

Highlands Newspaper

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Thurs..., March 14, 2023

Restaurant grease getting into the sewer was subject at Town Retreat

Though it hasn't been included in the FY '24-'25 budget yet, machines to clean sewer lines and storm drains will likely become

part of the town's stable of equipment.

During his presentation at last week's Town Retreat, Public Works

Director Lamar Nix said during last year's sewer plant inspection, Highlands was told to upgrade its

• See GREASE page 9

Sales Tax Referendum to be on November ballot

By Brittney Lofthouse

The Macon County Board of Commissioners voted unanimously on Tuesday night to once again place a referendum for a quarter-cent sales tax increase on the ballot for citizens to vote on this November.

This decision comes after an identical resolution was voted down in 2022, which many on the board of commissioners attribute to being due to lack of information surrounding the measure. The November 2022 referendum question on the ballot to increase the sales tax failed with 55% of voters voting against it.

The North Carolina General Assembly granted county boards of commissioners the

• See SALES TAX page 8



Tiny cubs nested in a pile of brush which can be a typical bear den.

NC Wildlife offers help to identify bear dens

What may initially appear to be just a pile of brush, a crawl space, or a hollowed-out tree; may actually be the winter home of a bear and possibly its cubs.

If disturbed by humans, a bear may be inadvertently flushed from the den, and if it's a female bear with cubs, she may orphan her cubs if humans do not leave

the area immediately.

Biologists at the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission (NC-WRC) recommend, if someone encounters a bear den, to remain calm, leave the area quickly and quietly, and do not disturb the den for the rest of the winter season.

Black bears are very resource-

• See BEAR DENS page 9

•INSIDE THIS ISSUE•

Mayor on Duty	2	Spiritually Speaking	10
Investing at 4,118 Ft.....	4	Police & Fire Reports	11
Letters	7	Classifieds	13

Town OK's millions for urgent projects at Retreat

The purpose of the Town Board's annual retreat – held this year on Thurs., March 7 – is to identify issues and hear requests from department heads regarding operations for the upcoming fiscal year.

Normally retreats are just listening sessions – decisions are rarely made – but this year it was different.

Several presentations indicated a dire need for upgrades or repairs with budget amendments passing unanimously to move several projects forward; most were from the Public Works Department which includes the street, sanitation, water/sewer, electric, water plant and wastewater treatment plant departments.

First up was Bob Thomas, Highlands' electrical consultant, who after conducting an intense and full-blown study made it clear that what Highlands went through during the December 2022 Big Freeze when electricity and water outages drove the town to its knees could happen again.

A perfect storm of weather conditions and a town full of second-home owners and visitors that December pushed the electric system to its limits. If not for the town's electric and water crews working all night in bad conditions things could have been much worse and lasted much longer.

For the town to prevent such a thing from happening again, Thomas has recommended a major system upgrade and expansion from a two-circuit system to a four-circuit system.

This will involve replacing existing delivery point reclosures for each delivery circuit with a spare unit in case of a failure; replacing all existing regulators each year for several years; buying and installing two new 12,470-volte reclosers for two of the new delivery points; purchasing and installing six new 7620-volt voltage regulators for two of the new delivery points; constructing about 4,000 feet of double-circuit 336.4 ACSR

• See PROJECTS page 9

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Results from last week's Town Retreat

After the town retreat last Thursday, I talked with Lamar Nix. Lamar smiled and told me, "Mayor, you know we just identified about 16 million dollars in needed capital funding." I reluctantly acknowledged his assertion. Lamar responded, "But there is good news. About half of that 16 million will be covered by state grant funding."



Highlands Mayor
Patrick Taylor

Lamar made a correct observation. The 3.3-million-dollar Dog Mountain water project and the 5-million-dollar water plant upgrades are all state-funded. Also, at the retreat, the board allocated around 4 million dollars to address pressing, immediate needs. Funding for the design phase for water plant upgrades will cost \$540,000. This allocation from reserve funds will be reimbursable through a state grant.

The board heard a report from the consultant who had just completed the electric grid study. Before and after the pandemic our electric department has been tracking significant increases in electric usage. Bob Thomas, our electrical consul-

tant, stated he didn't know how the grid remained intact during the Big Freeze, except for some heroic efforts by our electric crews. Thomas stated Highlands increasing use of electricity necessitated the immediate start of upgrading the grid. Our public works director and town manager agreed. The board approved a 2.8-million-dollar budget amendment so that the process can get underway without delay. This first phase of the grid upgrade will take about 2 to 3 years. Thomas

indicates additional grid improvements will be needed after completing this first phase.

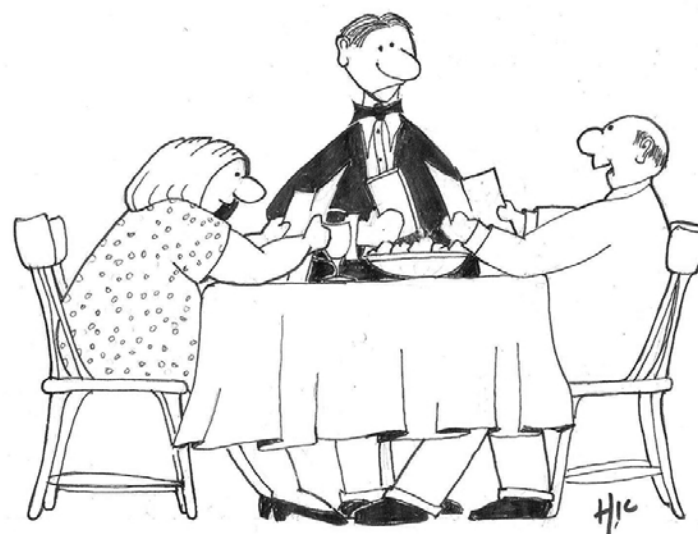
The board also approved a \$700,000 budget amendment to stabilize a large section of Little Bear Pen Road that is showing signs of collapsing and if left unchecked will fall down the hill. This is an emergency project that must be completed now.

Both of these projects were funded from town reserves. Every budget year, a portion of these reserve funds is used for capital projects. Maintaining strong reserves has enabled Highlands to keep utility rates, taxes, and debt loads low. For instance, the utility grid upgrades will not translate into immediate electric bill increases.

But how long can the town continue to maintain this mode of financial operations? More people stay here longer during the year, more visitors come, and utility demands, as witnessed by the current electric grid situation, have grown significantly. At the same time, tax rates and utility rates have remained stable and overall low for the last decade.

In our forthcoming budget workshops, as well as into the future, the town board will have to carefully review the town's financial position and possibly institute some unpopular policies to ensure the long-term viability of Highlands. Capital projects will have to be prioritized, and utility rates and tax increases will be considered. The good old days of relying on town reserve funds may be coming to an end.

The first budget session for the FY '24-25 budget will be held on Thursday, April 11, at 3 p.m. at the recreation center. At this workshop, the town manager and finance director will share with the board a first draft of the new town budget based on discussions at the town retreat.



"How much just for the ambiance."

• WEATHER •

Thu, 14-Mar	Fri, 15-Mar	Sat, 16-Mar	Sun, 17-Mar
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• INVESTING AT 4,118 Ft •

'I want to start a business in Highlands'

"Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress; working together is success"

-Henry Ford

We hear this question a lot lately; "I want to start a business up here, what does Highlands need?"

As I think about the real estate business in Highlands and the factors that make it so great, one very positive trend is that people genuinely see themselves relocating to Highlands full-time. Don't worry local citizenry, this isn't like when half of New York and New Jersey moved to Florida during the pandemic. No, this is genuine and truthful, it's their dream to live here, work here, and own a successful business. Maybe it's your dream as well.

What's causing this to happen? Hey Highlands, take a look in the mirror. It's you! It's the shops, restaurants, hotels, grocery, hardware, and churches. It's the workers, waiters, and wannabee's who are the fabric of this special place. There's one thing they all have in common and that's friendliness! if you will, a genuine love for one another, for the visitor, and for full-time residents. You can feel it. This is why your dream is to live here full-time and to start a business in Highlands.

A few weeks back I attended a Business Roundtable with the Mayor and our Town Board. Here's what was mentioned, (and I apologize for paraphrasing). A 5-generation local businessman named Mike who owns a grading company made this comment; "I've lived here my entire life, and I like what Highlands has become." Clarissa is a successful restauranter about to open her second establishment and said, "I've lived in Colorado, and I chose Highlands." And there's Richard Delany who runs the Old Edwards Hospitality Group (the largest employer in town) who commented, "Our business is very good, but our Town needs to attract and support more great people and successful businesses."

This will give you some confidence. There are many who've come before you with a dream of opening a business. They've purchased property here and then say, "What am I going to do full time?"



Pat Gleeson
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Take Cody, Melanie, Nancy, and Mark who moved here from Atlanta and Athens. They collaborated and together started Spruce Interiors, a successful interior design group. There's Sophie, a local who's about to open One Wicker Cheese Co. to procure fine cheese, positive experiences, and togetherness. Meet Bryan and Steven, who ventured to Highlands from Charleston and have made The Highlands Smokehouse a "go to" establishment for locals and visitors alike. Then there's Jannie from Jannie Bean Fine

Custom Jewelry, who on her way back to Minnesota stopped in town for a cup of coffee and said, "This is where I want to be."

And many young locals have returned to Highlands, which speaks volumes.

Take Rachel, who graduated from Highlands School and returned to Highlands after college and working elsewhere and subsequently opened The Secret Garden sandwich shop. There's also Kedra, a Highlands School graduate who also returned after college and co-owns The Molly Grace. There's Lacy who owns Creative Concepts. Robin who owns Whole Life Market ... all who stayed or returned to make Highlands their home ... and they aren't the only ones.

A selfish plug here, but many a Real Estate Broker in town had a similar dream. We all wanted to live and work in Highlands, NC, and to help others discover a lifestyle and opportunities unlike anywhere else. We learned Highlands by visiting here, renting on weekends, and eventually buying a home and getting into this business. This is the essence of Highlands, the friendliest place you can be, and one of the country's last best places.

In closing, what's on your mind? What's your dream? A bakery, a coffee shop, a day care center, a transport service, concierge home services, or perhaps a food truck (see Town of Highlands for that one). Stop by for a cup of coffee, and you may stay for a lifetime. Let's hope so!

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• LETTERS •

Pay attention. Learn about the legislation and legislators who REALLY support YOU

Dear Editor,

People are complaining about how bad the economy is. The truth is the US economy is the strongest in the world now, with record stock market gains and unemployment at a 50-year low.

However, the average person is not feeling much benefit because the system is rigged so that most of those gains go to the top.

In the last four decades, monied interests have deregulated Wall Street, opened the US to Chinese imports, let companies charge exorbitant prices, provided outrageous pay raises to their CEO's while paying workers a pittance, cut taxes on the rich, and bailed out the banks while leaving working people struggling to pay their bills. The gap between rich and poor has never been greater.

Hedge funds buy up houses and drive up rents. Monopolies like Amazon hurt small businesses and fire workers for unionizing. The government subsidizes wealthy corporations like oil companies, who in turn bankroll politicians to keep the money rolling in, while the rest of us have little or no impact on the decisions being made in Washington, DC.

I'm mad about it, and you should be, too. But what can be done to make this roaring economy benefit ordinary Americans?

Robert Reich has some ideas. Take on corporate greed, a major cause of recent inflation. Pass legislation linking corporate tax rates to the ratio of its CEO pay to average worker pay (currently 350:1).

The Trump tax cuts were supposed to encourage business investment, but failed to do anything but make rich people richer. It drove the deficit higher, adding \$1-\$2 trillion. So, let's raise taxes on corporations and the top-earners. Get big money out of politics. Eliminate special tax loopholes. Unfortunately, the GOP wants more tax cuts, and to pay for them they will cut veterans' health care,

cancer research, Meals on Wheels, and more.

To his credit, President Biden has lowered some drug prices, like insulin. He passed the Infrastructure Bill, providing much-needed projects and good paying jobs. He has protected workers' rights to organize, forgave some student debt, reduced bank fees, and raised taxes on corporations. But more needs to be done.

What can we do? Pay attention. Press your legislator to pass bills that create a fairer system for all of us. Support worker rights and higher wages.

One of the most impactful things you and I can do is support local and/or small businesses. 15.6% of all sales are made through the internet. Amazon accounts for 37.8% of those sales and over 40% of all book sales. Amazon's money doesn't enrich our community, nor does Walmart. They don't donate to local non-profits; local people/businesses do.

Spending your money locally helps build the local economy and supports local people who work here, not fat cats in far off cities. My last suggestion is to buy American-made products when possible.

Cynthia Strain
Highlands, NC

We must elect candidates who understand our country's constitution

Dear Editor,

Understanding history is critical to the success of the future. If you forget the history of this country, the future has no hope.

It took our founding fathers 13 years from the time of stated independence to completion of the constitution that has been our guide since 1789. This was at a time when there were 13 states and only 4,000,000 citizens that made up the newly formed United States of America.

There has been plenty of bad policy and good policy since our founding more than 248 years ago, but we have held to the principles of our constitutional republic despite severe differences along the way.

We need to only elect individuals willing to abide by our constitution, even when it does not agree with their worldview.

You can always change bad policy but you may never be able to rebuild the republic for our children and their children.

I urge everyone to be an informed voter and to protect what so many gave their lives to create and keep, so we could enjoy the freedoms we cherish in our great nation.

Jerry Moore
Highlands, NC

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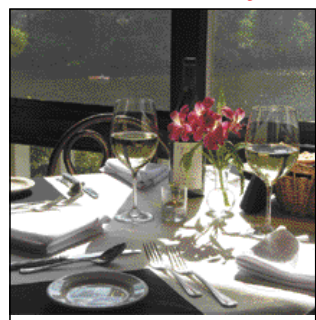
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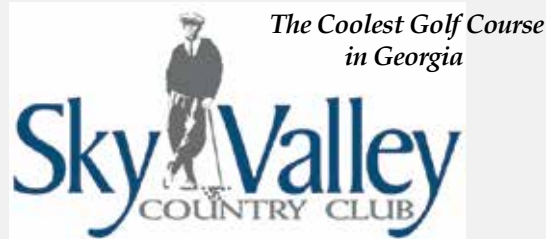
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...SALES TAX continued from page 1

authority to levy, subject to voter approval, an additional one-quarter cent county sales and use tax. Macon County has the lowest property tax rate in the state of North Carolina at \$0.27 cents per \$100 of assessed value and looks to be able to maintain that position even as it undertakes major capital projects. The quarter-cent sales tax, which would apply to residents and out-of-towners alike, is projected to accrue about \$2.4 million for the county annually.

"If we get the quarter-cent, we could essentially drop our mill rate by two mills," said Commissioner Vice Chair Josh Young during Macon County's budget kickoff meeting in February. "I think it's a strong point to make to the people that we could collect funds from pass-through revenue and offset our local mill rate by two cents and keep all our CIP (Capital Improvement Plan) fully funded."

If approved by voters, the sales tax increase would apply to purchases on items such as clothing, household supplies, electronics, and prepared food and drinks from restaurants or stores. However, there are several items that would remain exempt from the sales tax, including prescription medication, gasoline, certain agricultural supplies, motor vehicles, and non-prepared food (groceries).

The purpose of the sales tax increase is to generate additional revenue for the county, which could be used to fund various projects and services that benefit the community. Macon County has specifically supported using any additionally generated funding to support capital projects surrounding education – more specifically the construction of a new Franklin High

School facility and renovations to Highlands School. Proponents of the sales tax increase argue that it is a necessary step to ensure the county's fiscal stability and maintain essential services.

"If there ever was a fair tax, it would be this sales tax," Commissioner John Shearl said on Tuesday night when offering up his second to Commissioner Paul Higdon's original motion to place the vote on the November ballot. "Let's let the people decide."

Opponents, however, are concerned about the impact of the sales tax increase on residents, particularly those with lower incomes. They argue that the tax increase would place an additional burden on already-struggling families and individuals.

The referendum will now be put to a vote by the citizens of Macon County this November, who will have the final say on whether the sales tax increase will be implemented.

Remember to commemorate Viet- Nam vets on March 29

By Paul Schowalter,
Commander

Highlands American Legion Post 370

National Vietnam War Veterans Day is celebrated on March 29 in the U.S. and became a recognized annual holiday in 2017.

March 29, 1973, was made a Special Day to commemorate the withdrawal of all U.S. troops from Vietnam. The Vietnam War is one of the longest wars in U.S. history lasting almost 20 years.

Vietnam Veterans Day is a separate holiday from Veterans Day which is celebrated on November 11. The November date marks the end of the First World War and recognizes all Veterans.

March 29, 2024, commemorates the 51 anniversary of the end of the Vietnam War. On this 51st anniversary, we say: "Thank you, Vietnam Veterans, for your Service, your Sacrifices, your Wounds, and for the many Deaths for our Country's cause. We honor you as our Heroes. You Vietnam Veterans all came home as comrades. Let's look to the 'Vietnam Wall in DC' as a permanent reminder of our debt to you!"

American Legion Post 370 encourages citizens to fly the U.S. flag on Vietnam Veterans Day.

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...PROJECTS continued from page 1

from the Dillard and Franklin roads; and reconstructing about 3,500 feet of single-circuit 1/0 ACSR to 33.6 ACSR from US 64 west along Rocky Hill, Raoul, Foreman roads and Bruner Lane.

Since the upgrade and expansion will take time, commissioners voted unanimously to begin right away and they unanimously OK'd the \$2,808,000 required which will be paid out of the \$7.1 million Electric Fund Reserve fund.

The second project, which also got a unanimous vote, was for Gibson Street and Sanitary Sewer improvements for a total of \$872,974.33. Of that, \$652,974.33 will come out of the Water/Sewer Reserve Fund Balance and the rest - \$220,000 will come from ARPA Funding.

In relation to that project, a Gibson Street Rock change order was OK'd for \$171,000 due to unexpected rock while preparing the site for the Gibson Street and Sanitary Sewer improvement project.

Town Manager Josh Ward said the money could come from the department's fund balance or it could be funded with a low-interest loan.

"Either way, funding the change order

...GREASE continued from page 1

ordinance and to step up inspections of grease traps in all establishments that serve food.

"Grease is an issue impacting most sewer systems and more attention is needed to achieve compliance," he said. "Inspections are part of the compliance process and have been done in the past but need to be done on a regular basis."

Town Manager Josh Ward said inspecting grease traps at food establishments will likely start soon and would probably be done twice a year with frequency adjusted as needed.

With more food establishments and more establishments staying open year-round, Nix said the town has noticed that grease is becoming more of a problem in the last few years.

At \$250 per inspection per establish-

...BEAR DENS continued from page 1

ful in finding places to shelter from November through April as cubs are born and cold weather lingers. Dens come in many types and sizes, and exist in both wooded and developed areas, including neighborhoods.

Bears have even been known to slumber in backyard brush piles, under decks and in crawl spaces. Black bears also use rock and tree cavities and excavations under fallen trees, or they build ground nests for

will be through the correct way of funding," he said. "With so much coming out of that fund, we may have to go up on water/sewer rates at some point."

The third project the Town Board OK'd was the Dog Mountain Water System Improvement Project which will be funded with ARPA Grant proceeds totaling \$3,386,495.

If needed the town will front monies which will be reimbursed through the state.

The fourth project also OK'd by the board is for the Wastewater Treatment Plant pre-clarififier tank, 3rd treatment train and intermediate pump station project.

Money transferred from the Sewer Fund for the project - \$584,000 - will be reimbursed through ARPA funds, and not the fund balance. The total cost is \$1,168,000.

The fifth project, which was deemed extremely urgent was stabilizing Little Bear Pen Road for \$700,000 which will come out of the General Fund Balance.

There is a long section of the road which is at risk of falling off and will be stabilized including adding real estate so there is room for guardrails. It will be constructed the same way the Gorge Road was repaired

ment twice a year, it's estimated to cost the town about \$30,000 per year.

Nix introduced two pieces of equipment to clear lines - a Sewer Jetter for \$80,000 and a Hydrovac for \$70,000 - both can be used by more than one department.

"The jet cleans sewer lines and storm drains. The hydrovac can clean debris washed down by the sewer jetter and can be used to excavate in areas that are congested with other utilities without damaging them," he said.

The new equipment will clear out problems that have been occurring and will also prevent grease and debris buildup.

Food establishments will be notified of upcoming inspections. Even establishments without grease traps and those that don't "fry" foods will be subject to an inspection.

-Kim Lewicki

their long winter nap.

If the den is found under a deck, shed or crawl space, leave the area and call the NC Wildlife Helpline at 866-318-2401, or contact your local district wildlife biologist for further guidance. But in almost all cases, the best option is to simply stay away from the den area.

For more information on black bears visit the BearWise website

and stabilized recently.

"Only Little Bear Pen will be more than twice the length repaired on the Gorge Road," said Commissioner Jeff Weller.

Public Works Director Lamar Nix said town crews will ready the road and the firm the state used for the Gorge Road - GeoStabilization - will be used for Little Bear Pen.

"The road was built on unstable soils to start with and it's just gotten worse over time," said Nix.

Not all the Public Works projects discussed got the immediate OK, but of the \$16,488,695 necessary to complete everything on Public Works Director Lamar Nix's

wish list, half of that will be done, via grant money.

Finally, \$48,000 was OK'd for hardware training, and installation for a Time Clock program for employees. This will be paid for through the General Fund Balance.

Other items on the Public Works list as well as items requested by the police dept., fire dept., parks and recreation and the IT/GIS dept., will be discussed during upcoming budget meetings. The first budget meeting for FY '24-'25 is set for Thurs., April 11 at 3 p.m. at the Rec Park.

- Kim Lewicki

Lunch
Tues. - Sat.
11a to 3p

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Orchard Session

with
MIKE KINNEBREV

Thursday, April 18

THE FARM
at Old Edwards

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• SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING •



Inspiration from St. Patrick

Ken Langsdorf
Lutheran Church of the Holy Family

On March 17 we will celebrate St. Patrick's Day. This year St. Patrick's Day can be about more than drinking green beer and eating corned beef and cabbage. Our faith can be encouraged, and our lives inspired as we learn about St. Patrick and his ministry.

There are many fun legends about St. Patrick, but what we can be fairly certain of is that Patrick, whose birth name was Maewyn Succat, was born in Britain around 387 A.D. When he was 16 years old, he was taken prisoner by a group of Irish raiders who were attacking his family's estate. They took him to Ireland where he worked as a slave.

While he was enslaved, he worked as a shepherd. He spent most of his time alone and afraid. It was during this time that he became a devout Christian, turning to God for strength and peace. As he found comfort in his faith, he began to dream of converting the Irish people to Christianity, wanting to share with them the hope of his faith.

After six years of working as a prisoner, he heard a voice in a dream that he interpreted as being the voice of God. The voice told him that it was time for him to escape.

He found an opportunity to get away, but then he had to walk 200 miles to the Irish coast. Once on the coast he was able to get onto a boat going to Britain.

Once in Britain he had another dream. This time an angel told him to return to Ireland as a Missionary. But first he had to have training to be a Missionary. His studies lasted more than 15 years.

Following his ordination as a priest, he returned to Ireland both to minister to the Christians who were already in Ireland and to convert others to Christianity.

Patrick's devotion to God and sharing his faith is reflected in a quote where he says, If I have any worth, it is to live my life for God.

While we may not have an experience in life like Patrick or a call to share our faith with people who brought harm to our lives, we can still have some of Patrick's passion to want good for others and share with them the peace and joy we find in our faith.

Patrick taught his faith in simple but meaningful ways, including using the shamrock, a three leafed plant, to teach about the one God of Christianity who is known in three expressions as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

I invite you to take the opportunity to share your faith by offering the following blessing for your family or the people you celebrate with today.

St Patrick's Prayer of Blessing

*May the Strength of God pilot us.
May the Power of God preserve us.
May the Wisdom of God instruct us.
May the Hand of God protect us.*

• See SPIRITUALLY page 11

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 28717

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.

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. W. 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

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Sunday School: 10 am. Worship Service: 11 am

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HAMBURG BAPTIST CHURCH

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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

The Highlands Central Baptist Church is temporarily

sharing the facilities of the Shortoff Baptist Church.

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

HIGHLANDS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Rev. Dr. Randy Lucas. Pastor & Rev. Christine Murphy

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www.highlandsmethodist.org

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Rev. Ken Langsdorf

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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

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and Rosh Hashanah & Yom Kippur.

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743-2583 • Independent Bible Church

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4224 Big Ridge Road (4.5 miles from NC 107)

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

OUR LADY OF THE MOUNTAINS

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

Tues. - 9:30am; Thurs. - 9:30am; 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: Sun. 9a; Mon. 9:30a (Latin); Wed. 9:30a

THE CHURCH OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD

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Sunday Worship - 11 a.m.

WHITESIDE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Rev. Sam Forrester/Cashiers

Sunday School: 10 am. Worship Service: 11 am

• POLICE & FIRE REPORTS •

Highlands Police entries from Feb. 21. Only the names of persons arrested, issued a summons/citation, issued a Class-3 misdemeanor or those of public officials have been used.

Feb. 21

• At noon, officers received a report of an online account being hacked from Kenya at a residence on Shelby Drive.

Feb. 28

• At 1:30 p.m., officers received a report of a company failing to provide products and services after receiving payment.

The Highlands Fire & Rescue log from March 1.

March 1

• At 2:12 p.m., the dept. responded to a motor vehicle accident on Horse Cove Road,

• At 3:07 p.m., the dept. re-

sponded to a fire alarm at the hospital.

March 2

• At 7:58 a.m., the dept. responded to a motor vehicle accident on the Franklin road.

• At 9:05 a.m., the dept. responded to a call of a gas leak at a residence on Sequoyah Drive.

• At 10:25 a.m., the dept. responded to a call of a gas leak at a residence on Highgate Road.

• At 4:14 p.m., the dept. responded to a motor vehicle accident on Main Street.

March 4

• At 10:37 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a location on Shortoff Road.

March 5

• At 12:52 p.m., the dept. was first-responders at a residence on Ridgelake Circle.

March 7

• At 12:45 p.m., the dept. responded to an electrical fire at Spinx on N. 4th Street.

March 8

• At 11:31 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Upper Divide.

March 9

• At 9:54 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Ridge Trail.

• At 12:28 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Mirror Lake Road.

March 10

• At 10:40 a.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Bowery Road.

March 11

• At 10:44 a.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Happoldt Drive.

• BIZ/ORG NEWS •

Spring Cleaning Alert!

At Mountain Findings in Highlands, we believe your unwanted items can become someone else's treasures!

As a non-profit thrift store, we specialize in giving furniture and housewares a second life. All proceeds from your donations support local grants and scholarships, making a difference right here in our community.

Give us a call at (828) 526-9929, and we will schedule a convenient pick-up from your home.

Or drop your items off 24/7 at our store located at 432 Spruce Street in Highlands.

Declutter, donate, and make a difference with Mountain Findings today! Call (828) 526-9929 or visit us at www.MountainFindings.org

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• CLASSIFIEDS •

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SEASONED FIREWOOD - Any size load. call 828-342-6806. (st. 1/25)

LAND FOR SALE - 3 tracts, 7.5 miles south of Highlands, 8.64 acres with spring, by far the best view in the area at \$200,000; 6.12 acres with spring (already subdivided into 2, 3-acre lots) \$140,000; 3.99 acres with southern exposure, \$70,000. 828-974-1137. (5/16)

TINY HOME LOTS FOR SALE. \$30k-\$45k/ea. Each lot comes with water, power, and sewer run to each lot. www.TinyMountainEstates.com for more info. (st. 11/22)

RV SITE - class A only - in Wildflower Creek RV Resort. Just minutes from Highlands and Sky Valley. Full hook-up, concrete pad, landscaped and storage shed. Reduced \$192,500. For more info call 828-421-1709 or email bobnancync@gmail.com. (st, 1/25)

FOR RENT

FURNISHED ONE BEDROOM APT. IN HIGHLANDS. Private entrance, full kitchen, bath, small deck, W/D access. Internet and TV. All utilities included No pets, \$1,400 a month, 828-482-2613. (st. 2/29)

1 BEDROOM, 1 BATH FREE STANDING FURNISHED COTTAGE FOR RENT. Single level House has new washer/dryer, new heat pump, new bed, covered deck, back up gas heat. Two miles from center of town. Water and sewer included.

1200 per month. Available for one year lease. Call or text 828-342-4819. (st. 2/29)

COMMERCIAL BUILDING DOWN-TOWN HIGHLANDS. Retail with office space upstairs. Approx. 1,700 sf. Good storage and parking on 1/2 acre at 255 Spring Street. David King 727-644-9544 (2/15)

NEW FURNISHED EXECUTIVE APARTMENT FOR RENT in Highlands city limits. 1 bed/1 bath in garden setting. \$1,700 with all utilities and internet included. Call/text 352-422-7200. (st. 1/18)

TLC OPEN AIR STORAGE - Located in Highlands, NC. Spaces available for pontoon boats, ATV vehicles, equipment trailers, RV's, and campers. Minimum 1 month rental. \$75 small to medium vehicles; \$100 large vehicles. Contact Greg 828-526-5280. (st. 12/21)

APT. WITH MOUNTAIN VIEW 2 1/2 minutes from Main Street. Furnished, no pets, smokers, or children. Spacious 2 Bdrm/1 Bth. \$2200/month. Year lease. Bobbygrace@icloud.com. Cell/Text 727-458-0787 (st. 11/30)

BRAND NEW TRAILERS FOR RENT. 2 bedrooms/2 baths \$1700/month and 3 bedrooms/2 baths \$2250/month. Between Highlands & Cashiers. Includes hi-speed internet, water, & washer/dryer. No dogs. Inquires, Marcy -(706) 982-0444. (st. 5/4)

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SENIOR COUPLE FROM HIGHLANDS SEEKING A YEAR-ROUND RENTAL. Will consider neighboring towns in our Western NC area. Please call Lynn Kimball at 828-421-8193. (st. 2/15)

PARTNER/INVESTOR FOR A DOG KENNEL BUSINESS on my property south of Highlands. If interested and to learn more, please email Brian Grace at gracebrian907@gmail.com. (st. 1/18)

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• See CLASSIFIEDS page 14

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Highlands/Scaly Mtn/Cashiers

...CLASSIFIED continued from page 13

a variety of membership and administrative tasks including, but not limited to, member recruiting, programs, and events, communications, data entry, tracking, and reporting. View full job description visit: <https://www.highlandschamber.org/live-work/job-board/>. To apply: Email director@highlandschamber.org (3/1)

HIGHLANDS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE/VISIT HIGHLANDS, NC --

Welcome Center and Office Coordinator – Part Time, Hourly. Performs a variety of administrative and clerical tasks including, but not limited to, oversight of the Welcome Center and its functions, scheduling, communications, inventory, data entry, tracking, and reporting. View full job description visit: <https://www.highlandschamber.org/live-work/job-board/>. To apply: Email director@highlandschamber.org (3/1)

LANDSCAPE CONSTRUCTION CREW LEADER

-- Thompson Landscape Company is now hiring a full-time crew leader starting \$25/hour based on capability and experience. Comprehensive benefit package including year-end bonus. Minimum 3-years experience, valid NC Driver's license. Drug test required. After 2 years of satisfactory employment, salary options available starting at 55k with other employee benefits. Contact Greg at 828-526-5280. (st. 12/21)

LUPOLI CONSTRUCTION is hiring an office manager/executive assistant and a bookkeeper. Full-time, compensation based on experience. Please

contact Regina@Lupoliinc.com, 770.757.5004 for more information. (st. 11/2)

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DOG SITTING - overnight, or daily checkins/walks. Call Lisa. References available. Call or text 828-424-4637. (st. 12/21)

ANYTHING GOES CLEAN-UP SERVICE Complete property cleanup - house, garage, property, etc. Call at 828-200-2855. (st. 9/28)

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

BIZ/ORG NEWS

Mission Hospital first to perform new treatment for atrial fibrillation

An important milestone in arrhythmia management has been reached at Mission Hospital, as we recently completed the first procedure in the state using a new ablation strategy for the treatment of atrial fibrillation. This proven technology will allow Mission Heart to reduce complications and improve procedural safety for patients undergoing atrial fibrillation ablation procedures.

"I am pleased to have performed the first ablation procedure using this new technology in North Carolina at Mission Hospital," said Jason Lappe, Mission Hospital's Chief of Electrophysiology. "The incidence of atrial fibrillation is on the rise, and such safe, effective and efficient therapies allow physicians to reduce

complications, treat more patients, and benefit the overall public health."

Unlike a traditional ablation procedure, the FARAPULSE PFA System, uses a different approach that avoids damage to surrounding structures and increases the safety of the procedure.

Atrial fibrillation (AF) occurs when the top two chambers of the heart, the atria, beat too fast and with an irregular rhythm (fibrillation). AF, the most common type of arrhythmia, can decrease the heart's pumping efficiency, which can cause blood cells to pool and stick together, forming clots in the heart, and lead to stroke. People with AF have a higher risk of stroke, heart failure and other heart-related

complications than those with normal heart rhythms. Nearly seven million Americans live with this arrhythmia.

"This procedure is one of the biggest advances in heart care in the last decade. It is safer and data shows it is more effective. What an honor for Mission Hospital to be the first in NC to bring it to patients. We're proud to offer the latest technology and the expertise to patients living with atrial fibrillation (AF)," said Brad Kappelman, Vice President of Heart Services at Mission Hospital.

AF is one of the most common heart rhythm disorders, affecting millions of people in the U.S. alone. For more, visit MissionHealth.org/heart

Laurel Garden Club awards grants

Each year, the Laurel Garden Club awards grants to protect and conserve our natural resources and to enhance the beauty of our town and its native mountain landscapes.

As of March 2024, the Laurel Garden Club has given back to the community a grand total of \$228,545.66. These grants to community organizations are made

possible through fundraising events that have included the sale of cookbooks, kitchen tours, and luncheons.

This year, a total of \$12,156.66 will be awarded to eight community organizations.

These recipients are: The Boys & Girls Club of the Plateau, Coalition for Non-Native Plant

Management (CNIPM), Highlands Biological Station, Highlands Cashiers Land Trust, Highlands Community Child

Development Center, Highlands Historical Society, Peggy Crosby Center, and The Bascom.

Since 2002, the Laurel Garden Club has funded 17 different organizations in our community.

...SPIRITUALLY continued from 10

*May the Way of God direct us.
May the Shield of God defend us.
May the Host of God guard us
against the snares of the evil ones, against
temptations of the world.
May Christ be with us!
May Christ be before us!
May Christ be in us, Christ be over
all!
May Thy Salvation, Lord, always
be ours, this day, O Lord, and evermore.
Amen.*

Classifieds

\$10 for 10 words, 30 cents
for each word thereafter.

\$2 for color highlight
\$5 for color photo.

Osborn and Allen take top honors at company ceremony

In a recent awards ceremony of Allen Tate Realtors in Asheville, Julie Osborn and Pat Allen took top honors! They were recognized as the number one company-wide team for 2023 with a sales volume of \$68,560,350.

This is the second year in a row Pat and Julie have received this prestigious award, having been named tops in the company in 2022.

Pat Allen Realty Group and Beverly Hanks Realtors were



Julie Osborn and Pat Allen

recently acquired by Allen Tate Realtors, based in Charlotte, which is the #1 independent firm in the Carolinas and a subsidiary of Howard Hanna Realtors, which

is the #1 privately owned real estate company in the country, with sales of \$7.5 billion in 2023.

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