

Highlands Newspaper

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Thurs., Jan. 18, 2024

HS swim team hosts 1st ever home meet

Junior Finneas Garner ranked 4th in state

On Friday, Jan. 12, the Highlands School Varsity Swim Team hosted Franklin, Rabun Gap Nagoochee School (RGNS), Smoky Mountain and Summit Charter at first-ever home meet.

Missing a key swimmer for

most of the meet, the Highlanders (8 swimmers), finished 3rd behind Franklin (33 swimmers) and RGNS (22 swimmers).

The Highlanders were led by Finneas Garner, Aniah McKim and Chase Kenter who all scored

57 pts. Each finished 1st in three events and 2nd in an event.

Junior Finneas Garner is ranked 4th in the state at the 50 freestyle.

Sophomore Aniah McKim is

• See SWIM page 11



See repair update on page 4.

On the Brink of the Abyss

By Ran Shaffner

The Franklin Press called it “probably the greatest scenic highway in all of the state.”

Unlike most roads that hugged the banks of the rivers they followed, Highway 28 (to-

day’s 28/64) wound its way along a narrow ledge blasted into the age-old granite wall of the Cullasaja Gorge 300 feet above the river far below.

Workers were hired that spring of 1928 to hang from ropes

fastened to the top of a 500-foot cliff, where one slip meant certain death from such dizzying heights. They drilled holes into the solid rock by hand, filled them with sticks of dynamite and a blasting

• See ABYSS page 4

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NC attorney general sues HCA for failing to provide promised care

Carolina Public Press and Asheville Watchdog weigh in

by Grace Vitaglione
Carolina Public Press

N.C. Attorney General Josh Stein sued HCA Healthcare on Dec. 14 over allegations that the hospital company is not providing the care it agreed to when the state approved its acquisition of the Asheville-based Mission Health System in 2019.

At a press conference about the lawsuit, Stein said the company is failing to provide emergency and cancer care for Western North Carolina residents. He referenced allegations that the emergency department at HCA’s facility in Asheville was “frequently filthy” and had well above average wait times.

Stein also singled out the lack of any medical oncologists on Mission’s staff.

“Patients in Western North Carolina deserve quality health care and that is exactly why I am taking this action today,” he said.

Staff around him at the conference held signs reading “Staff Up! For Safe Care. End Crisis Care Now.” Hannah Drummond, a nurse in the emergency room department at Mission, said at the press conference that “the front waiting room often resembles a warzone” because of the staffing crisis.

Other allegations against HCA include understaffing, creating bed shortages, and impeding ground and air medical transport services in the region. Cancer patients are also allegedly unable to begin chemotherapy treatments because no medical oncologist is available, according to the state Department of Justice.

Sen. Julie Mayfield, D-Buncombe, said at the conference that she and two other representatives introduced the “Preserving Competition in Health Care Act” to

• See HCA page 14

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• THE PLATEAU'S POSITION •

• MAYOR ON DUTY •

Line up for first Town Board mtg of 2024

This Thursday, the Highlands Town Board of Commissioners returns to work for the new year. Our monthly workshop meeting will begin at 6 pm, followed by the business meeting at 7 pm. Both sessions are at the Highlands Community Center next to the ball field. There will be a video link on the town website for those who cannot attend.



Highlands Mayor
Patrick Taylor

We have a full agenda for both sessions. At the workshop, the board will hear a report from Lamar Nix, the town's public works director, concerning the status of the major upgrades to the water plant. Specifically, the board will receive cost estimates to replace the pre-clarifier tank and to build a new water filter train in the plant. Staff will be seeking direction on how to proceed.

There will also be a discussion and review concerning the planning board appointment policy. At the December meeting, the board decided on a procedure to select planning board members. This review will center around such issues as how many planning board members should be

town residents and the length of terms on the board.

The agenda will also have an item concerning tabled UDO amendments, specially creating a new definition of commercial building and subdivision road paving requirements. Finally, staff proposed modified weekend construction work regulations will be reviewed.

At the 7 pm business meeting, the first agenda item will be a presentation of the 2022-23 town audit by Travis Keever of Gould Killian, CPA Group. There will also be a discussion of a proposed workforce housing grant engagement letter that the Highlands Chamber of Commerce is requesting. The board will also review the proposed chamber events calendar for 2024.

Also on the agenda will be the appointments to the planning and zoning boards. Commissioners have been reviewing the applications and have made recommendations concerning who should serve on these boards.

There will also be a discussion of the bids for the renovation of the Highlands Community Buildings. These renovations include kitchen upgrades and improvements to ADA building accessibility.

Finally, a budget amendment request will be made to the Poplar Street waterline overage. Those hidden rock formations turned out, as in many past instances, to cause a budget overrun. Contractors constantly remind us that it is near impossible to identify hidden rock until the excavation is underway. Such was the case with this waterline project. The project was about 100 yards away from completion when solid rock was hit.

Staff will be monitoring developing snow conditions today. If severe conditions develop the board meeting may have to be rescheduled.

Coming UP

Fri., Jan. 19

- Senior Lunch at noon in the Meeting Room in the Highlands Civic Center at the Rec Park.





- At the Literacy & Learning Center, Tucker Time for tots. 11 a.m. Focusing on fine motor skills. Free to attend and no registration required. 675 S. 4th Street.

• HIC'S VIEW •



"James, I have found what is impotent in life.
A good scratch, long nap, and a bowl of ground chuck."

• WEATHER •

Thu, 18-Jan	Fri, 19-Jan	Sat, 20-Jan	Sun, 21-Jan
 42°F 29°F	 35°F 10°F	 21°F 7°F	 39°F 10°F
Increasing cloudiness	Colder; breezy in the p.m.	Mostly sunny and very cold	Sunny and not as cold
RealFeel® High: 41° Low: 22°	RealFeel® High: 29° Low: 6°	RealFeel® High: 10° Low: 0°	RealFeel® High: 40° Low: 4°

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Highlands Newspaper

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view details

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...ABYSS continued from page 1

cap attached to a fuse, and sought shelter —"Fire in the hole"— as blocks of granite weighing several tons were hurled into Lower Cullasaja Falls.

Ancestors of today's McDowell, Wilsons, Lowes, and other local families helped build what the district highway commissioner would call "one of the most beautiful and certainly the most unusual scenic attractions on any highway in eastern

America." It cut 15 miles off the Georgia route to Highlands, reducing the trip to 10 from Franklin.

The deluge on January 9th washed out the underpinnings of this road that clings like a tiny creeper to the cliff just beyond Lower Cullasaja Falls overlook.

Standing on that unsupported ribbon of road today, without benefit of micro-piles, a wall atop the piles, or a shoulder, relives the trembling experience of the powder men dangling from ropes on the very brink of the abyss that we know as the Gorge.

Gorge Road Update

Due to the washout on the Gorge Road last Tuesday, US 64 west in the Cullasaja Gorge between Highlands and Franklin from Buck Creek to Goldmine is closed while repairs estimated at \$250,000 will be made.

NCDOT engineers met with officials from GeoStabilization Inc, which has designed and will construct repairs. The initial design involves installing micro-piles, building a wall atop the piles and finishing with shoulder construction.

According to the NCDOT, repairs began this week and are expected to take two weeks to complete. Barring any weather delays, the road will remain closed through the end of the month while it is repaired.

The Gorge Road detour in and out of Highlands is Buck Creek Road for passenger vehicles only. No trucks are allowed on the detour.

- Kim Lewicki



A bird's eye view of the washout.

• INVESTING AT 4,118 Ft •

The value of a fireplace

"You get guys around the fire, and they start telling their stories. That's the fellowship they want to be in"

John Eldredge;
"Wild at Heart"

"How's the weather up there?"

That's the question many of our non-resident customers have been asking this week. The answer is ... we're in single digits! It's been so frigid, the church bells across the street from our office which chime a lovely hymn every day are playing "Baby It's Cold Outside" by Barry Manilow. So put another log on the fire and let's consider the importance of the fireplace.

When we show property in Highlands and Cashiers the fireplace gets a ton of attention, right up there with the kitchen (followed by the septic tank). A home with a great fireplace and a lousy kitchen will sell, but a home with great kitchen and a lousy fireplace or no fireplace can be problematic. My point is that a great fireplace is in many ways the very heart of the home, and it needs to be considered whether you're selling or buying. So, what is it about gathering around the fire?

The act of gathering around the fire dates to prehistoric times. There are proven social, psychological, and health benefits to a great fireplace. According to a University of Alabama researcher (not Nick Saban, who will likely be by the fire a lot more) Christopher Lynn, being by the fire lowers blood pressure an average of 5%. The researchers hypothesized that "when we sit by the fire, all of our senses become absorbed in the experience, and having a calming focus of attention helps reduce anxiety."

As to the social and familial benefits (including your next cocktail or football tailgate party) the study concluded "especially in colder climates, sitting around a fire and keeping it going is a very important job. Collecting kindling, keeping the fire stoked, cooking; all these things require the cooperation of others. Groups who are more successful at keeping the fire going would have an advantage over groups that don't."



Pat Gleeson
828.782.0472
Christie's
International Realty

Mountain residences in Highlands and Cashiers personify the need to be close to the fire, a fact that needs to be strongly considered when buying (or selling) your property. According to NAR sources, homes with fireplaces are valued 5-12% higher than those without.

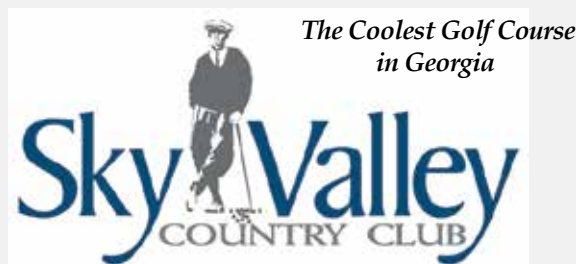
I must admit here that I'm insufferably old school and a guy who burns real wood in both of our fireplaces (one indoor and one outdoor). There's something about our beautiful andirons and the scent, crackle, and ember glow of real wood. I have nothing against gas log sets. The ones manufactured today are extremely authentic in look, feel, and output; and they're no muss, no fuss, no mess. There's just something exhilarating about heading out to our woodpile, donning leather gloves, splitting the kindling, and putting my life at risk with a long-handled axe in my hand.

Hopefully, I've got you thinking about your fireplace, outdoor fire pit, patio, deck, or remodeling the family room (my apologies if your budget just increased). You have amazing resources right here in Highlands and Cashiers. Google "Isokern Fireplace," a fabulous wood-burning option for adding a fireplace that's engineered to draw well and not stink up the room with that "fireplace smolder smell."

The major propane suppliers in town all have the current gas log sets for you to see in action. For the finest in finishing fireplace touches, contact Trey Miller at Southern Andiron & Tool Co. or stop by The Highland Hiker (where there's always a fire burning) to see the full line of Trey's andirons, fireplace tools, log holders, etc.

In closing, we hope you'll sit by the fire this very night, pour yourself a glass of something, count your blessings, and raise a toast to Highlands, North Carolina!

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• HIGHLANDS DINING •

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• LETTERS •

A heart-felt thanks to the town's water crew

Dear Editor

This letter brings countless thanks and blessings on the wonderful Town Water Crew(s) that came and worked through the night to restore our Pinecrest area water!

Apparently, it was a main line break, not just a frozen segment that caused a neighbor's yard to flood, of course on a late Friday afternoon.

The response to my neighbor's call was quick and work started right away. Further assessment required a backhoe, huge pump and additional manpower. In an hour, it would be dark. Terrible conditions--in a semi-thicket of rhododendrons. Rain and freezing precipitation

were predicted after midnight. Intent on locating the source of the gushing water, the dedicated crew chain-sawed through heavy roots clearing the area to the break.

Like a well-oiled machine, the specific individuals performed their various tasks further expediting the tremendous job at hand. Under big lights, the crew continued the repair. They were able to pull out just before the heavy freezing rain occurred.

What amazing timing brought about by the steady efforts of our Town Water Crews! How can we praise you enough in our thanks? You are simply the best and we are the lucky ones.

**Birney Robert
Highlands**

2024 Primary dates and deadlines

Here are key dates and deadlines for the 2024 primary election in North Carolina:

- Jan. 19, 2024: County boards of elections begin mailing absentee ballots to eligible voters who have submitted an absentee ballot request form.

- Feb. 9, 2024: Voter registration deadline (5 p.m.).*

- Feb. 15, 2024: In-person early voting begins, with same-day voter registration available.

- Feb. 27, 2024: Absentee ballot request deadline (5 p.m.).*

- March 2, 2024: In-person early voting ends (3 p.m.).

- March 5, 2024: Primary Election Day.

- March 5, 2024: Absentee ballot return deadline (7:30 p.m.).*

- March 15, 2024: County boards of elections primary canvass meetings (11 a.m.)

- March 26, 2024: State Board of Elections primary canvass meeting (11 a.m.)

*Voter registration and absentee voting deadlines are different for military and overseas citizen voters.

Catapult: Storytelling through shadow dance coming to PAC Jan. 27

On Saturday, Jan. 27, the Highlands Performing Arts Center presents Catapult (America's Got Talent Finalists) at 7:30pm.

You won't believe your eyes as you watch these incredible dancers transform their bodies into seemingly impossible shapes using shadows. In one instant they are a mouse and then a full-size elephant, a camel, a car with headlights, a house and not just a house but a house with a window and people inside the window.

Not only is the show packed with hundreds of shape transformations, but it is full of humor, emotion, and engaging stories. Audiences leave dazed and happy and they will never look at their own shadow the same way again!

A show for the whole family! Tickets are available online: www.HighlandsPerformingArts.com.

Child tickets for 16 and under are \$15 excluding taxes/fees.

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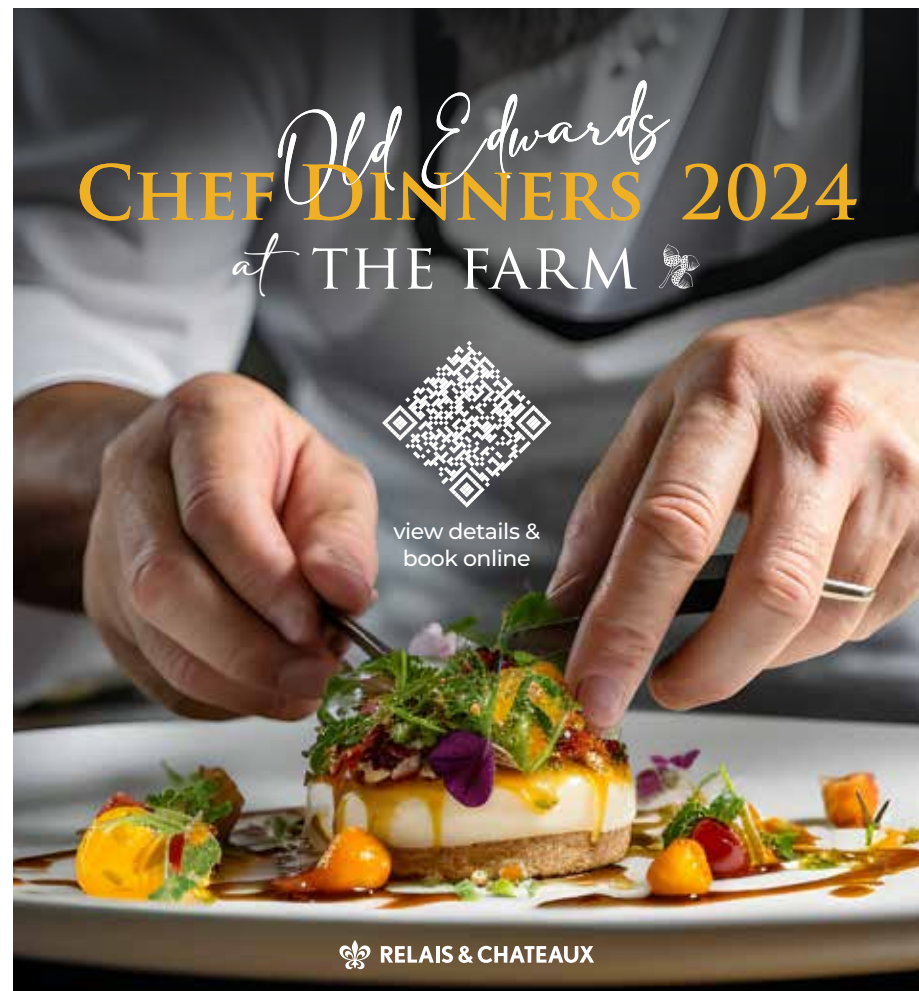
Be an informed voter

Dear Editor,

The 2024 elections will have a big impact on all of us, no matter where you are on the political spectrum. There is a lot of misinformation out there, as well as some vicious fear mongering. Recognize when someone is going for your gut, rather than your brain. Get your news from more than one source, weigh

the facts for yourself, and make informed decisions. Those of you who have not been voting, register and vote! The scrutiny that our elections have been under have made it clear that that they are open and honest. Register and vote!

**David Stearns
Otto, NC**



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• OBITUARIES •

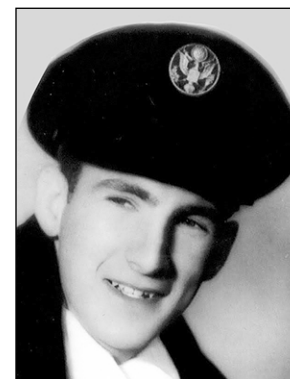
Charles Bobby 'Bob' Houston

Charles Bobby Houston (Bob), of Highlands, N.C. passed away on January 12, 2024. He was born on August 16, 1937 in Highlands, the son of the late John Walter Houston and Edna Roper Houston. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his brother, W. Eugene Houston (Gene).

Bob served in the US Air Force for 8 years and active Navy Reserves for 12 years. He was called to active duty during Desert Storm. He retired in 1993 as Chief Hospital Corpsman. He served three terms with the Town of Highlands Board of Commissioners and volunteered with Highlands Fire and Rescue for 23 years as an active member. He served seven years as Chief, and 27 years as a part time worker. He was employed with Highlands Country Club as bookkeeper, office manager and worked as a real estate broker for 16 years there. He also worked with Macon County Emergency Medical Services as a paramedic for 18 years, being the first supervisor of the Highlands Station.

He was a long-time member of Highlands First Baptist Church. He served as Deacon, Sunday School teacher and Usher. He was a member of the American Legion Highlands Post 370 for over 20 years. He enjoyed attending the meetings and breakfasts with the other veterans.

He is survived by his wife of 66 years, Sammie Calloway Houston, daughter Karen Houston Potts (Joe) of Cashiers; son Timothy Charles Houston of Stone Mountain, GA. He was very proud of his four grandchildren: Danae A. Westendorf (Scott) of Highlands, Trent Reese



(Stephanie) of Germany, Matt Houston (Jenny) of Snellville GA, and Melisa Toller (Ben) also of Snellville, GA. He was affectionately known as Be-ba to his grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and many others. His great-grandchildren are Adisyn, Charlotte, and Camden Westendorf of Highlands; Maeve Reese of Germany; Lucas, Emma and Levi Houston

of Snellville, GA; Olivia and Nolan Toller of Snellville, GA. They all cherished their time with him, many hikes, picnics, a playhouse, along with a zipline that he made for them. He will be greatly missed by all of his family and many others.

Services will be held at 2pm Friday, January 19, 2024, at the Highlands First Baptist Church with Pastor Jim Kinard and Dr. Mark Ford officiating. The family will receive friends from 1pm to 2pm, one hour prior to the service. Burial will follow at Highlands Memorial Park.

Pallbearers will be Trent Reese, Matt Houston, Scott Westendorf, Camden Westendorf, James Manley, Steve Houston, and Robbie Forrester. Highlands Fire and Rescue members will serve as honorary pallbearers. Cowee Fire Department Honor Guard will represent his service to his community. American Legion Highlands Post 370 will represent Bob's 20 years of service in the military.

In lieu of flowers donations can be made to Highlands Fire and Rescue, P.O. Box 460 Highlands, N.C. 28741.

Online condolences can be made at www.maconfuneralhome.com

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.

• See OBITUARIES page 9

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...OBITUARIES

continued from page 8

Carol Lee King



The world lost a beloved mother, grandmother, wife, sister, and friend after a courageous fight against cancer on January 1, 2024. Carol Lee King, 78,

was born & raised in Baltimore, MD where she attended Baltimore Catholic

High School for Girls. Carol had ties to North Carolina via her paternal grandparents where she spent many summers on their farm picking tobacco. She continued her education at UNC-Asheville and received her degree in accounting.

As a child, Carol found an advertisement in a comic book that said, "You can make money selling our greeting cards." These cost .25 cents, and she sold them for .50 cents. This was her first attempt at being an entrepreneur, but not her last. Carol's gift of managing finances was what helped launch her successful CPA firm, Carol L. King & Associates, which thrived for over 30 years. Devoted to her new hometown of Asheville, Carol used her passion, experience, and drive to help shape the downtown Asheville corridor, including the Pack Square Park Committee, Saving Grove Arcade Committee and was a member of the Asheville Rotary Club where she was the first woman District Governor District 7670 from 2009-2010. She was the Rotary Foundation Chairperson for six years culminating in the Million Dollar Dinner where she raised \$1,300,000. Carol was a humanitarian who devoted decades to Rotary International and its mission and it earned her the coveted "Service above Self" award in 2023. (Only 500 are given worldwide yearly.)

She traveled to India twice to give polio vaccines and several visits to the Philippines to distribute wheelchairs. She was the epitome of what a Rotarian should be: Service Above Self.

Carol was a dedicated mother first and foremost. She treasured her family and embraced every moment with them. She is survived by her husband, John F. Baumrucker MD, sister, Samantha King, brother,

James I King, Jr, son, Skip Ruckle (Brigitte), daughter, Nicole White, son, Sean Willander (Beth), grandchildren, Darren Bryan, Avery Ruckle, Electa & Anika Willander, Jacob & Ryan Borth and nephew, Daniel King. Also lovingly survived by her dear cousin, George J Schultz the rest of the Ruckle, Sclafani & Minacapelli families of Baltimore and beyond. She is predeceased by her parents, James I. and Mary S. King, her brother, Paul I. King (Trissa), and many beloved animal companions.

She had a vivacious personality and always made people around her laugh and made friends everywhere she went. Carol meant so much to so many ... let's not think of her as someone to be missed, only as someone to be remembered.

A Celebration of Life will be held at All Souls Cathedral, (9 Swan St, Asheville, NC 28803) at 2pm on Friday, February 2, 2024. In lieu of flowers, donations in her honor can be made to the Highlands Bolivian Mission, PO Box 1358, Highlands, NC 28741. The foster home there and other projects were dear to her and is a mission started by her current husband 25 years ago.

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Do you know, both legally and financially, what would happen to you, your loved ones and cherished possessions if something unexpected were to happen to you?

If you're not sure, or it has been more than three years since you have reviewed your existing estate plan, schedule a complimentary consultation with me, Julie Upshaw, Esq. at Blue Ridge Legacy Law.

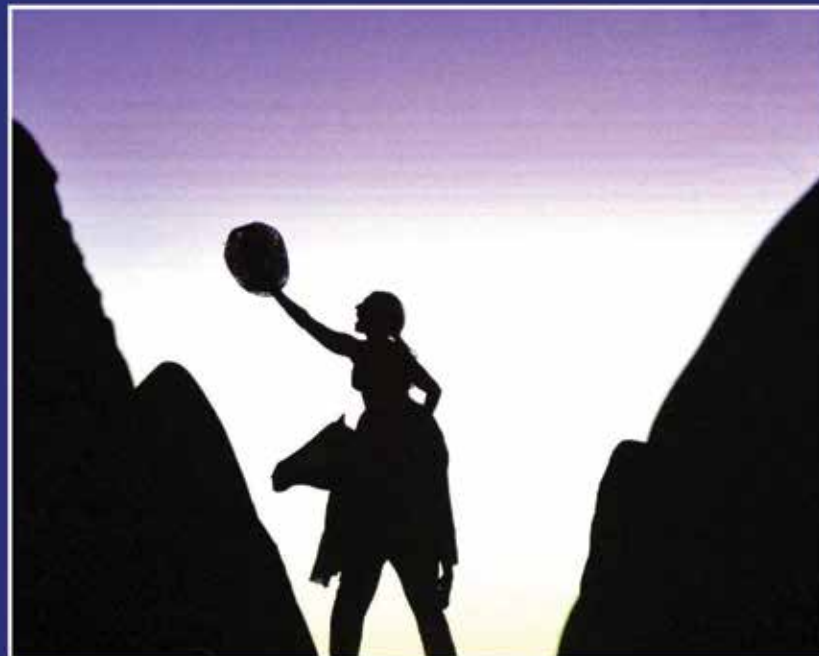
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• SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING •



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Community Bible Church

Over the years, I have acquired an understanding that each of our lives is a story with a beginning, a middle and an end. Each of us is carrying out the plot of our personal stories and within our "story," we each play various characters at various times. I prefer to think that our personal stories have some adventure to them. If your life lacks adventure perhaps this article will get you started thinking about the "story" of your life differently. Both Steven Covey and Donald Miller, prolific writers, have explored this subject as have others. I commend a book to you entitled Hero on a Mission, by Donald Miller. For simplicity's sake, let's say that there are four main characters in a good story. Some roles you want to play, others, well, not so much.

Victim: In life there are victims in the truest sense of the word. Some people have been oppressed, hurt, betrayed, abused, abandoned, wronged and even falsely imprisoned. Others are not really victims, yet they play the role as though they really are victims. You and I may even step in and out of a victim role on a bad day or in a bad relationship or while going through an illness. What we need to watch out for is a victim mentality. Whether you have been truly victimized or not, we do not need to adopt and live with a victim mentality. Victims often complain, blame others, and rarely take personal responsibility for outcomes and may even live with a bit of entitlement. Victims live from the outside-in rather than the inside-out. The oppressed Israelites in the Bible are good examples of people missing out on great blessings and promises because of their victim mentality.

Villain: Victims that lack success or never seem to reach their potential can become villains in their own story. As others excel, the victim turned villain will bring others down so as to elevate themselves. Resigned to going nowhere, a victim/villain will become self-loathing, and relationally destructive. Who wants to hang out with a villain who has embraced a victim mentality? This character is increasingly hopeless and mean while at the same time only becoming increasingly bitter about the whole situation. Villains do not readily forgive others while remaining entitled to even more than they currently have.

Victor: The role we really should want to play in our own life is of course the victor or the overcomer. Shouldn't we be the hero in our own story? Victors may have once been victims and even villains but their quest for meaning and purpose in life has helped them shed that dead serpent's skin. Victors have embraced something beyond themselves that they passionately and strategically pursue with God's help. A victor doesn't forget playing the lesser roles as empathy fuels a pursuit of answers for a better world for all. Transformation awaits the victor who begins to live from the inside-out. Victors are transformed into people of resolve, faith, poise and resiliency. It is the adventure, the challenge, and the perceived danger of the quest that changes the victor into the main character we all want to identify with.

• See SPIRITUALLY page 11

Proverbs 3:5

• PLACES TO WORSHIP •

John 3:16

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

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

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Wednesdays: Mid-week prayer meeting: 7 p.m.

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

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Wednesday night Dinner and Service 5:30

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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.

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

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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

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Sunday School: 10 am. Worship Service: 11 am

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Sunday: School 9:45a. Worship 11a & 7p. Bible Study 6p

Wed. Kidsquest 6p.; Worship 7p.

HIGHLANDS ASSEMBLY OF GOD

Randy Reed. Pastor 828-421-9172 • 165 S. Sixth Street

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

HIGHLANDS CENTRAL BAPTIST CHURCH

Pastor Dan Robinson • 11339 Buck Creek Road

Highlandscentralbaptist.org • 828-526-0774

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sharing the facilities of the Shortoff Baptist Church.

Sunday Worship is at 9a & 6p. Wed. Worship is 6p

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Pastor Zane Talley

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

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Franklin • 828-634-1312 • mountainsynagoguewnc.com.

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and Rosh Hashanah & Yom Kippur.

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Rev. Marty Kilby

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Wednesdays: Prayer Mtg.: 7 p.m.

SCALY MOUNTAIN CHURCH OF GOD

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

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Pastor Rev. Andy Cloer

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

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Sunday School: 10 am. Worship Service: 11 am

• POLICE & FIRE REPORTS •

Highlands Police entries from Jan. 2. Only the names of persons arrested, issued a summons/citation, issued a Class-3 misdemeanor or those of public officials have been used.

Jan. 2

• At 5 p.m., officers received a report of 2nd degree trespassing – being on the property after being told not to be - at a residence on Sagee Drive.

Jan. 4

• At 3:58 p.m., officers received a report of a shoplifting incident at Reeves Ace Hardware where fire arm accessories valued at \$80 were taken.

Jan. 9

• At 12:51 p.m., officers responded to a 2-vehicle accident on Spring Street.

Jan. 10

• At 9:54 p.m., officers responded to a 1-vehicle accident on US 64 east.

Jan. 11

• At 8:11 a.m., officers responded to a 1-vehicle accident on Satulah Road.

• At 10:30 a.m., officers responded to a 2-vehicle accident on Church Street.

The Highlands Fire & Rescue log from Dec. 19.

Dec. 29

• At 10:39 a.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Cottage Lane.

• At 2:06 p.m., the dept. responded to a motor vehicle accident on Hospital Drive.

• At 7:43 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Dog Mountain.

Dec. 30

• At 1:25 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at the hospital.

Dec. 31

• At 9:18 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Laurelwood ridge.

• At 8:56 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Buckberry Road.

Jan. 1, 2024

• At 3:30 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Jessamine Lane.

• At 11:51 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Magnolia Drive.

• At 5:44 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Falls Drive W.

Jan. 7

• At 10:44 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on W. Cypress Lane.

• At 1:25 p.m., the dept. responded to a motor vehicle accident on S. 4th Street.

Jan. 9

• At 5:36 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Whiteside Cove Road.

Jan. 10

• At 8:17 a.m., the dept. provided public assistance at a residence on Holt Circle.

• At 6:08 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Holt Circle.

• At 9:05 p.m., the dept. responded to a call of a possible motor vehicle accident on Buck Spruce Lane but nothing was found.

Jan. 11

• At 7:48 a.m., the dept. responded to a motor vehicle accident on Buck Creek Road.

• At 8:04 a.m., the dept. responded to a call of a possible motor vehicle accident on Buck Creek Road but nothing was found.

• At 4:14 p.m., the dept. investigated the cause of smoke on Wilson Gap Road.

Jan. 12

• At 7:57 p.m., the dept. responded to a power pole fire on the Walhalla Road.

Jan. 13

• At 1:28 p.m., the dept. responded to a call of a fuel spill on N. 4th Street.

• At 4:39 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a location on N. 4th Street.

Jan. 14

• At 12:23 p.m., the dept. responded to a call of a possible electrical fire at a residence on Goldmine road.

Jan. 15

• At 7:06 a.m., the dept. responded to a call of a motor vehicle accident on Buck Creek Road.

...SWIM continued from page 1

ranked 12th in the state in the 100 breaststroke.

Conner Hughes scored 53 points, Jack Sumner 50, Tate Wilson 29, Paolo McRae (only available for 1/6 of the meet) 26.5, and Tate Wilson 29.

All seven of the above are Jr. Olympians.

Aniah McKim and Tate Wilson are Academic All-American

...OBITUARIES continued from page 9

Charles Burch Seymour



Charles Burch Seymour, of Highlands, NC and formerly of Marietta, GA, a loving husband, father, grandfather and great-grandfather, passed away peacefully on January 6th, surrounded by the love of his family. He was 91 years old. He married Peggie Williams in April of 1957, and they raised a family and enjoyed 60 wonderful years together.

Charlie was born in 1932 in Los Angeles, CA to Tee Greenway Seymour and Perry W. Seymour, and relocated to Atlanta at the age of 7. He was predeceased by his parents, his beloved wife Peggie, his son, Richard Seymour, his brother, Douglas Seymour and nephew, Jim Herring. Surviving are his daughter and son-in-law Julie and Lang Lowrey of Highlands, NC, four grandchildren, Pierce (Katherine), Austin, Haley (Reese) and Connor, three great-granddaughters Rosemary, Olivia and Elizabeth, nephew Sam Herring (Geraldine), and nieces Kim Seymour Davis (Ja), and Tamara Seymour Randolph (James).

Upon graduation from Brown High School in 1950, he entered Georgia Tech where he studied Mechanical Engineering for two years before transferring to Southern

Tech. He graduated with a degree in Gas Fuel Technology in 1956. He was an avid football fan and a Georgia Tech Yellow Jacket for life!

While he was attending college, Charlie began his career at the Atlanta Gas Light Company. During this time, he also served his country in the Naval Air Reserve. He was assigned to the Wing Staff Squadron at Chamblee Naval Air Station where he served from 1950 - 1958.

Charlie rose steadily at Atlanta Gas Light Company, including management of the Marietta and Rome Offices, and became NW Georgia Division VP in 1986, followed by VP of Human Resources in 1988, and finally, VP of Facilities Construction and Maintenance in 1992. He loved his profession and enjoyed getting up and going to work every

day. Charlie retired from the Atlanta Gas Light Company in September of 1994 as a corporate officer with 43 years of service.

Charlie was active in various civic and professional organizations in Marietta and Highlands.

During their marriage Charlie and Peggie traveled to over 40 of the 50 states as well as Germany, Switzerland, France, Scotland, Wales, England, Mexico, Canada, Panama Canal, and much of the Caribbean. He was also an avid golfer well into retirement. After Peggie's passing, Charlie relocated to Highlands, NC, to be closer to his family and live the mountain life. He lived a long and full life, was dearly loved, and will be greatly missed by family, friends and by all whose lives he touched.

A Celebration of Charlie's Life will be held on Saturday, January 27th at 3pm at Arlington Memorial Park, 201 Mount Vernon Hwy, Sandy Springs, GA 30328.

Online condolences can be left at www.bryantgrantfuneral-home.com.

Bryant-Grant Funeral Home & Crematory is honored to serve the Seymour family.

...SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING continued from page 10

tify being ourselves

Voice: Though the victor succeeds in the end, the victor, having once been a victim, may remain somewhat vulnerable and at times even weak throughout the story. The victor needs a voice throughout the process. Who doesn't need a coach, mentor or wise counselor? Successful victors have a voice speaking into their lives, cheering them on into the deeper waters of

purpose and meaning.

Where are you in your life story? What is the plot and how much of it is your choosing? Are you living a life simply based on happenstance or are you on an intentional, well-defined adventure? Do you blame others and even God for your lot in life or have you been emancipated from non-productive mentalities and mindsets? Where will the next chapter take you and is Christ

anywhere active in a friendship with you to help get you there? You may not be a Bible aficionado but you don't have to be. Here is one simple statement from He who died on your behalf so you could be a victor in a lost and dying world. The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly (John 10:10).

There is a role available only to you. You are called to play that role in earnest and Christ remains available to help you enjoy the role. You are called to meaning and purpose and to be a victor. Ask Him to reveal Himself to you in a very personal and meaningful way. Listen for Him speaking to you through the Bible and enjoy the challenging adventure ahead. Your developing belief in Him will even lead you to an eternal adventure with Him well beyond this victimized world.

stroke.

Natalie Claire Ballard (Franklin) broke both the 7-year-old 200 yard freestyle and her own 100 yard backstroke record.

Alvero Hernando Martínez (RGNS) broke the 6-year-old 100 backstroke record.

Rylee Cassada (Franklin) broke the 5-year-old women's 50 freestyle record.

Swimmers.

Jesus Mendoza-Tentle was most improved Highlands swimmer of the meet again with 2 Personal Records (PRs).

Six pool records were broken at the meet.

Finneas Garner broke the 7-year-old 50 yard freestyle record.

Aniah McKim broke his own record in the 100 yard breast-

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at gracebrian907@gmail.com. (st. 1/18)

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...HCA continued from page 1

increase transparency about health care transactions and in part authorize the Attorney General to determine how the transaction might impact the “cost, availability, accessibility and quality of care.”

According to Stein, HCA agreed to continue providing emergency and trauma services and oncology services at Mission Hospital until at least 2029, when the Tennessee-based for-profit health care company purchased nonprofit Mission.

Stein said he asked the court to order HCA to restore emergency and trauma services and oncology services to the previous level at Mission Hospital before HCA’s purchase.

The suit follows a years-long saga of worries over how care would be affected by the HCA’s purchase and ensuing complaints over services and staffing.

In 2020, Stein issued a letter to the president of the North Carolina division of HCA Healthcare asking for answers in regards to four key concerns: quality of care, sexual assault nurse examiner staffing, charity care and nursing issues.

Nurses at Mission Hospital in Asheville voted in 2020 to approve a union, and union leaders said it was a contentious process.

Asheville Watchdog

According to an article carried by Asheville Watchdog by Andrew R. Jones, Mission Hospital risks losing Medicare and Medicaid funding because of deficiencies

in care that were so severe, state inspectors concluded last month, that they “posed immediate jeopardy to patients’ health and safety.”

“Immediate jeopardy” is the most serious deficiency possible for a hospital. The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services has recommended that Mission lose its participation in Medicare unless it quickly corrects the deficiencies, according to a letter obtained Thursday by The Watchdog.

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services’ (CMS) regulations define immediate jeopardy as noncompliance that “has placed the health and safety of recipients in its care at risk for serious injury, serious harm, serious impairment or death...[It] is the most serious deficiency type, and carries the most serious sanctions...An immediate jeopardy situation is one that is clearly identifiable due to the severity of its harm or likelihood for serious harm and the immediate need for it to be corrected to avoid further or future serious harm.”

Failure to correct the deficiencies could threaten the financial viability of the hospital system. The majority of patients in Western North Carolina are on Medicare, Medicaid or uninsured.

The Dec. 19 letter from NCDHHS to Mission CEO Chad Patrick cites nine incidents over 19 months that highlighted deficiencies

in care and states that “the hospital nursing staff failed to provide a safe environment for patients presenting to the emergency department (ED) by failing to accept patients on arrival, resulting in lack of or delays with triage, assessments, monitoring, and implementation of orders, including labs and telemetry.

Six of those conditions that Mission failed to meet: governing body, emergency services, nursing services, patients’ rights, quality assurance, and laboratory services.

HCA’s Mission Health responds

Asked about the lawsuit, Nancy Lindell, Director of Media and Public Relations for Mission Health, issued a statement later on Dec. 14, saying that the company was aware of the lawsuit and pointedly identifying Stein as gubernatorial candidate.

“We remain confident that we continue to meet, and often exceed, the obligations under the Asset Purchase Agreement that the Attorney General approved at the time of our purchase, and we intend to defend the lawsuit vigorously,” Lindell said. “Though there have been challenges, some of which we are continuing to address as we work to expand our capacity, we remain committed to serving our community fight for critical access to health care services for the people of Western North Carolina,” Lindell said.

4th annual Bear Shadow spring music festival features acclaimed talent

Single and two-day tickets are on sale now

Highlands Festivals, Inc. announces a stellar lineup for the 4th annual Bear Shadow spring music festival, set to be held May 11-12 in Scaly Mountain, NC at Winfield Farms.

The two-day festival will feature headlining performances by seven-time GRAMMY®-nominated duo Black Pumas and JJ Grey & Mofro. The full lineup will also feature performances by

American Aquarium, Futurebirds, Grace Bowers, North Mississippi Allstars, The Record Company, and White Denim.

Base Camp performances are scheduled for Saturday, May 11 from 2:30 – 9:30 p.m., with gates opening at 1:30 p.m., and Sunday, May 12 from 1:30 – 8:30 p.m., with gates opening at 12:30 p.m.

Winfield Farm is located about 7 miles from Main Street in

Highlands, in Scaly Mountain, and organizers plan to provide continuous, complimentary shuttles from the Town of Highlands.

GA \$300 for a 2-day pass

\$175 for single day

VIP \$600 for 2-day

VIP \$325 for single day

For more information, visit <https://bearshadownc.com/information/>.

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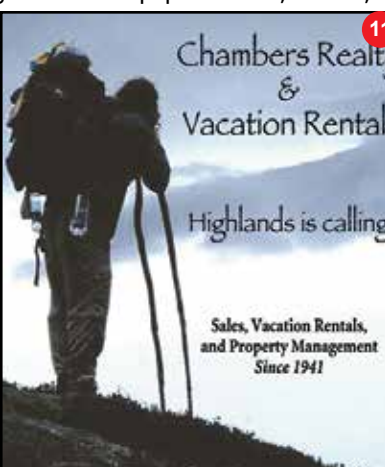
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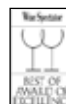
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