

Highlands Newspaper

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Thurs., Oct. 19, 2023



Kay Craig



John Dotson



Brian Stiehler



Jeff Weller



Rachel Wilson

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This is week 4 of the Candidate Q&A

Five candidates are vying for three seats on the Town Board -- two incumbents and three newcomers.

This is the fourth week of the 6-week Q&A leading up to the Nov. 7 election. Candidates are listed alphabetically.

Question #4:

How would you improve the infrastructure of Highlands -- roads, sewer,

• See Q&A page 8

Background checks are being considered for library workers

By Brittney Lofthouse

The Macon County Public Library's Board of Trustees is considering the implementation of mandatory background checks for library employees and volunteers, a discussion that was initiated following a suggestion made by board member Leah Gaston during the board meeting on Tuesday, Oct. 3.

During the most recent meeting, Gaston inquired if Fontana Regional Library (FRL), which oversees the Macon County Public Library, conducts background checks for their employees. Tracy Fitzmaurice, the Director of FRL, said that while they do not conduct formal background checks,

applicants are required to disclose any non-traffic-ticket criminal convictions on their applications. Fitzmaurice mentioned that the FRL refers to the sex offender registry to verify the accuracy of this information.

Under our current procedures, applicants are required to report any prior convictions, and we check employment references," said Hudson Library Branch Librarian Carlyn Morenus. "Adding a background check is an additional option currently being researched by FRL. I don't have enough information yet to comment further."

Expressing concerns about potential liability, Gaston emphasized the importance of implementing background checks, especially for employees who work with children. Fellow board member Highlander Diann Catlin echoed these concerns, stating that the absence of background checks could be deemed as "dangerous."

Fitzmaurice acknowledged that in all their years, they had not encountered criminal issues with employees, but she agreed to explore this further.

Justin Bohner, another board member, suggested involving a third-party agency to conduct thorough background checks. Overall, board members Highlander Wood Lovell and Bill Dyar

• See BACKGROUND page 12



OLM plans to replace the current church with a Baroque-style structure.

OLM variance request is continued until Nov. mtg

A parking variance requested by Our Lady of the Mountains Catholic Church was the subject of the Wed., Oct. 11 Zoning Board of Adjustment meeting.

According to the plans submitted, a new Baroque-style church planned for the site will eventually replace the existing 262-seat church that was built in 1950,

expanded (lengthened) in 1964 with a sanctuary addition constructed in 1989.

Plans for the new 286-seat church requires 72 parking spaces.

Due to the slope of the land which is 16%, the wetlands on the 2.58-acre tract, and the mature trees that would have to be

• See OLM page 12

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• THE PLATEAU'S POSITION •

• MAYOR ON DUTY •

NC sidewalk could be decided tonight

Tonight is the Highlands Town Board meeting starting at 7 pm at the Highlands Community Center next to the ball field. At 6 pm the board will have a public workshop meeting at the same venue. Both meetings can be accessed on YouTube with a link at the town website.

A major board meeting issue at the time of this writing will be the location of the proposed sidewalk on NC 106 beginning near the business district and going near the Highlands Country Club.

At the last meeting Commissioner Dotson urged the board to continue to consider the proposed route that would require an easement on the Shelby Place Homeowners property. I have met with Rick Siegel of the association and shared with him a photo of an elevated, steel walkway that could be installed. This walkway would be level with the road and traverse Munger Creek which is right next to the road and prevents the sidewalk following the roadway.

If the homeowners at Shelby were



Highlands Mayor
Patrick Taylor

interested in pursuing this alternative concept, then the board would need to decide how to proceed. The option to relocate the sidewalk on the opposite side of NC 106 is still on the table, if the board chooses to do so.

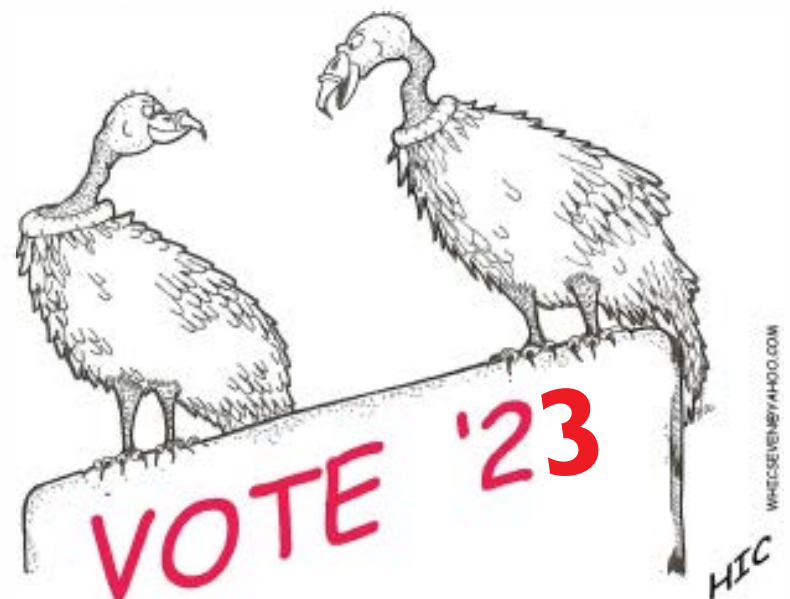
The bottom line is there are state/federal funds available for such proposed sidewalks. Our staff has a grant proposal almost ready for submission dependent on the board's final decision.

Staff from the Southwestern Regional Planning Organization have been of great assistance in identifying funding sources and working with our staff in developing the grant request. Our contacts indicate there is an ample supply of funds for the grant, at least for now. The longer we wait in submitting a grant request, the more likely that the funds will have dried up. I will press for a final decision concerning the location of the sidewalk at the meeting tonight.

We will also have a request for the final approval of the new subdivision located on Gibson Road. It is an unusual situation where water major utilities will not be available until the water and sewer lines are completed on Gibson. The installation of these lines is the responsibility of the town. ARP funds have been approved and a contract is in effect for the project. The developer is ready to start selling the lots and building homes. By the time any of the homes are completed, about 18 to 24 months from now, the water and sewer lines will be installed. The subdivision owner is requesting not to be delayed simply because of the schedule of this town project. Normally, subdivisions are developed next to roads that already have utilities in place.

At the workshop at 6, the board and staff will revisit the Highlands School request to install an illuminated, electronic sign. It is fall, and leaf blowers are active and in full force. I want to have a discussion about a possible ordinance regulating the commercial use of leaf blowers. I have received feedback from residents that this is an issue that needs review.

• HIC'S VIEW •



"Early voting starts today.
Yum Yum, This is going to be a fun and lucrative."

• WEATHER •

Thu, 19-Oct	Fri, 20-Oct	Sat, 21-Oct	Sun, 22-Oct
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Times of clouds and sun	Cloudy with a passing shower	Breezy in the morning	Sunny
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• INVESTING AT 4,118 FT. •

When things go up in the night

It's almost that time of year when ghosties and goblins take to the streets. One of the scariest things on our residential streets isn't Nightmare on Elm Street's Freddy Kruger, but the mortgage interest rates that seem to be creeping up faster than we can scream, "Help!"

According to Forbes online magazine, in an article published by Robin Rothstein, "Mortgage rates began September above 7% before reaching 7.57% in the second week of October- the highest rate since 2000, according to Freddie Mac."

Freddie Mac, Freddy Kruger. Po-TAY-tow, Po-TAH-tow, or to some, just tater. Housing market watchers say it ain't over until the pumpkin explodes. OK, well that wasn't their exact words, but analysts are hopeful that rates will start to decline, depending on several things, like less inflation. That being said, it's likely to get worse before it gets better.

Interestingly enough, the next 2-day



Jeannie Chambers
Chambers Realty
& Vacation Rentals
828-526-3717

meeting to decide how much rates will rise is October 31st and November 1st. How fitting. Take your pick, Trick or Treat or The Day of the Dead.

Here are some quotes from different sources, also cited in the Forbes article:

Realtor.com, economist Jiayi Xu "The trajectory of mortgage rates hasn't unfolded exactly as we expected...we've seen almost the opposite pattern." He still predicts lower rates if inflation is better controlled.

First American Financial Corporation- Chief Economist, Mark Fleming, "It's likely that mortgage rates will continue to hover in the 6.5% - 7.5% for the remainder of the year, which means affordability will remain a challenge for many home buyers.

Palisades Group CEO/Co-Founder Jack Macdowell, "While over the medium term we expect a normalization bringing mortgage rates back to around 6%, predicting the timing is challenging." He goes on

to forecast that in the near term, we may see rates of 7%-7.25% remain in place until the end of the first quarter on 2024.

According to MBA data (Mortgage Banking Association), Purchases and re-finances remain at the lowest level since 1990. I'm not a banker, and I certainly don't claim to have any insight into the banking industry, but I predict if banks aren't making money on new mortgages or re-financing, they will find a way to make it up in other areas. Most of the re-financing happening now involves home-equity/cash-out loans. If you have renovations planned, you may want to consider a HELOC (Home Equity Line of Credit.)

Here's another prediction: Sir Isaac Newton may have been 'good at math,' but his law of gravity didn't necessarily mean mortgage rates or real estate prices. As Jed Clampett used to say, "Wee, Doggie!"

Real estate is still the best investment due to the law of scarcity. There aren't any more parcels of dirt being created, unless you count the dried-up streams because of our drought.

Some of the home sales over the last six months realized a 60% +/- profit, but several of those sellers waited ten years for that to happen. Yes, there were many sales over the last couple of years that showed the seller only having the home for one-two years. Flippers. Do we blame TV for that one?

A lot has changed here and all across the country in the last ten years. The average home sale in NC in the year 2013 was \$175,000, and while the amounts were higher in our area, there's still a big difference. In our MLS, sales in 2013 ranged from \$108,000 to \$2,800,000. with the higher prices usually reserved for the country club homes. Not anymore. Walk-to-town is the magic word. We also need to consider the costs of im-

provements made to the property and when they were made. For instance, improvements made pre-Pandemic would have been a lot less than renovations after 2021.

Everything has gotten more expensive, just go to the grocery store - ANY grocery store.

We have a lot of cash buyers in our area, so there are many people who don't think twice about mortgage rates but hold on. In another Forbes article,

Why Mortgage Rates Matter For Cash Buyers Of Houses

By Bill Conerly, he ends his article by saying this about cash buyers: "In all cases, interest rates play a part in the decision. Either a traditional mortgage will be secured eventually, or the buyer is giving up interest income by putting the cash into a house. Higher interest rates will discourage house purchases across the board.

The negative effect of higher interest rates usually does not cause home prices to fall, just to grow at a slower rate."

I find it hard to imagine the amount of liquid assets some people have, especially when you consider the residential properties that are listed in today's market. The least I can do is help some of those people make good choices.

The inventory is still sort of low, but there are some excellent homes available. In our MLS, there are 344 homes listed as active with prices ranging from \$165,000 all the way to NINE MILLION! WEE. DOGGIE.

Let's hope when the time comes for Trick-or-Treat, the Feds decide on a treat because that will help fill more goody bags.

I will end this with my Realtor Prayer, "Lord, please let my sellers not be greedy and my buyers not be needy."



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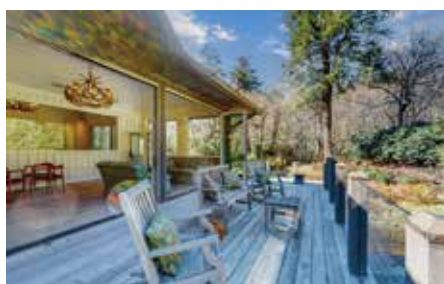
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• LETTERS •

'Rocky Horror' debuts

Dear Editor.

Our beautiful Highlands offers so many delights for its citizens and visitors to live "life as they choose."

It's a town of churches, schools, art and continuing education, fine hotels, restaurants and shopping.

Our community flourishes under the carefully organized town's employees and volunteers. We "celebrate" all kinds of things ... car shows, food and wine, music of all kinds, Holidays, Ice skating, Dahlias etc.

I was saddened to see that the director of the Mountain Theatre Company and obviously its board of directors and major financial supporters have taken steps to change our historically entertaining productions into a venue to forward this "Cult" classical production, as the

director describes it.

The last two productions -- Rock of Ages and now The Rocky Horror Show -- have been altered to add excessive sexual and alternative lifestyles, that is not a family-oriented community production; even advising that adults only attend.

At no time have I heard of our town putting on a public "celebration" to promulgate and honor its citizens' sexual and trans preferences.

Previously, I personally and respectfully made my feelings known to the director at the Rock of Ages production; that I believed this was not the kind of production that aligned with the demographics of attendees and general supporters of the PAC.

I'm not judging the character of any individual or group, as we live in a live and let live society, but I am judging and challenging the content of these type productions, assured by management and sponsors that these productions are indicative of the desires of the majority of "friends, allies, community and general public" of Highlands, NC.

With the obvious gifted and talented singers and actors of the current cast of Mountain Theatre Company, why not bring back family friendly classics like: The Sound of Music, Oklahoma, Patsy Cline, The Buddy Holly Story and drama like Arsenic and Old Lace, The Orient Express, etc.?

My family and I will no longer attend and financially support this endeavor to merge this sexually explicit agenda with the Mountain Theatre Company.

Charlie Renfro
Highlands

A soldier's right

Dear Editor,

As I have written before, we are shaped by our life experiences. My past was soldiering, and it has certainly influenced my thinking.

I was on Main Street the other day, and an older man walked by me wearing his "I'm a Veteran" hat. Just in passing, I usually thank them for their service. This time was different; I noticed a pin on his collar, "Trump 2024." It made me think. How can a military veteran be for Trump?

From my vantage point, Trump's disrespect for the military is beyond disgraceful; it is unforgivable, and I cannot understand how a Veteran, in particular, can support him.

Some cases to make my point.

In 2016, then-candidate Trump told a supporter who gave him a copy of his Purple Heart: "I always wanted to get the Purple Heart. This was much easier." Can you imagine the total lack of understanding of what this medal represents?

In 2017, he visited the grave of the son of General Kelly, 1st Lt. Robert Kelly, who died in Afghanistan in 2010; Trump reportedly said: "I don't get it. What was in it for them?"

As Commander-in-Chief, Trump canceled a visit to the Aisne-Marne American Cemetery near Paris in 2018, claiming his helicopter could not fly him there. But his comment to his staff told the truth. "Why should I go to that cemetery? It's filled with losers." Trump referred to the more than 1,800 marines who lost their lives at Belleau Wood as "suck-

ers" for getting killed. According to the staff there, he did not go because he feared his hair would become disheveled in the rain and because he did not believe it important to honor the American war dead. Can you even imagine that of a Commander-in-Chief?

At the command ceremony for the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Milley, the former Army Captain Luis Avila, who was seriously wounded after five combat tours in Afghanistan, sang "God Bless America" at the ceremony. When Avila finished his performance, Milley claimed that Trump told him, "Why do you bring people like that here? No one wants to see that, the wounded," before telling him not to let Avila appear in public again.

In 2019, in preparation for Trump's visit to the U.S. Naval base in Yokosuka, Japan, the Trump White House requested the U.S. Navy cover the name of the USS John S. McCain. When asked about McCain as a hero, Trump responded, "He was a war hero because he was captured; I like people who weren't captured." Trump's disrespect for Senator McCain is so well documented it only needs to be said that Trump is not fit to clean the boots of Senator John McCain.

Trump's latest announcement on social media was that General Milley was a traitor who deserved to be executed. Execute the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, really? As a result, General Milley and his family require special security.

There are many other examples of his total disregard for the sacrifice of our military personnel.

All this hostility and disrespect to the military by a man who, in the fall of 1968, received a dubious, if not fraudulent, exemption from military service for diagnosis of bone spurs in his heels. It should be noted there has never been mention of that condition in any of Trump's medical exams.

What has happened to America that we could elect, and possibly re-elect, a Commander-in-Chief who has no respect for the service member, the wars they fought, their sacrifices, and the service they provide to each of us? To disregard the pain and suffering of those who have served is beyond sinful. It is unforgivable. To honor our fallen is a sacred duty. We can never forget their service and their sacrifice.

I served with brave men and women who placed their lives on the line. I am not a combat veteran, but men in my units died serving. My mentor and my first sergeant, both dear friends and steadfast soldiers, are dead. I think of them often and honor them every day of my life. I have been and continue to be affected by their loss. The after-effects of service, brought on by battle or service alone, have been devastating for many. Their sacrifice cannot be diminished by anyone, and most certainly not by the likes of a coward like Donald Trump. I am personally sickened by the thought of a man of Trump's lack of integrity and disregard for the American servicemen and women being Commander-in-Chief.

It is every American's right, no one more so than our veterans, to support whomever they wish. I don't say this man I passed on the street, this veteran, can't support Trump; I just would like to know how he can. If there is a Vet reading this who supports Trump, I would sincerely

• See LETTERS page 8

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...Q&A continued from page 1

water, recreational facilities?

Kay Craig

To improve Highlands' infrastructure we need to identify the need or the problem, have it designed or engineered, budget for it, and then complete it.

We have been so fortunate to receive state funding for our water plant and thanks to Senator Corbin and Representative Gillespie we also will be receiving funds to clean up Mirror Lake. We have also been able to apply for grants and having the projects engineered and shovel-ready helps us receive those grants. As a prosperous community we should always be striving to improve our residents' lives. I feel it is important to plan ahead and set aside funds in case state funding is not available in the future.

John Dotson

Highlands Town Commissioners have the responsibility of allocating funds for the maintenance and improvement of the existing infrastructure within the Town of Highlands.

Day-to-day operations and repairs within specific departments, such as water, streets and sanitation, fall under the purview of our Town Engineer and the department teams.

Road maintenance in Highlands requires a well-planned schedule, taking into account factors like traffic flow, particularly during peak seasons, and the appropriate temperatures required for paving or repairs.

With the exception of Many and Warren roads, ALL roads in Highlands have been paved.

Given our location at the top of the watershed, water quality remains one of our primary concerns. Continuous monitoring and upgrades to our water system are ongoing, with significant investments of tax-

payer dollars over the past few years. This includes the installation of a water intake at Lake Sequoyah, larger storage facilities, improved filtration, and upgraded lines.

With the exception of fewer than six homes on private wells (by choice), ALL homes are served by town water.

Another goal for the Town is to expand sewer availability. However, the engineering requirements for sewer installation in our area come with significant costs, primarily due to considerations from soil depth to rock and topographical challenges. Our current focus is on completing the Mirror Lake area and possibly extending sewer lines to Webbmont, with the aim of providing as many homes as possible with sewer access.

Two of my main goals are the continuing installation and improvement of sidewalk access into much-needed areas of town and the expansion of sewer availability.

The Town of Highlands is the primary provider of recreational facilities, not just for our residents but also for the southern part of Macon County. Macon County commissioners committed to provide \$550,000 annually for recreation, and our annual recreation budget exceeds 1.1 million dollars.

Highlands has been fortunate to receive support from numerous benefactors over the years, who have contributed to funding recreational facilities enjoyed by the whole community.

Recent town projects have ranged from renovating the recreation center and establishing a dog park to remodeling the pool and creating new amenities at the ball park.

As seen with the recent conversion of tennis courts to pickleball courts, the Commissioners constantly consider upgrades, updates, and proposals from the voters for new recreational facilities.

• See Q&A page 10

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...LETTERS continued from page 7

like to understand how that can be. Is there some attribute of Trump that is so exemplary that it overshadows his blatant disrespect and disregard for American service members, which permits the veterans to support him? There must be some rational reason; I just am at a loss to see it.

The Office of the President is all about honor and integrity.

The rest is just crap.

Matthew Eberz
Highlands

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Pat Allen

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...Q&A continued from page 8

Brian Stiehler

Since I was first elected, infrastructure improvements have been a priority. The Fiber project, the Buckhorn water tank replacement, the Moorewood Rd water project, the Split Rail Row water project, the sewer and water project on Gibson St, the Dog Mountain water project and the preclarifier tank replacement at the water plant are just a few examples of improvements that I've supported over the past few years. There is always more to do and we cannot fall behind.

The most obvious is road paving. To help control the amount of sediment entering our bodies of water, road paving is a huge step in the right direction. Mirror Lake is soon to begin a large-scale dredging project. We need to be as proactive as we can in eliminating as many sources of sediment as possible. I think we need to do our best to eliminate gravel roads in the town. We've been focused on this for the last 10 years and will stay focused on improving our roadways.

The second improvement that we need to continue to work on is getting every home possible onto the sewer system. This is very important for environmental reasons, especially those homes in critical watershed areas.

The third area, in recreation, I want to see is the establishment of the Boys and Girls Club facility in the town of Highlands. The town can potentially be a huge player here and I can't think of a bigger need or more worthwhile cause in our community. I

am 100% committed to helping make this a reality, in any way I possibly can. Also in recreation, I am currently the Chairman of a committee that is working to build a first-class playground facility for the youth in the area. We are currently finalizing plans for the facility and will start fundraising in the coming months. This is an exciting project to be a part of and was initiated by an anonymous contribution from a member of the community.

A fourth area that I would love to see, is the Town of Highlands and the Chamber of Commerce, work together and use occupancy tax dollars to establish an excellent downtown wireless network. This would be a huge benefit for residents and visitors alike, and even has the potential to improve cell phone service by getting folks downtown, off the towers.

A fifth area of infrastructure I'd like to see, is the completion of a smart grid for water and electric. This system would help the town and its residents in several ways. One example is the system could detect water leaks and track abnormal usage. This would prevent a homeowner from having to be responsible for an enormous water bill in the event of a water leak.

And finally, our infrastructure requires a dedicated team of hard-working employees to maintain it. We have several long-standing employees who are nearing retirement. These folks are a wealth of information and they have complied a large amount of institutional knowledge over

• See Q&A page 30

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...OLM continued from page 1

removed to provide the required parking places, OLM requested a variance for 49 parking spaces and allowance for 23 spaces - 10 more than they have now - instead.

To be granted a variance from the quasi-judicial board, a hardship peculiar to the property must be proven.

To represent them, OLM solicited attorney Craig Justus who practices environmental law, real estate, and land use litigation and planning at The Van Winkle Law Firm. Justus has litigated and won against the town in the past.

He opened the case before the board

by first referring to OLM as a Main Street church noting that Main Street churches in Highlands aren't required to provide parking.

There is a finger-like portion of OLM's property between the Hudson Library and the Church of the Incarnation that borders Main Street.

Town Planning Director Michael

Mathis said according to Justus's testimony it was clear he believes OLM's property abuts Main Street and thus should be considered a church on Main Street and exempt from the town's parking standards (Per Sec. 9.1.1 (B)(3).

"However, the Town hasn't taken a

• See OLM page 14

...BACKGROUND continued from page 1

agreed with the idea, acknowledging that it would necessitate a budget allocation. They pointed out that other institutions, such as Pre-K centers and churches, routinely conduct background checks for prospective employees.

"The Macon County Library Board is the advisory board to the larger Fontana Library Board of Trustees," said Diann Catlin. "In June 2023, when the Macon County commissioners appointed three new trustees to the advisory board, two of the three were parents of young children who are insightful about guarding their children. Churches and schools have benefitted greatly from background checks for years. Our logic was: why take a chance in today's world? At least four of the MCLB also believe that sexually graphic books such as It's Perfectly Normal belong in the adult section, where parents discern and navigate what their children read. Advisory Boards advise, and this we believe is GREAT advice."

The general consensus of the board is that in the event the policy is approved, it would apply to current employees and volunteers as well.

Later Caitlin said background checks flesh out practices which might indicate a problem in working with children.

"Of course pedophilia, but there might be a history of someone ... say who worked in childcare and was fired for say anger toward a child, or carelessness with a child. Drug abuse might surface also. Many businesses do background checks," she said.

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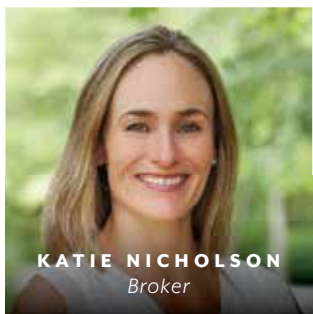
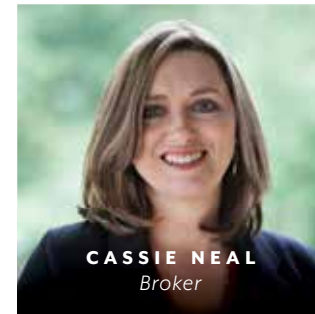
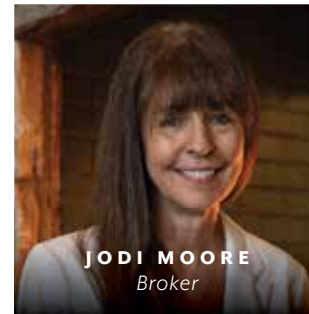
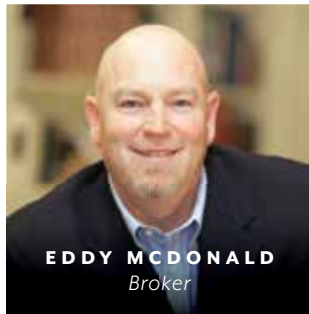
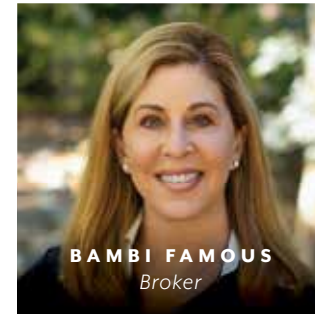
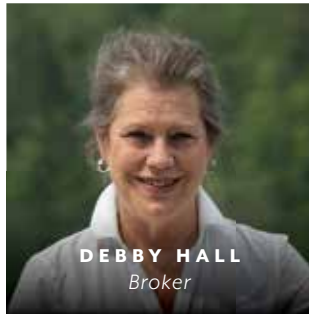
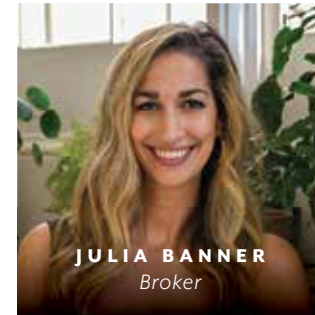


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• OBITUARY •

Marie Ann Van Huss Marion

Marie Ann Van Huss Marion, 87, of Charleston, SC and Highlands, NC, went to meet her Heavenly Father on October 6, 2023 and celebrated her life at St. Philip's Church, Charleston, SC on October 12, 2023.

On October 23 at 12:30 pm at Highlands Cemetery Memorial Park in Highlands, NC, Ann will be buried in the family plot next to her mother, Marie Van Huss, and cousins, Rebecca Smallwood Harris and Thomas H. Harris.

Ann was born on January 18, 1936 to Marie Claxton Harville and Ernest Stewart Van Huss of Atlanta, GA. She attended North Fulton High School and received an undergraduate degree in Elementary Education from Emory University. Ann taught in the Fulton County School System for nine years before receiving a Master's Degree in Education from Stanford University.

Upon moving to Charleston, Ann worked in real estate and continued teaching in the Charleston County School System. While raising her children, Ann was active in many civic organizations includ-

ing serving on the board of the Women's Council of the Gibbes Museum of Art and as President of the Women's Medical Society Auxiliary of South Carolina.

She is survived by her three children. Robert Francis Marion IV and his wife Swain, Rebecca "Becky" Marion Blakeney and husband Bennett, David Francis Marion and his wife Sarah, as well as seven grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Referring to Highlands as "the closest place to Heaven on earth," the town played an important role in Ann's life since early childhood. With long standing Highlands' roots, spending summers at the original family home, built in 1881, was one of Ann's greatest joys. After selling the Highlands homestead, Ann continued to visit Becky and Bennett, of Highlands and Charleston, creating new memories and enjoying the splendor of this place she called Heaven.

Memorials may be made to Highlands Biological Station, 265 N 6th St, Highlands, NC 28741.

...OLM continued from page 12

stance on this, and the UDO doesn't specify the amount of property a church must own on Main Street to be exempt from the parking standards," said Mathis. "It simply says, 'The parking requirement for places of assembly or recreation, or entertainment with fixed-seats shall not apply to churches located on Main Street.'"

Though Justus did refer to OLM as a Main Street church at the beginning of his testimony, the majority of what was discussed centered around parcel hardships.

"The slope, wetlands, and tree removal make it challenging to adhere to the ordinance," he said.

In addition to Justus's testimony, several parishioners, and members of the community spoke in favor of the variance saying the 72 required spaces wouldn't even be used for the most part because parishioners routinely park on 5th and Pine streets during the Saturday and Sunday masses. Furthermore, they said parishioners rarely filled the existing 262-seat sanctuary so filling the new 286-seat sanctuary was unlikely, citing the infrequent use of the property as well.

Those parishioners sworn-in to testify, which is required of the quasi-judicial hearing, said they and others, are only in Highlands 4-6 months, so having so much parking on the campus was unnecessary.

Chairman of the Zoning Board Margot Teed said though the hardships cited by Justus were notable, they aren't peculiar to Highlands and furthermore on-street parking in Highlands is a premium.

However, Michael Thompson and Isabelle Chambers who live in the neighborhood near the church testified that parishioner parking in the area was not detrimental.

"There has never been a parking problem," said Chambers who lives next door.

Justus said OLM was willing to consider any reasonable condition and would consider putting parking where the existing church is located if it is demolished – which further complicated the issue.

According to the plans submitted, the existing church is labeled "to be removed" but at the hearing there was talk of keeping it as an accessory building without fixed seating.

If it is kept, even more parking would be needed – one seat per 200 sq. ft. – for that type of building.

"We have heard almost nothing about hardship during the testimony and that is almost solely what our criteria is based on for granting a variance," said Teed. "I would like you to express the actual hardship, because taking down trees is something everyone in

• See OLM page 21



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Located off Bartram Ridge Road, in the Scaly Mountain community, this 2 bedroom, 2.5 bath features a vaulted great room plan that opens onto a covered porch and open deck. There is a main floor bedroom with ensuite bath, upper level has a loft and guest bedroom and bath. There is a lower unfinished level and has a single-car garage. Usable yard and in excellent condition. Offered at \$495,000. mls# 102545



Stunning 4 bedroom, 4 1/2 bath on over 3.3 acres in Blue Valley Falls features a ridgeline view and water feature. Top of the line finishes with antique, one-of-a-kind touches. Huge cathedral living room, real fireplace with gas starter, screened and open porch with fireplace and big screen TV. Cook's kitchen with gas stove, marble island, banquette window seating breakfast nook. 2 main floor bedrooms with baths. Lower level has 2 bed/2 baths with living room, fireplace and porch. 2-car garage with a covered breezeway. Currently a vacation rental so showing requires advance planning. Offered at \$1,895,000. mls #102601



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An established short-term rental, on Little Bear Pen Mountain. Enjoy gorgeous panoramic mountain views from the expansive deck and open living room. Floor-to-ceiling windows in living room. 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, and 2 bonus rooms. There are two bedrooms on the main level, each with its own bathroom. Offered at \$1,795,000. mls# 102689



A Highlands Country Club property with Membership not required. 4BR/4BA home with post and beam great room and cathedral windows and wrap-around porch. The master bedroom and bath on the Main Level adjoins an outdoor living area with fireplace. There is a second bedroom and bath on the main level. The other two bedrooms, also, have ensuite bathrooms. Deck on the lower level with walk-out steps. Offered at \$1,399,000. mls #103156



Newly updated home has a view from the primary bedroom with a covered deck. Bath has a new shower and sauna. Living area has a stone gas fireplace, full kitchen with all new appliances, and large front deck with wood burning fireplace. Downstairs consist of 2 suites, one has a kitchen with full fridge, 2 burner cooktop and microwave. Covered parking under the front deck. Offered at \$999,000. mls#102769



3 bedrooms, 2 1/2 baths. 4 miles to Main St. All new systems and appliances. Sits on .89 acre with open long-range mountain view. Primary bedroom with en suite has a heated floor and bubble tub on the main level with 2 bedrooms and a bath on the lower level. Open kitchen, dining room and living room. Fireplace on each level with gas logs. Covered deck on each level and outside fire pit. Offered at \$1,265,327 mls #102515



Located at the end of the lane and needs someone to rebuild and restore it. 2 bedrooms, 1 bath plus an attic in the roofline. There is a carport and storage above. The lot is wonderful, with end-of-the-road privacy and a grassy usable lot. Loads of potential with city water and power. \$425,000 mls #103136.



This house on Upper Lake Road has a great entrance hall, large living room, dining room and gourmet kitchen plus a screened porch and spacious deck. Primary suite with office and laundry room, as well as very large walk-in closet and large bath. Upstairs has 3 bedrooms, each with its own bath. There is a large den with built-ins and a bunk room off one of the upper bedrooms. Porch with gardens and a fountain in front. with 2 guest parking spaces on the street. Offered at \$2,400.00 mls #102744



This is a wonderful family home in a great neighborhood! 3 bedrooms, 3.5 baths, office and loads of storage, great open plan has been updated with a new kitchen. Vaulted living room with fireplace. Separate guest bedrooms with the upper bedroom featuring a mountain view. 2 car garage. Flat usable lot. Offered at \$1,895,000. mls #101906



On Eastside Duck Mountain, this 3 bedroom 2 bath is in Four States Subdivision and has a spectacular view of Winfield Farm, Blue Valley and vistas to the south. Main floor living plan has living room with fireplace, kitchen, dining room/sunroom with loads of windows for 180-degree view. 2 guest bedrooms with a hall bath. Upstairs has a huge master suite with fireplace and ensuite bath. Offered at \$650,000. mls #101529

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Highlands Veterans launch 'Plateau Warriors' program to aid area Veterans

By Chip Snyder

A group of local Highlands veterans has joined forces to establish the "Plateau Warriors" program, an initiative designed to provide vital support and resources to area veterans during times of uncertainty and crisis.

Across the country every 65 minutes a veteran chooses to take his or her life because many veterans are not aware of their choices. Recognizing the unique challenges faced by those who have served, the Plateau Warriors support team members take on the role of "Battle Buddies," a group with whom the veteran responds to and trusts because of mutual service experiences. Battle Buddies empower veterans by communicating the various choices available to them and offering a helping hand when it is needed most.

The program was conceived through the joint efforts of Ed McCloskey and Davis Picklesimer with help from a team of former servicemen, including Bill Huff, Zach Claxton, Paul Schowalter, Jim Kinard and myself, Chip Snyder.

The Plateau Warriors program seeks to bridge the gap between veterans and the multitude of services and support systems available to them. The founders understand that navigating the complex landscape of resources can be overwhelming, especially during times of crisis. Therefore, its primary focus is to serve as a guiding light, ensuring that veterans are aware of the options and assistance available.

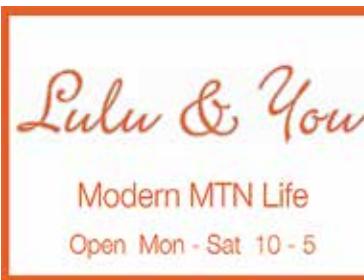
Tom Neil, CEO of the Highlands Cashiers Hospital, has played an important role in funding, encouraging, and providing important resources to the Plateau Warriors Team. The program also receives referrals from the hospital's social worker.

The Plateau Warriors aim to educate veterans about the support systems in place, an example being a variety of mental health services. By equipping veterans with this knowledge, the program empowers them to make informed decisions and access to the health they need to overcome challenges and regain stability in their lives.

The Plateau Warriors program places a strong emphasis on peer support and camaraderie. By fostering a welcoming and inclusive community, veterans are encouraged to share their experiences, seek advice, and find solace in the company of fellow service members who understand the unique struggles they face. The sense of connection and understanding is invaluable in times of uncertainty in crisis.

The launch of the Plateau Warriors serves as a reminder of the bond forged through shared experiences and the determination to ensure that no veteran is left behind. As this program continues to grow and evolve, it is our collective responsibility to rally behind these heroes and ensure that they receive the support and resources they deserve.

Veterans seeking support from Plateau Warriors can call 800-906-5315, for help and information. Other veterans interested in information or to volunteer to help with the program contact Ed McCloskey at 813-267-3823 or email ed.mccloskey6@yahoo.com.



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...OLM continued from page 14

Highlands might have to do even though we hate it, nobody likes it, but it's not peculiar to your piece of property. In addition, a 16% grade isn't unusual for Highlands and that's one of the criteria for a variance."

Teed said defining the hardship is paramount.

"The UDO is very clear. There needs to be a parking space for every four seats," she said. "I want you to help us make a good decision. It's the hardship part of this that hasn't been addressed."

Justus said the spirit of the ordinance was met because OLM is not currently impactful and it only wants to modernize the

campus not change it.

"We aren't dramatically changing the use of the property. The ordinance presents itself as the problem because we are being told in order to modernize we have to put in three more parking lots," he said.

In the end, Justus requested a continuance so OLM could get with an architect to see if parking on areas not previously considered would be possible.

The case was continued to the next Zoning Board meeting on Wed., Nov. 8 at 5:30 p.m. in the Community Building.

- Kim Lewicki

HS Boys are 2nd place champs

Steve Hott
Head Coach

On Fri., Oct. 13, the Highlands Middle School Swim Teams concluded their 2023 season at the Far Western North Carolina Middle School Swimming Championships held at the Buncomb County Schools Aquatic Center.

The boys' team finished 2nd and combined with the three-member girls' team they finished 4th.

As they have been all season, the Highlander boys were led Ian Batista and Junior Olympians Blake Kenter and Justin Powell. Kenter was the meet and season high scorer with 47.5 points for the meet, 239 for the season and a 3rd place finish in the meet.

Batista and Powell both brought home 46.5 pts at the meet. Batista had 235 for the season, Powell 225 and a 3rd place finish at championships.

Aleks Petric-Sakonjic earned 41.5 points at the meet, 128 for the season and a 2nd and a 3rd at the meet.

Ivan Shchelgachov scored 34 and 189 pts, while Junior Olympian Corena Dearth had 26 and 128. Alex Lopez brought home 23 and 133.5; Emilina Hernandez 20 and 160; Penelope McRae 17 and 109.5. Also contributing throughout the season but absent from the meet, Miley Zagal had 58 pts for the season and Cassie McDowell 15.

Vote *Rachel*

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Highlands' Taxpayers Are Talking About 3 Things:

Fiscal Responsibility
You work hard for your money, and I'll work to ensure each tax dollar provides you a return on your investment, asking for input and creating transparency.

Better Collaboration
Our best path forward is for the Town to work with other entities, helping collaborate for the best to protect and preserve our Town while ensuring a future that will support small businesses and future generations.

Managed Growth
While growth is inevitable, I'll work to proactively find fair solutions to challenges before they become problems.



Vote ON or BEFORE NOVEMBER 7

Putting Taxpayers First

rachelwilsonforhighlands.com
[@rachelwilsonforhighlands](https://twitter.com/rachelwilsonforhighlands)
rachel@rachelwilsonforhighlands.com
 828-421-2038

Paid For by Rachel Wilson for Town Commissioner




Peace of Mind in the Mountains

HomeWatch and Home Management Services
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Proudly serving the communities of Franklin,
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Loretta Peake Newton still believes that personal care and attention to your property is what you want.

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MountainHomeMinders@gmail.com

MountainHomeMinders.com



Wine Wednesdays

Each Wednesday through Thanksgiving



Wednesdays
3:30 pm - 5 pm

Spread the season's joy with hand-crafted treasures! Discover unique finds at The Shop and Studio Barn: sculpture, pottery, paintings, textiles, glass, photography, books, & more. Your purchase supports regional artists and our creative economy. Plus, savor a glass of wine while you shop every "Wine Wednesday" through Thanksgiving at The Bascom.

THE BASCOM

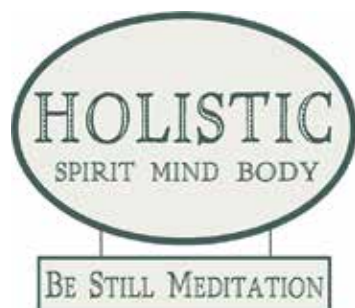
A CENTER FOR THE VISUAL ARTS

323 Franklin Road | Highlands, NC
TheBascom.org | 828.526.4949

•HIGHLANDS EVENTS•

NEW POOL SCHEDULE

- Lap Swim: Mon.-Fri., 6-9:45a, and Sat., 10a-11p - 6 lanes. Water Aerobics: 18 yrs plus, Mon.-Fri. 10-11am with Karen Chambers.



24B CANOE POINT • CASHIERS, NC

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Store from Asheville

AURA PHOTOGRAPHY READINGS/14 pg report

Sunday, Oct. 29 • 11:30a-4:30p

\$65

Reservations • 828-487-5579

Adult Swim: 18 years old+, Mon.-Thurs 11a-1:30p; Public Swim Mon. thru Thurs. 3:30-7p; Sat. 11a-6p and Sun. 1-6p. For info, call 828-526-1595.

Fri.-Sat., thru October

- At the Nature Center, every Friday and Saturday in October – weather depending - at 4 p.m. come for FREE guided leaf tours open to the public.

Oct. 6-28

- “The Rocky Horror Show” at Mountain Theatre Company now in residence at the Performing Arts Center on Chestnut Street. For tickets www.mountaintheatre.com.

Thurs., Oct. 19

- 17th Annual Chili Cook-Off sponsored by Landmark Realty Group in Cashiers, at the Lewis Hall Center at The Village Green 5-7 p.m.

Fri.-Sun., Oct. 20-22

- The Franklin Gem and Mineral Society will host their Leaf Lookers GemBoree at the Robert C Carpenter Community Building at 1288 Georgia Road, Franklin, NC 28734. GemBoree hours are Friday and Saturday 10am to 6pm and Sunday 10am-4pm. Parking is free. Admission is \$3. There is a Fall Raffle with two \$400 prizes: a sterling silver turquoise cuff bracelet and sterling silver turquoise size 7 ring. Raffle tickets are \$1 each.

Fri., Oct. 20

- At Hudson Library, a delightful (and refreshing!) talk by local author/photographer

Robert Willson at Hudson Library on Friday at 2 PM. He'll be talking about his new book, a photographic documentary, *Delicious and Refreshing: Georgia's Vintage Coca-Cola Wall Signs*. Books will be available for purchase and signing at this free event.

Sat. & Sun., Oct. 21-22

- Art League Fall Colors Fine Art Show at the Highlands Rec Center 600 N. 4th St. 10a-5p.

Tues., Oct. 24

- Hudson Library, in partnership with Macon County Public Health, is hosting Fall into Health! This informational health fair will be open from 1-4 p.m. at the library. Everyone is encouraged to come learn more about health services available in our area. Participating organizations include Highlands Counseling Center, Community Care Clinic of Highlands, Macon County Public Health, Reach of Macon County, MountainWise, and Highlands-Cashiers Health Foundation. Information, give-aways, and some types of health screenings will be available.

Thurs., Oct. 26

- Highlands Parks and Recreation will have a Halloween Spooktacular Event on Thursday night from 5:30-7:30pm. The event will include pumpkin decorating, apple bobbing and other games geared to ages 5-10, but everyone is welcome. Wear your spookiest

• See **EVENTS** page 24



HIGHLANDS

ELEV. 4118 | THE HEART OF HAPPINESS

Tidy Our Town
Join us!

Saturday, November 4

8:30 a.m.

**It is time to tidy up our town!
And we need a little help
from our friends.**

**We'll begin at
Kelsey-Hutchinson Founders Park,
Pine Street, Highlands.**



**To participate, send an email to
events@highlandschamber.org**

This event is hosted by the
Highlands Chamber of Commerce/Visit Highlands, NC.
For more information: highlandschamber.org or 828-526-5841
visithighlandsncc.com

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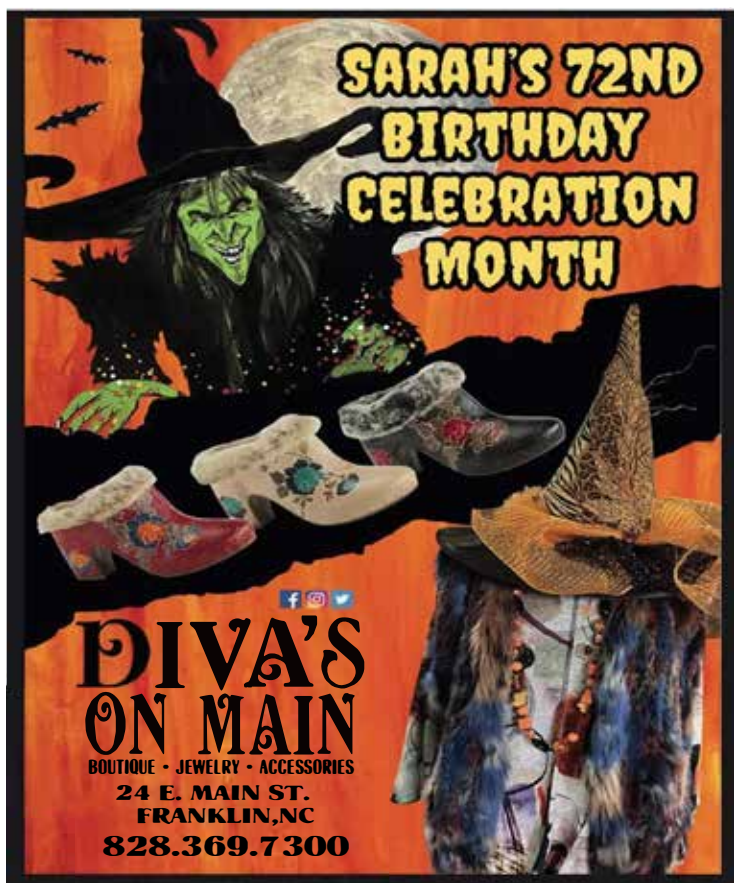
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**Pat Allen &
Cy Timmons**
828-200-9179



• HIGHLANDS EVENTS •



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FRANKLIN, NC
828.369.7300

costume or come as you are. We look forward to a fun event for the whole family.

Fri., Oct. 27

• Let's bring baseball back to Highlands School!. On Friday at 5:30-7:30 pm at the town field we will be hosting a family fun night. We will do some hitting, fielding and throwing. This night is to gauge interest in starting a middle school team this coming spring.

Sat., Oct. 28

• Free Fall Concert with the H-C Chamber Music Festival, 5 p.m., at First Presbyterian Church. Sponsored by the Cullasaja Women's Outreach.

Sun., Oct. 29

• Aura Photography Readings at Holistic, 11:30a-4:30p. Reservations required. 828-487-5579.

Wed., Oct 26

• The Highlands Chamber of Commerce will host a traditional ribbon cutting ceremony at Hotwire Communications' Fision Experience Center. The event is free and open to the public and will take place at 2 p.m. at 670 North 4th Street, Highlands.

Fri., Oct. 27

• At Hudson Library, Community Coffee with the Mayor Friday at 11a in the Hudson Library Meeting

Room for the final Community Coffee with the Mayor of 2023. The topic will be: "What is Ahead for Highlands: An Idea Discussion with the Mayor."

Tues., Oct. 31

• Halloween on Main (from 2nd to 5th streets) will be open to pedestrians from 6-8 p.m. on Tuesday. Participating merchants will distribute candy. Musical performances include the Foxfire Boys in front of Reeves Hardware, High Five in front of Berkshire Hathaway and DJ Mike Murphy next to Kilwins. The Kid's Zone will be on Fourth Street

Sat., Nov. 4

• Volunteers are needed to help Tidy Our Town on Saturday beginning at 8:30 a.m., weather permitting. Volunteers will begin at K-H Founders

Park on Pine Street, to get geographic assignments before collecting trash. Volunteers will get a light breakfast, a safety vest, gloves, pick-up tools and garbage bags. Only areas within the town limits will be covered. To participate please email events@highlandschamber.org or call 828-526-5841.

Fri., Nov. 10

• Garrison Keillor, Tonight! at PAC-HPAC at 7:30 p.m. \$80 per person. Call 828-526-9060 for tickets or go online at hcmusicfestival.org.

Dec. 8-24

• "Home of the Holidays" at Mountain Theatre Company now in residence at the Performing Arts Center on Chestnut Street. Tickets go to www.mountaintheatre.com

Wine Wednesdays thru Nov. 22

The Bascom: A Center for the Visual Arts Invites You to "Wine Wednesdays" – A New Holiday Tradition. The Bascom: A Center for the Visual Arts is delighted to introduce "Wine Wednesdays." This festive holiday offering will occur each Wednesday leading up to Thanksgiving, from 3:30 to 5 pm. "Wine Wednesdays" offer a unique opportunity for visitors to explore The Shop and Studio Barn, all while enjoying a glass of wine and browsing the work of local and regional artists

"Wine Wednesdays" offer a unique opportunity for visitors to explore The Shop and Studio Barn, all while enjoying a glass of wine and browsing the work of local and regional artists. This diverse collection includes sculpture, pottery, paintings, textiles, glass, photography, books, and more. With every purchase, not only do visitors enrich their holiday shopping experience, but they also

support our creative economy.

Jessica Lammers, Retail Manager, extends a warm invitation, saying, "We invite you to join us, savor a glass, and explore The Bascom's unique and diverse gift-giving options. We are here to help you give the gift of art this holiday season."

For further details about "Wine Wednesdays" and The Bascom: A Center for the Visual Arts, please visit our official website at www.the-bascom.org or call 828.526.4949

About The Bascom: A Center for the Visual Arts

The Bascom creates visual art experiences that inspire and empower individuals and communities through seeing, thinking, and doing. For more than 30 years, we've served as a vital cultural resource for Western North Carolina, and we continue to build on that legacy through our work and advocacy for the arts.

The 'Fall Colors Show' in Highlands is October 21-22

The October Fine Art Show in Highlands is Oct. 21-22 from 10a to 5p at the the Highlands Recreation Center. It's an. This is a juried show with an amazing collection of regional artists accepting fine artists from the region, with Executive Deputy Director, Billy Love of the Bascom as juror.

The Art League has always promoted young artists and this year launches a new program specifically targeted to our youth.

Emerging artists from the Highlands School will have a booth and an opportunity to participate in a juried show. Highlands School Art Teacher Jessica Moschouris is thrilled to present this opportunity to her art students.

The show features varying disciplines from painters to fiber, wood and ceramic artists. The beautiful works of art are available for purchase.

Nancy's & The Exchange Fancys for Men



828-526-5029

**2060 Dillard Rd, Highlands
2 miles south of Main, Highlands**



Family Classes at Scaly Mountain Crafters

Pen Turning Class

Learn how to make your own wooden pen!
Choose from 5 different pen styles. Cost: \$40-50 per person and includes laser engraving.

Bird House/Bird Feeder & Bat House Classes

Learn how to make a Bird House, Bird Feeder or Bat House!
Choose from 5 different Bird House styles, 2 different Bird Feeder styles or a Bat House.
Cost: \$20-\$45 per person
Call 828-526-8800 or email scalymtncrafters@gmail.com to schedule a class!

Each class lasts approximately 90 minutes and provides 25 meals locally for each item made.

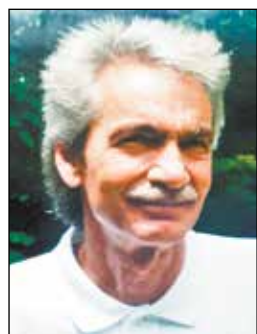
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STIEHLER
TOWN COMMISSIONER



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brianstiehler.org

Paid for by the Committee to Elect Brian Stiehler

• SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING •



What does it take to rouse you?

Pastor Dan Robinson
Highlands Central Baptist
Church

I am remembering just now what my Senior Class Faculty Advisor, Mr. Warren, said to me over 50 years ago. His words were, "Dan, I didn't think you cared."

Earlier that day our high school held a pep rally (remember those?) for the football game scheduled that night.

As Student Body President, my responsibility was to plan, oversee and officiate at those rallies. On that day I asked the Senior Class President to preside and to give me a few minutes at the end. He did a great job of rallying the students but failed to give me the requested time at the end.

I felt like the Student Body President surely eclipsed the Senior Class President in rank -- and told him so! And to my embarrassment I did so with heated language.

It was that incident which registered to Mr. Warren that "I cared."

I spoke up. I did something. I acted in a way I had not acted before. Something mattered to me. Lines had been crossed.

Question: How is the war in Israel affecting you?

It has surely aroused many people around the world. People are speaking up. Lines have been crossed. Both Pro and Anti-Israel demonstrations are taking place. As one who believes in Scripture as God's holy and definitive Word, I must ask myself, "What is my role now as a Believer in regard to Israel?"

Here are my conclusions. I hope they will help and challenge you.

1) I Must Pray.

While I know this seems to beg the question, I also know there is nothing more powerful in the universe than Prayer. We could give dozens upon dozens of examples in Scripture where God intervened supernaturally when people prayed. As someone has said, "We can do more than pray, but we cannot do more until we've prayed."

2) I Must be informed by Scripture as well as by the Cable-News-Networks.

God's Sovereign plans for Israel are thorough, clear and unstoppable. These plans will prevail. And somehow even in the terrible heartache and atrocities we are seeing and hearing about, God is still moving Israel to His promised-prophesied goal and ends.

3) I Must be settled in regard to my own personal relationship with the Lord.

The Bible teaches that Jesus Christ died on the Cross in your place and mine. In our sin, we had offended a Holy God. Jesus paid for those sins. He now offers the free gift of eternal life to whosoever will (John 3:16). I don't inherit this gift from my parents. I don't receive it through baptism, communion or church membership. It is a personal relationship with a Living Person I may have through and

• See SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING page 30

Proverbs 3:5

• PLACES TO WORSHIP •

John 3:16

BLUE VALLEY BAPTIST CHURCH

Rev. Oliver Rice. Pastor (828) 421-1315

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

Rev'd Dr. Michael Matlock, Rector

464 Hwy 64E. Cashiers. NC 828717

CAC@christanglicancashiers.org & 828-743-1701

Sundays: 9:30 am Adult Christian Formation;

10:30 am Holy Eucharist Worship

Wednesdays: 6 pm Bible Study, Prayer, Potluck

Thursdays: 10 am Healing Eucharist

CHRIST CHURCH OF THE VALLEY, CASHIERS

Pastor Brent Metcalf • 743-5470

www.cashiers.church

Sun. 10:45am. S.S 9:30am. Wed. 6pm supper and teaching.

Tues. Guys study 8am. Gals 10am.

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE CHURCH

283 Spring Street - Sunday Service: 10:30 a.m.

Testimony meeting: 3rd Wednesday at 5:30 p.m.

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

Sundays: Service 10:45am, Children's 10:30am

Wednesdays: Youth 5:30-7pm; Women's Bible Study: Mondays

4:30pm, Tuesdays 10am; Men's Bible Study: Wednesdays &

Thursdays 7am @ Zookeeper Bistro

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. VV. Bentley Manning, Rector • 526-2968

5th and Main streets • www.incarnationwnc.org

Sunday: Rite I, spoken, 8 am in Chapel, Rite II with Choir 10:30

am in Sanctuary, Wed: Healing Eucharist 12 pm in Chapel, Morn-

ing Prayer: Mon-Thurs 8:30 am in Chapel

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; Women's 10:30 am

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Emily Wilmarth, pastor

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

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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

909a Bluegrass and 11a Traditional

www.highlandsmethodist.org

HOLY FAMILY LUTHERAN CHURCH: ELCA

2152 Dillard Road • 526-9741

Rev. Ken Langsdorf

Worship/Communion: 10:30 All are welcome.

Visit our website: Holy Family Lutheran Highlands NC

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 • mountainsynagoguewnc.com.

Services: 1st /Fri. and 3rd Sat.

and Rosh Hashanah & Yom Kippur.

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

CATHOLIC CHURCH

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

Tues. - 9:30am; Thurs. - 9:30am; Sat. 4pm; Sun. - 11am

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

Sunday Services: 8a. 9:30 & 11a

Visit our website www.goodshepherdofcashiers.com for

schedules of activities.

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UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP

85 Sierra Drive. Franklin • uufranklin.org

Sunday Worship - 11 a.m.

WHITESIDE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Rev. Sam Forrester/Cashiers

Sunday School: 10 am. Worship Service: 11 am

Thank you!

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2023 Outdoor Concert Series
a success:*

Friends of Founders Park

Highlands Police Department

Highlands Parks and Recreation Department

Town Square and the Lupolis

And our wonderful musicians and concert attendees!

The 2024 schedule is already live
on our website so you can plan accordingly.

See you next year!



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9am - Live Stream

w/Andy Stanley

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8/31



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Founding Member

Cell: (828) 482-2370
gsgarren@gmail.com

Downtown Office 33
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Highlandssothebysrealty.com

Paul Corbin
Owner



A&O LANDSCAPING SERVICES, LLC

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pcorbin1631@aol.com



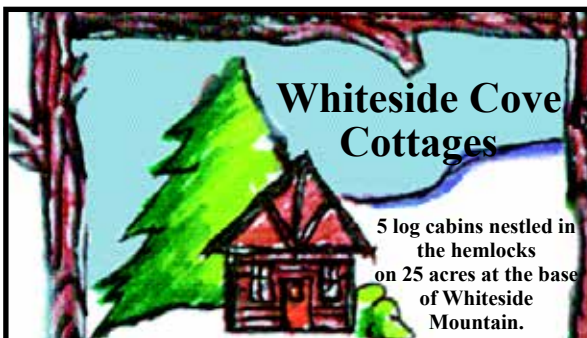
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Pat Allen, Broker in Charge




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HELP WANTED

WADE HAMPTON GOLF CLUB is currently seeking an administrative manager to join the team. The position can be full-time with benefits or part-time without benefits and offers competitive pay and flexible hours. The administrative manager is responsible for clerical tasks including tracking labor, invoices, and supplies. This position assists with the distribution of inventory, running errands as needed, updating spreadsheets, word and excel a plus, and is responsible for welcoming guests to the golf course operations department. Please contact Eric Shomaker at #828-743-5653 or email your resume to golfcourse@wadehamptongc.com to apply. (st. 10/12)

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...Q&A continued from page 10

their many years of service. As with any business, succession planning is critical, and this is no exception. We need to be sure the up-and-coming leaders of various departments can fill the large shoes of those who are planning to retire, or have retired, in the coming years.

Jeff Weller

I would like to see a very proactive movement for the expansion of sewer inside the town limits. We need to work on expanding the sewer to service all areas of the town. We should start with service to our most environmentally sensitive zones around Highlands. We need to start in areas that border our water ways and especially our drinking water supply. Some of these areas are not going to be a simple task, but our environment is so important not to come up with the solutions. Currently, water infrastructure and supply just received a big boost with the recently announced \$5m grant to upgrade the water treatment plant. Our mayor and administration should be thanked for taking this request to our State Representatives. Then, Kevin Corbin and Karl Gillespie took the request and really came through for the Town of Highlands in securing the grant for the water treatment plant as well as the additional \$5m for the Mirror Lake Dredging Project. This should allow the town some more flexibility financially moving forward to improve and expand other infrastructure around town because of the funds from the State.

The recreational facilities have really been improving over the last many years.

From the new pool, to the pool cover, the renovation of the gym, the stage, tennis courts, pickleball courts, skate park, weight and aerobics rooms, etc. Recreation facilities in Highlands are on a very good path. There is still work to be done.

I have served as the Chairman of the Macon County Recreation Commission for several years. Recreation and our youth are very important to me. I'd like to engage the County as well in Highlands future planning. I was asked to join a new committee to replace and improve the playground facility at the Rec Park. This is just one more step to provide comprehensive recreation opportunities for all ages and abilities. The committee is working diligently on providing an all-inclusive playground for every child in Highlands.

Our roads and sidewalks need to also remain a priority. We have been working on roads and a few places sidewalks also have been extended by the town. I'd like to see a focus on completing that task by expanding the "pedestrian-friendly" district to a larger area. There is still work to be done but a good path has been set. We just need to stay focused.

Rachel Wilson

From my research and in talking with town employees, infrastructure throughout the Town of Highlands is in good shape. I commend the Town Board, Mayor and Town Manager for increasing the funds allocated to maintaining roads, sidewalks, curbs & gutters in the 2023-2024 budget and for being proactive to ensure residents

and business can count on a solid foundation for years to come.

Paving projects have been consistent throughout town for the past several years and from what I have seen there has been a quick response if potholes or other issues arise on our roads. My first improvement would be the continued expansion of our sidewalks to further encourage pedestrian activity not only down 106 but also further towards Mirror Lake. Regarding sidewalks in the heart of downtown, there is concern over the loose brick. While the esthetic is nice and it makes repairing pipes underneath the sidewalk easier it is hard to make all the brick level creating a tripping hazard, concreting them in would be a better solution.

Our sewage treatment plant is state of the art and not at full capacity, however, there will likely be a need to invest significant money into maintaining or replacing old lines. Funds have been secured for much needed upgrades to our water system. Soon the town will be replacing an old holding tank and replacing undersized lines to provide better service to residents and improve fire protection around town. As the town continues to grow there will also be the need for expansion of water and sewer services and the Town needs to be proactive in preparing for this growth financially. We also need to monitor water quality closely and protect Lake Sequoyah from potential sediment, chemicals and toxins upstream to maintain it as a healthy water source for our town.

As many may recall, our power grid was put to the ultimate test in December 2022. Town employees worked tirelessly to keep the lights on as much as possible and the grid

did not fail. The town will soon be working with a contractor to do a study of our current power distribution infrastructure and determine if changes or upgrades need to be implemented to meet the demands of more full-time residents and less seasonality. This forward thinking is critical.

Our recreational facilities are better than most for a town of our size, but there is still opportunity for more to support local families. Commissioner Stiehler is putting forth great effort to expand the playground area at the Rec Park which is long overdue. As my second improvement I would fully support the Town investing in a large multi-purpose building that could be used in partnership with an outside organization to provide after-school care and summer day camps for children in our area. This is a dire need for working parents in our community. The Mayor has mentioned this as one of his priorities and I believe we should make this happen.

One final note worth mentioning regarding town infrastructure is the manpower behind it that keeps everything moving. We can have the best technology, materials and resources in the world but without Town employees, none of it benefits the people of Highlands. If elected, one of my focuses would be to make sure the Town of Highlands is a premier employer in Macon County and take steps to make each employee feel valued and appreciated. In my mind, that is the most important factor in securing solid infrastructure for years to come.

Oct. 26 question #5:

What relationship do you think the Town should have with the K-12 Highlands School?

• POLICE & FIRE REPORTS •

Highlands Police entries from Oct. 10. Only the names of persons arrested, issued a summons/citation, issued a Class-3 misdemeanor or those of public officials have been used.

Oct. 10

• At 1:40 p.m., officers responded to a one-vehicle accident on Arnold Road.

Oct. 14

• At 8:20 p.m., officers responded to a call of misdemeanor child abuse and misdemeanor breaking and entering at a residence on Brooks Road when a man forced a door open into a child's room.

• At 8:30 p.m., Alfonso, Oliveras-Saucedo, 30, of Glenville, was arrested for misdemeanor child abuse, and breaking and entering. He was issued a secured \$1,000 bond. His trial date was Oct. 17.

Oct. 15

• At 1:14 a.m., Franklin Antonio Gonzalez Castillo, 33, of Highlands, was arrested for DUI and driving without a license when he was stopped on N. 5th. Street.

• At 9:03 a.m., offices responded to a call of a burglary/breaking & entering at a residence on Satulah Ridge Road.

The Highlands Fire & Rescue log from Oct. 10.

Oct. 10

• At 11:23 a.m., the dept. provided public assistance at a residence on Ashewood Circle.

• At 1:26 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a location on N. 5th Street.

• At 1:40 p.m., the dept. provided mutual aid to the Cashiers Fire Dept.

• At 2:05 p.m., the dept. responded to a motor vehicle accident on the Dillard Road.

Oct. 11

• At 2:38 p.m. the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on VZ Top.

• At 5:38 p.m., the dept. provided public assistance to a residence on Paul Waldon Way.

Oct. 12

• At 11:50 a.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a location on Country Club Drive.

• At 6:14 p.m., the dept. investigated smoke

at a residence on Mac Wilson Road.

Oct. 13

• At 12:44 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a location on Half Mile Drive.

• At 1:34 p.m. the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Clear Creek Road.

Oct. 14

• At 2:38 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Spring View Lane.

• At 4:34 p.m. the dept. responded to a medical alarm at a residence on Kelsey Court.

• At 10:41 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Buck Creek Road.

Oct. 15

• At 11:54 p.m., the dept. responded to a motor vehicle accident on the Walhalla Road.

Oct. 16

• At 3:57 p.m., the dept. provided mutual aid to the Scaly Fire Dept.

• At 8:13 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Pipers Court.

• At 8:18 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Old Orchard Road.

...SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING

continued from page 26

by faith. I hope you will turn your life over to Him even now by repenting of your sins and asking Him to be your Savior.

4) I Must do everything possible on a practical level to help Israel.

This includes humanitarian relief as well as political negotiations whenever/wherever possible.

We are living at a critical time in the history of the world. More than most of us probably realize. I hope you will be encouraged. I hope you will be vigilant. I hope you will be roused.

God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks in our conscience, but shouts in our pain: it is His megaphone to rouse a deaf world. (C.S. Lewis, *The Problem With Pain*).

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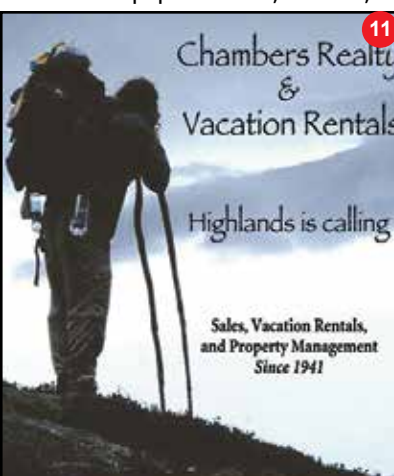
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