but I want to thank the American people for their support, I want to thank the American people and organizations like Red Cross and all the many private people donating whatever they can. Please don’t blame Ukraine for higher gas prices. Hang in there with us. Pray for Ukraine. I appreciate your support and thoughts and everything else that the US provides to the great people of Ukraine.”

Kravetz said he is very grateful to Ukraine’s neighbors, too — Poland, Slovakia, Romania, Hungary, Germany – for taking Ukrainian refugees and treating them very well, giving them housing and food.

“A special thanks to Poland. They really are being very good neighbors. Just imagine you have a neighbor next door who is completely crazy. Just imagine!” he said.

Kravetz suggested a new world order when the conflict is over – an order where the aggressor isn’t allowed to participate. He believes organizations with more teeth in them need to be formed to navigate much needed change in the world.

President Zelensky touched on this notion Wednesday during his address to Congress when he suggested the formation of United for Peace – U24 – an alliance of responsible countries that have the strength and consciousness to stop conflict immediately – even intervening within 24 hours to stop aggressors.

Kravetz parents – his father who is 62, his mother who is 60 and his sister who is 24 – evacuated Voznesensk and traveled to western Ukraine where for now they are safe. Kravetz keeps up with them daily.

– Kim Lewicki

• Winter stories will be held at the High Dive from 2-4 , a casual gathering of story swapping. Come, Tell, Listen.

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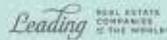


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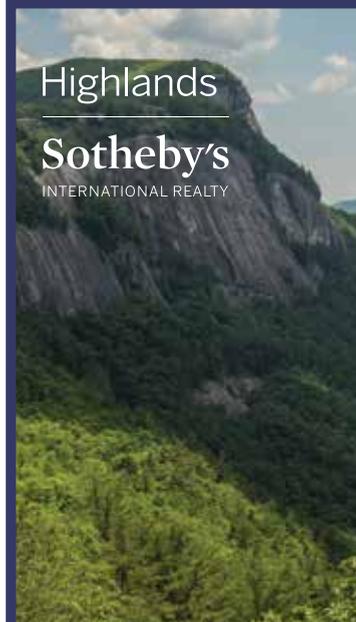
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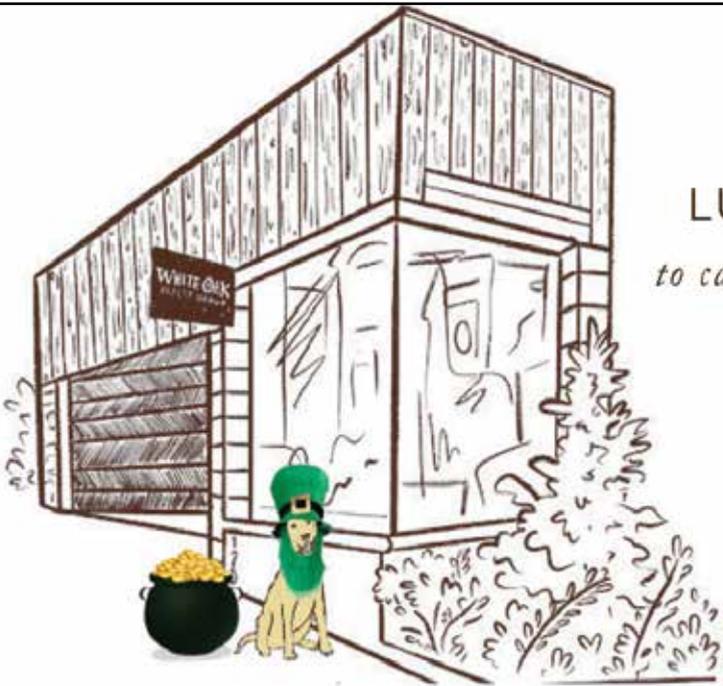
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