

Highlands Newspaper

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Thurs., Aug. 7, 2025

Stiehler resigns from Town Board

Though not always bad, sometimes life has a way of re-directing the journey and that's what happened to Highlands Commissioner Brian Stiehler.

On July 31, Stiehler resigned from the Town Board, effective

immediately, a position he has held for 14 years and the seat he was re-elected to Nov. 2023.

"Serving the town for 14 years in the role of a commissioner has been one of the greatest honors of my life and one that

I will certainly miss," he said in his resignation letter. "I'm proud of the work the members of the Town Board accomplished over the years."

Stiehler said the timing of

• See STIEHLER page 11

Forensic nurses now available in MC through REACH

By Kristin Fox

Last week, the non-profit organization REACH (Recognizing, Educating, Advocating for Community Health) of Macon County launched the county's first community-based forensic nursing program that will address a critical need in rural western North Carolina, where access to specialized care for victims of violence is often limited.

REACH can now provide comprehensive support to survivors and victims of sexual assault and domestic violence with 24/7 trauma-informed forensic exams in Macon County — without the need to travel for care.

"For far too long, survivors in our community have faced sig-

• See REACH page 17



The Burnt Part Boys is on stage at PAC

Mountain Theatre Company's new musical The Burnt Part Boys is on stage at PAC through Aug. 30.

Set in a fictional town in West Virginia following a tragic mining accident that killed their father, two brothers fight to

claim their past while forging their future. With their friends, they embark on a life-altering journey to the mine that turns magical, inspiring, raucous, and playful. The story is set to a driving and haunting bluegrass-inspired score.

The Burnt Part Boys is an

empowering and thrilling theatrical experience for all ages.

The story touches upon themes of loss, grief, and the legacy of mining in the region. For tickets visit <https://www.mountaintheatre.com/>

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Highlands School PTO needs YOU!

The next meeting is August 7, at 6p at The Highlands Rec Park or online via Zoom.

By Nalicia Allio
Vice President HS PTO

For more than 60 years, the Highlands School Fall Festival has been a cherished community tradition. Many lifelong Highlands residents, now in their 80s, fondly recall attending the festival when they were Highlands School students.

No one remembers precisely when it began — but for decades, the Fall Festival and many other school events have been brought to life through the dedicated efforts of parent volunteers and for the last 20 years officially by the Highlands School Parent Teacher Organization (PTO).

But although the school's annual Fall Festival is anticipated and fondly remembered, the PTO is involved in much more.

• See PTO page 15



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• THE PLATEAU'S POSITION •

• MAYOR ON DUTY •

Ordinances protect our plateau

The Highlands Plateau is hot. No, not summer hot, we are still cool, but Highlands is a hot as a desirable place to live with incredible beauty coupled with a strong community and civic life.

Everywhere on the plateau, construction is underway. With that rush to build comes challenges. In the town, and in some respects in the county, there are ordinances in place to ensure responsible building practices and environmental protocols to protect the watershed.

Within the county and town, a major building project cannot be done without the required permitting. For instance, a new deck for a house needs to be permitted and inspected so it is structurally sound for those special parties with the deck holding a full load of folks. There have been several deck collapses throughout the country in recent years, some of which could have been prevented.

In the downtown B1 zone, there are extensive construction requirements, espe-



Highlands Mayor
Patrick Taylor

cially concerning fire code ordinances. The concept behind these strict fire codes in B1 is to protect all the businesses that are connected to one another. In short, code requirements are for the greater public good.

Erosion control ordinances, such as requiring silt fencing when land disturbance occurs, are not only to protect the public watershed, but also to protect the property of other owners. The issue of runoff and water flow control is particularly challenging in this area of steep terrain and extremely high rainfall.

The town strives to enforce both building code requirements and erosion control. Before building a structure, a town permit is required. It can be obtained at the Town Hall. That permit is the first step in getting a county construction permit. That permit is obtained at the county government complex at 1834 Lakeside Drive, Franklin. The same permitting process applies to landscape projects where significant areas of land are disturbed or removed.

This past year, the town has hired a code enforcement officer who patrols the town to make sure proper permits are in place. If he sees a construction site where earth is being moved or a structure is being built, he will verify if the proper permits are in place. If not, a stop work order is issued until permits are acquired. A yellow building permit poster is supposed to be displayed in clear view at any construction site. If it is not displayed, residents can report a possible noncompliance, and our enforcement officer will investigate.

In recent weeks, concerns have surfaced about construction sites that are not in compliance with erosion control requirements. Specifically, complaints were made concerning home construction sites in the River Walk Subdivision. Our enforcement personnel inspected the sites and determined that the silt fencing met town and state ordinance requirements. Some questioned that determination and filed a complaint with the state. Their concern was apparently that siltation was or would flow into Mirror Lake. At the time of this writing the state has not responded.

There have been recent violations of the silt fence requirements that impact the

• SNAPSHOT •





Fairies live here



Do you have a heartfelt, funny, interesting, or beautiful photo you would like to share in our "SnapShot" section? Email it to highlandseditor@aol.com or text it to 828-200-1371, with a brief description and a name. No anonymous photos will be accepted.

Photo by Robert Keller

• WEATHER •

Thu, 7-Aug	Fri, 8-Aug	Sat, 9-Aug	Sun, 10-Aug
 71°F 59°F	 72°F 58°F	 71°F 60°F	 73°F 59°F
A shower and thunderstorm	A stray afternoon t-storm	A thunderstorm in spots	Partly sunny, a stray t-storm
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Phone: (828) 200-1371

Email:

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• INVESTING AT 4,118 Ft. •

Real estate in Highlands continues to hold its own

Highlands is still holding its own, and the market has been good in the current economic conditions. I am hearing that markets in some of the markets in Florida are cooling, even as the weather is red hot.

Figures for the last 30 days from Highlands Cashiers MLS, as of Aug. 4, show 30 new listings, with 38 properties active – under contract, 14 properties pending, and 19 closed.

Properties that are reasonably priced are trading fairly quickly. Most sellers are asking premium prices and there were 36 price reductions also. The bottom line is, the recent HOT weather continues



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to draw people to our cool mountain climate.

We have a limited number of properties, and as long as people want to come here, with a tight inventory, prices will continue to rise.

The current development trends are more homes per acre, people in the past wanted private lots, I hope we will return to that frame of mind and not make Highlands a city environment that people are trying to flee from.

Hopefully, people want to enjoy what Highlands is, a wonderful mountain enclave where life is a little slower, kinder, and where there is small town living.

...MAYOR continued from page 2

Cullasaja River, but not at River Walk. Those violations occurred outside the town limits. Nevertheless, our enforcement officer did report the violations to Macon County, which has jurisdiction over the area where the violations occurred.

There have been other violations throughout the plateau area. When a town official observes such situations, the county

is notified. Since the town rescinded ETJ authority over a decade ago, we do not have jurisdictional authority over these violations that are just outside the town limits. Now, some might think the mayor should take the lead and get ETJ reinstated. Sorry, but that boat sailed away a while back. Some experts predict that the state legislature is about to nix all ETJs throughout the state. They are certainly in no mood to allow more ETJ zones now.

My real concern is that a few new residents, investors in the community, are building huge houses and complexes with little mindfulness or regard for the sensitive environment of the Highlands Plateau. I know I sound like a stuck record, but too often people buy large tracts of land only to decimate the forest and landscape to create a spectacular view for a huge house. I was made aware of such a situation only last week with a piece of high mountain property just outside of town.

What can be done? Maybe it is time for a major educational initiative among stakeholders like the town, county, and nonprofits such as the Highlands Cashiers Land Trust and the Highlands Biological Foundation. My position is that while we all own property here in this wonderful mountain paradise, we do not own nature. We are mere stewards of the land. Our actions toward the land, the vegetation, the water, and the animals have a lasting impact. Mindful decisions should be our goal.



Photo by Marti Boone

Clyde arrived at the Cashiers-Highlands Humane Society after he was found as a stray in Franklin. He is a handsome male Mountain Cur mix who loves going for walks and we estimate that he is about six years old. What we don't have to estimate is Clyde's capacity for affection. He loves every human he meets. For more information, visit chhumanesociety.org or call (828)743-5752.

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• LETTERS •

Another Marine's point of view

Dear Editor,

As a former Marine, I was asked by a friend to read the letters to the editor submitted by former Marines and published in the July 24th edition of the Highlands Newspaper. I did not read the letter to the editor they responded to and limit my comments to their letters. To say that there are no Marines that disagree with decisions made by the present occupant of the White House could not be further from the truth.

Unlike the current President, I did not pay to have a bogus medical opinion keep me from war. I had been accepted to law school, which included a deferment to remain out of the Vietnam War. I chose, because of my indebtedness for having spent my life in freedom, to join the Marine Corps. I understood I would be in the war. I joined the Marine Corps, and, after ten weeks of Officers Candidate School, was commissioned a Second Lieutenant. After six more months of intensive training and completion of Recon Replacement Training, I arrived in Vietnam. I served for a year in Vietnam as a rifle platoon commander, leading the finest young men I have ever known in combat. It was the most impactful time of my life.

In October, my wife Cindy and I will be attending the 56th year reunion of my Marine Corps Basic School class, many of whom I am in regular contact with. For the writers to say they don't know of a former Marine that is "struggling" with the President's decisions indicates to me that they need to broaden their circle of friends. Most of the Marines that I am in contact with could not disagree more with most of his decisions. I am sure their opinions would be echoed by the 6,000 military veterans, many of whom I am sure are former Marines, that were fired from their positions with the Veteran Administration by the man with bogus bone spurs.

Anyone that watched the horrendous actions of the cowardly mob on January 6th would agree that it was an attempted dismantling of our government. To say that "some would say" it was something other than an attempted insurrection is blind to the truth. I am sure the families of the capital police officers that died that day and shortly thereafter trying to protect the capital and its occupants would burn with disdain for that statement.

**Semper Fidelis,
Rick Trevathan**

• See LETTERS page 8

PUBLIC NOTICE
ANNUAL MEETING
MIRROR LAKE IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION
WED., AUGUST 20, 2025
5PM-7PM
HIGHLAND'S COMMUNITY BUILDING
AGENDA

- Dredging Update
- Fundraising
- Park Proposal
- Panel Discussion + Q&A
- Election of Officers

Dear Highlands Community...

I am Mirror Lake, and for more than half a century, I've been neglected and ignored. I've survived uncontrolled construction runoff, hurricanes, pollutants from unknown sources, and unregulated water release. As a designated North Carolina Trout Stream, it breaks my heart that I can no longer shelter trout in my waters – my streambed has become too shallow and too warm. I remember when families used to paddle through my bays and channels, but now they lie choked by sediment and deadfall.

I need your help... and now is the time.

This year, there is hope. A dedicated group of my neighbors have begun the crucial work of dredging my waters – a chance to restore me to health. Through the summer months, they will work to remove years of accumulated sediment, giving me back my depth and clarity. I know there will be some disruption – unusual sounds and activity along my shores – but please understand that this temporary disturbance is my chance at renewal.

Remember me as I once was: a haven for trout, a playground for paddlers, a peaceful retreat for all who visited my shores. With your support, I can be that place again.

But I cannot do this alone. The Mirror Lake Improvement Association (MLIA) has established a Dredging Fund to support this vital work. If you value my presence in our community, if you remember the joy I once brought, or if you dream of the beauty I can be again, please consider contributing. Your generous donation will help secure my future for generations to come.

To help restore my waters, please contact Pat Gleeson at 828.782.0472.

During the project, you'll notice changes:

- Dredging equipment along my shores
- Varying water levels as the work progresses

• Construction sounds during working hours
• Some areas' traffic will be temporarily restricted for safety

But imagine what I can become again – clear, deep, healthy waters teeming with life. A restored Mirror Lake, ready to serve as your community treasure once more.

Thank you for hearing my voice. Thank you for caring. Thank you for helping me become whole again.

*With hope and gratitude,
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...LETTERS continued from page 7

Our ecosystem in Highlands can't wait

Dear Editor

I was one of those teens in the early 1970s with an ecology flag sewn on my jeans, inspired by days on my aunt's dairy farm along the Chattahoochee and summers exploring Highlands' mountains and waterfalls. That upbringing led me to study agroecology, always focused on how resilient our agriculture and natural resources must be in the face of climate change.

The recent "protecting the environment" protest in our town felt deeply personal. We aren't just neglecting the foundations of our existence – we're actively dismantling them. Temperatures are rising faster than predicted. This year, global averages briefly topped 2°C above pre-industrial levels – a line scientists have long warned us not to cross, which could be passed for good as soon as 2037. Even here in Highlands, once considered a climate haven, heat, drought and floods are undeniable threats.

Instead of protecting us, the EPA is attempting to rescind the scientific finding that greenhouse gases endanger public health and is weakening clean air and water rules. Experts warn these rollbacks could cause up to 200,000 premature deaths in the next 25 years and cost billions in preventable healthcare.

Meanwhile, both NOAA and FEMA – America's leading science and disaster response agencies – face deep budget and job cuts. Weakening NOAA means losing the capacity to warn and prepare us for hurricanes, droughts, and wildfires. Losing

FEMA means losing recovery itself. With fewer meteorologists and disaster professionals, our lives and property are at greater risk just as extreme events grow more frequent and severe.

The USDA's plan to weaken the Roadless Rule would put up to 153,000 acres of Pisgah and Nantahala forests at risk. Our region's biodiversity hangs in the balance as forests dwindle and habitats fragment. Farmers and rural communities are suffering, too, as the latest farm bill favors giant agribusiness and strips vital support from small farms, local markets, and climate adaptation.

We depend on ecosystems for clean water, air, healthy soils, diverse plant and animal life, food, shelter – so much of what makes Highlands special and life meaningful. Community and belonging – for people and all living things – are deeply rooted in the living relationships that healthy ecosystems support.

If we want Highlands to remain the Highlands we know and love – for us, our children, and our community – call your representatives today. Demand they put the planet ahead of profits: don't overturn the Roadless Rule, keep the science in the EPA, protect small farms and rural communities, and fortify NOAA and FEMA. Our future depends on what we do now, because whether we admit it or not, "too late" is already in our line of sight.

Constance Neely
Scaly Mountain

Wowie Cowee supports Cowee School

Dear Editor,

On July 16, we celebrated our Cowee School with the release of a specialty craft beer "Wowie Cowee," bringing our Farmer's Market to town and other fun activities at The Lazy Hiker. We were amazed and flattered by the attendance and support from everyone.

Cowee School was born of a desire to keep this former elementary school as a cultural and artistic center. The center has

grown and continues to grow because of the backing of our citizens.

Thank you for coming out and supporting us. And please continue to drink "Wowie Cowee" at the Hiker as a portion of the sales will be donated to the school until the beer is gone.

Gratefully,
The staff of Cowee School Arts & Heritage Center

Pay attention! Our president is a disaster

Dear Editor,

Disappointing national employment numbers were released last week. Estimates were much lower than expected and may be precursors of a shrinking economy. The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) estimated

that 19,000 jobs were filled in May, 14,000 in June, and 73,000 in July (bls.gov/ Economic News Release 8/1/2025). Previously BLS-reported jobs numbers were 144,000 for May and 147,000 for June, a

• See LETTERS page 9

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...LETTERS continued from page 8

discrepancy of 258,000 jobs. For more detail see "Dark Clouds Emerge for Trump on Economy," 8/2/2025, The Hill (a right-leaning newsletter covering politics). For perspective, in early 2025, prior to the tariff uncertainties, the economy added an average of 162,000 jobs per month. The Biden administration's average of jobs added per month was 385,000.

President Trump did not like the numbers – they contradict his rhetoric that the US economy is thriving under his leadership. His solution to poor employment data? Fire the messenger, the statistician responsible for the BLS! Such thin skin and massive ego are not the characteristics of a mature, responsible adult. His petulant nature puts our economy in great danger. And his knee-jerk response to bad news likely has lost him the little credibility he had with voters.

Add to this bad news the world-wide economic uncertainty caused by Trump's tariff waffling. As we all understand now, tariffs are taxes on imported goods that are included in the retail cost of the product.

Last week Trump again changed his mind on tariffs. Now he is proposing a 50% import tax on Brazil, which, if you drink Brazilian coffee, it will retail for considerably more (not all of the tariff amount passes to the consumer), which in turn, raises the sales tax. Double whammy

to consumers.

I bring up Brazil because Trump increased the tariff because he is angry that Brazil has indicted its former president (and a friend of Trump), who is accused of plotting a coup after he lost the last election (NY Times, July 31, 2025). That's right, Trump is pretending to use leverage he does not have, manipulating our economy in an attempt to sway the outcome of a criminal trial in a foreign country.

Trump last week also raised Canadian tariffs again, from 25% which was imposed ostensibly because Canada was not doing enough to stop fentanyl at its US border (all of 42 pounds were confiscated in 2024) to 35% after Canada announced it would recognize the state of Palestine (Reuters, July 31, 2025). Again, illegally using the US economy to get another country to obey him.

Trump has no authority, nor any business trying, to interfere with the internal governance of other nations. This is not diplomacy, it is extortion. He wants to punish Canada and Brazil but he is only punishing his own citizens. Never mind that legally only Congress can impose tariffs.

Please pay attention to our president. He is a disaster.

**Karen Patterson
Highlands**

Body parts or left vs. right

Dear Editor,

Corporations, retail businesses, the military, even homeowners take periodic inventories of their stocks, supplies, personnel – whatever it is they have. Recently, I have been taking an inventory of my body parts. Why, you may ask? I'm not sure. Maybe it has something to do age and the inexorable process of ageing. To any mildly observant person, it's hard not to notice what's going on with their body. With me, it started with my ankles. I noticed that my right ankle is thicker than my left one. My thumb and index finger form a sort of caliper and that's how I found out. By accident. While watching TV. That discovery reminded me that my left leg is slightly shorter and more flexible than the right one which I have known for a long time, and that my right foot is bigger than the left, which makes buying shoes uncomfortable and unsatisfactory. Also, my left buttock seems to be fuller than the right one which is annoying to say the least.

As you can see, one thing led to another, hence the unavoidable inventory. Should any of this interest you? Should you care? Of course not, but with your

indulgence I'd like to get it off my chest – which, BTW, is an area of concern in itself, the details of which I will spare you out of innate modesty (the buttocks revelation notwithstanding).

To continue, my right hand is bigger than the left, my left arm is shorter than the right, my collarbones are uneven and I think my nose is wider than it used to be. I know my right eye is slightly smaller than the left one and that my left ear is definitely higher than the other one which makes it impossible to get my reading glasses to sit level on my widening nose. I won't even mention my skin in general. The skin is the biggest organ of our body and the most visible and obvious, but I'm not going to mention it again. Or my hair. Both are unmentionable.

The good news is, I'm half an inch taller than I was 30 or 40 years ago, so I'm not shrinking. My posture is faultless and I think my spine is okay and not crooked – in spite of an occasional backache. To top it all off, I've always been prone to headaches which forces me to consider my brain with its two opposing sides. I suspect the left side and the right side compete with each other

• See LETTERS page 19



HIGHLANDS
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Spare Parts Bluegrass Band

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• HOSPITAL NEWS •

Update on current state of HC Hospital, Part I

Each year I like to give our community members a status report on how Highlands-Cashiers Hospital (HCH) is doing on several fronts. I believe it's important for our community to understand all the exciting things that are happening at the hospital, from welcoming new and talented physicians to outlin-

ing the facility improvements that are possible, building and strengthening our hospital team, and making capital investment, thanks to HCA Healthcare.

I've said many times that it's our people that make this hospital outstanding — without them and their passion for patient care, we'd be little more than bricks and mortar.

I have to start by sharing that I continue to be impressed with their compassion, dedication, and professionalism.

I'm happy to share that we have welcomed several talented providers to the HCH family. Dr. David Jarrett is an accomplished orthopedic surgeon with a specialty in lower extremity procedures, such as hip and knee replacement. He holds office hours in both Highlands and Franklin. Dr. James Post is another highly skilled orthopedic surgeon who has joined our staff, and he specializes in upper extremity procedures, like shoulder and hand surgery. His office hours are still to be determined, but he will be in the Cashiers Clinic and have Operating Room days here at HCH as well. We're also fortunate to have recently added Robert Merck, Surgical Physician Assistant, to our Cashiers Clinic, where he holds office hours daily. He will be supporting our orthopedic surgeons and our general surgeons.

Our new plastic surgeon is Dr. Chris Wenzel, who offers face lifts, brow lifts, and chin lifts among other cosmetic procedures. Dr. Wenzel has performed more than 10,000 cosmetic and reconstructive procedures during his career. He has the experience and technical acumen to achieve natural-looking, beautiful results for his patients and takes pride in his work, combining artistry, technical skill, and surgical precision while devoting his attention to every detail of patient care. Dr. Wenzel sees new patients at Suite 304 in the Jane Woodruff Clinic on our campus, and you can schedule an appointment by calling (828) 550-3344.

HCH is also proud to welcome Comprehensive Pain Consultants to our medical staff. The doctors offer specialized pain management, dedicated to management of chronic pain that can be debilitating. They specialize in diagnosing and treating patients with painful neuromuscular and spinal conditions and are committed to individualized whole-patient care. They will start taking new patients in Highlands in July, and you can schedule an appointment by calling (828) 419-1460. They will be located in Suite 209 of the Jane Woodruff Clinic on



**Tom Neal CEO, CNO
Highlands-Cashiers
Hospital**

the hospital campus.

And though they're not new to our team, we are also fortunate to have general surgeons Dr. James Osborne and Dr. Zachary Phillips continuing to serve our patients. They also provide colonoscopies at HCH.

Our physician recruitment efforts are ongoing, and we are currently engaged in growing our primary care providers to be located in Cashiers and Highlands. We recently hired a new nurse practitioner for our Highlands clinic. Dr. Hannah Hough, DNP, RN, FNP-C will be joining Dr. Patti Wheeler later this summer.

I have mentioned our Certified Nurse Aide (CNA) training program in a past column, but this is a great 6-week, state-approved program that allows those wanting to enter the nursing profession an amazing opportunity. Students are paid while they study in the classroom, simulation lab, and clinical areas. They also receive reimbursement for test fees and uniforms, and qualifying students also receive referral sign-on and referral bonuses. Those wanting information on the program can call 828-526-1301.

Last month, I announced some of our DAISY Award winners, and now I can share the names of our PETAL Award winners. The PETAL (Performing Exceptional Tasks and Affirming Lives) Award recognizes the compassionate and excellent care provided by our dedicated patient care technicians and nurse externs. Our newest recipients are Carlos Otero-Estrada at Highlands-Cashiers Hospital and Terry Gibson of Eckerd Living Center. The teamwork and support they give to our nurses allow patients to receive the very highest level of care.

These team members, along with all their colleagues at HCH and ELC, grace our patients' lives every day and infuse our care with rare expertise, unmatched talent, and deep compassion. I am proud to see them grow, excel, and provide the extraordinary care that every member of this community deserves.

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Annual Barn Dance at The Bascom is Aug. 14

At The Bascom, the annual Bascom Barn Dance from 5:30-7:30 p.m. This year's event features the high-energy bluegrass sounds of Jackson Grimm and the Hidden Valley Ranchers, accompanied by old-time country caller, Harrison Keeley,

who will guide dancers of all experience levels. Tickets are \$10 for adults and children under 12 are free. Reserve your tickets today by visiting thebascom.org or calling 828.526.4949

...STIEHLER continued from page 1

this was not foreseen. He wants to see the Playground project through completion and would like to continue serving as the chairman of this year's Scholarship Golf Tournament.

When Hillary and Brian put their home on Chowan Drive on the market, they thought time was on their side and began looking at homes in the area. As it turned out, the house sold almost immediately and since they found the perfect house outside the town limits he has to give up his seat on the board.

Stiehler said he and Mayor Pat Taylor talked and agreed that he should resign immediately so the process of filling his seat could begin.

Normally, the sitting commissioners would appoint his replacement. Logically, that could go to the highest vote-getter after Commissioner John Dotson in the 2023 election which was Rachel Wilson. But, Mayor Taylor said he wanted the citizens to decide anew.

Under North Carolina G.S. 160A 63, when a vacancy occurs in an elected municipal office if the next regular city election is held within 90 days of the vacancy, the city council must appoint someone to serve the remainder of the unexpired term and a special election is not required in that scenario.

Mayor Taylor said he would support an election for the vacant seat on the Nov. 4 ballot instead of appointing someone.

"I would like the citizens to decide," he said.

To that end, on Wed., Aug. 6 the Macon County Board of Elections conducted a public meeting in the Board of Elections Office in Franklin to set the candidate fil-

ing period for a special election to fill the Town of Highlands Commissioner seat vacated by Brian Stiehler as of July 31, 2025 for a two-year term, which is the time left on Stiehler's unexpired term. The special election and the regular election are scheduled for Nov. 4, 2025.

The election board set the 10-day filing period for Stiehler's seat from 8a Aug. 11 until noon Aug. 22.

Deputy Director/Campaign Finance with the MC Board of Elections Judy Fritts said the special election is only for Stiehler's seat because the filing period for Commissioner Amy Patterson's and Commissioner Eric Pierson's seats has passed.

As always, write-ins will be accepted on the Nov 4 ballot for all seats, the revised ballot is only for Stiehler's seat.

Fritts said the town will pay the cost of the required Legal Ad to run in The Highlander Newspaper which is estimated to cost \$700-\$800.

"I know the Town Board will appoint, or the citizens will elect a new commissioner who will be able to serve the residents and bring a different skill set to the board," said Stiehler.

Over the years, Stiehler represented the Town of Highlands on two other boards — chairman of the Tourism Development Commission (TDC) since 2018 and as the town's representative on the MC Economic Development Commission (EDC) since 2011.

"I think you would want to appoint another commissioner for these roles, and although my resignation date is July 31, I am happy to continue to serve on both until a selection is made," he told the mayor.

• See STIEHLER page 19

JUST LISTED

MODERN FARMHOUSE RETREAT

Just 10 minutes from Highlands and 20 from Cashiers, this 2BR/2BA modern farmhouse on Horse Cove Road offers easy access to swimming holes, trout streams, and hiking trails. The open living area features cathedral ceilings and exposed trusses. The primary suite has a large walk-in shower and soaking tub, plus there's a second bedroom and office/den. Sold mostly furnished, this stylish, cozy home is ideal as a full-time residence, vacation getaway, or rental investment.

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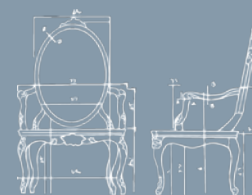


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• HERE'S THE THING •

What's next for the Highlands Playhouse building?

I've written before about some wisdom I learned a few decades ago from a woman with whom I was working. I don't recall the context, but she told me that it was hard to "logic" or "reason" someone out of something they've been "emotioned" into. She was 100% correct. When someone is emotionally invested in something, it's difficult, perhaps impossible, to accept a different point of view, even one presented in a logical or reasonable manner.

When I was 14-years old, a terrible thing happened. Not only to me, of course. It was 1958, and my beloved Brooklyn Dodgers were gone. Well, that's not true. The Dodgers, who loving fans nicknamed the Bums, were there, just not in Brooklyn. Instead, they were 3,000 miles away in some godforsaken place called Los Angeles. I was broken. Two years later, to add insult to injury, Ebbets Field, where the Bums played their games, was demolished, and then replaced by apartment buildings. Apartment buildings!

To this day, it still hurts.

There is a conversation taking place here in Highlands regarding what to do with the former Highlands Playhouse building on Oak Street. Ever since the beautiful, new, Highlands Performing Arts Center on Chestnut Street rendered the old Playhouse redundant, folks on either side – rehabilitate and repurpose the old building or tear it down and create something new – can't seem to find common ground.

Trust me, I get it. It's not just about frustration with change, although that's certainly a part of it. It's about loss. And change always arrives accompanied by some degree of loss.

Since Lynn and I moved to Highlands full time in 2011, we've experienced similar, if not quite as intense, situations. The Highlands Post Office moved from Highlands Plaza across the Dillard Road to its current location. The sizeable furniture store that used to occupy the space where the post office now resides simply vanished. The ABC store became the police station and now the fire station is the ABC store. As is the case with the Playhouse building, these were all non-commercial entities on town-owned or donated land, which limits potential uses.

None of these changes have generated the emotions being expressed regarding the possible demolition of the Playhouse build-



Bud Katz

ing.

Here's the thing. Live theater and feature films are definitively NOT leaving Highlands. This is about the fate of an old, unsafe building requiring approximately \$3 million in repairs just to comply with existing building codes. So, what ultimately might fill the void if the Playhouse building is gone? Several ideas have surfaced. Perhaps, a parking structure? Or a non-profit? An urgent care facility? In almost any scenario, the building in its current form will likely not survive. And that seems to be most upsetting to many long-time residents and Highlands' natives. Some folks, or their ancestors, were students when the building was Highlands' school. Others were involved as cast or crew with productions put on at the Playhouse.

I believe that whatever fate awaits the building, the Town Board's decision will be in the best interest of the town and its taxpaying citizens. And I also believe that whatever they decide, not everyone else will automatically be on board.

In the final analysis, which could play out over several years, I hope that something – signage, or a plaque – will be included commemorating the historic uses of the former building as both a community school and performing arts venue.

In 1973, Frank Sinatra released a sad, bittersweet song on his "comeback" album named, "There Used to be a Ballpark." It was an homage to the idea of the past giving way to the future.

The song reminds us of something gone but not forgotten. I don't know if anyone will write a song if or when the Playhouse building ultimately goes the way of Ebbets field in Brooklyn. I do know with certainty that it will be missed.

• Bruce F. "Bud" Katz, and his wife, Lynn, have lived year-round in Highlands since 2011. Bud is the author of four novels and a work of non-fiction. He facilitates the Highlands Writers Group and spends much of his time in front of a computer making words into sentences, sentences into paragraphs, ... etc. You can get to know Bud better by visiting his website, brucefkatz.com, and you can contact him, regarding this column or for information about the Highlands Writers Group, at brucefkatzauthor@gmail.com.

• BIZ/ORG NEWS •

HCHF names Grate Executive Director

The Highlands Cashiers Health Foundation (Health Foundation) announced today that Dr. Myrle Grate has been appointed as its new Executive Director. The appointment comes following a search conducted by the Succession Planning Committee and unanimous approval from the Health Foundation's Board of Directors.



increased fundraising by 110% in his first four years, and led the organization to its first national accreditation. Notably, Dr. Grate launched an innovative driver's education program aimed at foster youth in Mississippi, significantly increasing the rate of foster youth obtaining driver's licenses from 4% to 10% — doubling the national average of 5%.

"We are excited to introduce Myrle as the new Executive Director of the Highlands Cashiers Health Foundation," said Dr. Barbara Corcoran, Chair of the Health Foundation Board of Directors. "With extensive experience in the non-profit sector and outstanding leadership skills, he is poised to advance our mission and guide the Foundation toward a bright future. We look forward to the positive impact his leadership will have on improving the health and well-being of the communities we serve."

Dr. Grate brings over 25 years of experience leading and directing in the non-profit arena, most recently serving as the Executive Director of Sunnybrook in Ridgeland, MS. While at Sunnybrook, Grate oversaw \$10 million in facility improvements,

"I'm honored to join Highlands Cashiers Health Foundation and this remarkable community," said Dr. Grate. "I look forward to listening, collaborating, and investing in local organizations, as we continue to make the communities that we serve healthier and stronger."

Dr. Grate holds a BS from Samford University, a Master of Divinity from Beeson Divinity School, and a Doctor of Ministry from Asbury Theological Seminary. In his new role with the Health Foundation, he will oversee staff and operational management, lead development and strategic planning efforts alongside the Board of Directors, and foster collaborative partnerships across our communities.

The Rich Get Richer and the Poor Get Poorer



This is a fact of life that reasonable people can agree on. The rich increase their wealth at the expense of workers who can't afford health insurance, and struggle to pay rent/the mortgage, and put food on the table.

Historically there is a tipping point, which is where we are heading today. We need better leaders and better education to have a society where everyone gets a fair shake.

We need a coordinated master plan which includes all progressive organizations! *Bucking the System*, available on Amazon under Books, addresses income inequality and what we can do about it.

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Laurel Garden Club's 2025 'Elevated Living Home and Garden Tour'

Friday, Aug. 22 10a-4p

The Laurel Garden Club's annual fund raising event looks to be one of its best yet.

Don't miss this opportunity to tour four fabulous homes and two beautiful gardens all within walking distance of downtown Highlands.

In addition, you'll enjoy floral demonstrations and entertaining tips featuring Dorothy McDaniel, founder and owner of Dorothy McDaniel's Flower Market in Birmingham, AL. Throughout the day, you'll be treated to culinary treats and be able to shop at an exceptional Pop-Up Store featuring garden-themed items and many more beautiful items you'll want to take home.

The Elevated Living Home and Garden Tour is Friday, Aug. 22, 10am until 4pm and begins at the Church of the Incarnation, 520 Main Street in Highlands.

Tickets can be purchased on the LGC's website: laurelgardenclub.com/home&garden_tour. Select your tour times and plan on seeing beautiful homes and gardens and enjoying a special day that is sure to leave you feeling "elevated" in every sense of the word.

Your support of the Laurel Garden Club allows it to continue its work to ensure the protection and conservation of our natural resources, encourage civic beauty and roadside beautification, stimulate the fine art of gardening and enable cooperation with other organizations furthering the interest of horticulture and conservation.

In past years, the Laurel Garden Club's annual fund raising events have sold

out; so go to its website now and reserve your spot for what will truly be an elevated experience

More on Dorothy McDaniel

Dorothy McDaniel, one of the most skilled and talented floral designers in the south, to Highlands for one inspirational day. Dorothy, who has 40+ years of floral design skills to share, is the proprietor of Dorothy McDaniel's Flower Market in Birmingham, AL. She has been featured in Southern Living, Southern Accents, Bridal Edition, Cooking Light, Creative Ideas for Living, and many, many more publications. Dorothy has been awarded Entrepreneur of the Year in 2009 by the Women's Committee of 100 for Birmingham. She has also authored two books, "Dorothy's Simply Beautiful Flowers" and "Flowers by Dorothy McDaniel."

She is a very inspirational and encouraging speaker who has shared her floral skills, design secrets and southern graceful living tips from Dallas to Boca Grande, and from Charleston, SC to West Virginia. She is a veteran of Art in Bloom at the New Orleans Museum of Art, and the Birmingham Museum of Art. Dorothy is an educational and mesmerizing speaker for garden clubs, professional organizations and museums.

Come hear Dorothy as she brings her immense talent and expertise to Laurel Garden Club's Elevated Living Home and Garden Tour on Friday, Aug. 22. She will be doing floral demonstrations throughout the day at Laurel

2025 Town of Highlands Scholarship Golf Tournament registration is filling up!

Registration is now officially open for the 2025 Scholarship Golf Classic, brought to you by the Bryson Family of Highlands. The event is scheduled for September 15th at Cullasaja Club, marking the 50th Anniversary of the Town's Scholarship Fund. Since 1975, the town has been awarding scholarships to graduates of the Highlands School, who are pursuing a post-secondary education. Students attending universities and trade schools are eligible provided they're a graduate of Highlands School. All students receive some level of support for the duration of their education provided they apply each year.

The day will begin with a light breakfast, followed by at 10:30AM shotgun start. Following golf, you'll sit down to a full buffet dinner in the beautiful Cullasaja Club clubhouse. The event will be capped off at 28 teams, so be sure to reserve your spot. The cost for the event is \$800 per team (\$200/player). Hole sponsorships are available for \$150. Mike and Jim Bryson are continuing to support this event, ensuring it continues to be a revered community event, one that everyone looks forward to year after year. For the foreseeable future, the Bryson Family will be a partner for the event and cover all the expenses associated with the golf tournament.

Event Chair, Brian Stiehler, said, "It is an honor to have the support and partnership of the Bryson Family because it enables us to generate substantially more for the Town of Highlands Scholarship Fund. This is such a unique program, and we know the



community has been, and will continue to be, behind this 100%." Highlands Mayor, Pat Taylor, said, "the Town is so fortunate to have Bryson Family's support for this important annual event. This year is particularly special because we are celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Scholarship Fund."

If you have any questions about this year's event, reach out to Brian Stiehler (787-2778) or to register, contact Rebecca Shuler at Town Hall by calling 526-2118.



Highlands-Cashiers Film Festival lineup is posted

Thursday-Sunday, Sept. 18-21 is the first – hopefully to be annual – Highlands Cashiers film festival. It's four days of competition film screenings, workshops, emerging filmmakers, and panels with acclaimed industry presenters and award-winning professionals. All genres will be showcased, including features, documentaries, shorts, and international films. For complete schedule and tickets go to www.highlandscashiersfilmfestival.com/

Open House – Sat. & Sun. Aug. 9 & 10, noon to 3p 1302 Highlands Mountain Club



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For more information, call Laura Cook at 470-316-4420 or email laurahcook60@gmail.com.

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May jewelry theft at T.A. Anderson solved

In a strong example of how community involvement can enhance diligent police work, a tip submitted to the Highlands Police Department led to the arrest of Sharon LaCount, who has been charged with Felony Larceny from T. A. Anderson Goldsmith, which occurred in May 2025.

On August 1, Detective Wright received a citizen's report that Ms. LaCount had possibly been involved in a theft from a jewelry store in South Carolina. Detective Wright then contacted the sheriff's office in the



jurisdiction where Ms. LaCount lives. Deputies there confirmed that she owned and drove a vehicle matching an image of the one used in the T. A. Anderson theft.

Further investigation revealed that both Ms. LaCount and her vehicle matched the images recorded by T.A. Anderson store surveillance video, and Detective Wright was able to secure a warrant for Ms. LaCount's arrest.

Ms. LaCount later turned herself in to Detective Wright and Macon County Sheriff's deputies and was arrested without incident.

...PTO continued from page 1

Despite the small numbers, the PTO continues to pour time and energy into fundraising, organizing events like the Fall Festival, and helping the school students and staff in meaningful ways.

Beyond planning events, the PTO fulfills crucial requests from teachers for supplies and tools not covered by state funding. Just this past year, PTO funds have provided:

- New science goggles to replace worn-out paper alternatives
- An educational program to help teachers address learning challenges in engaging ways
- Caps and gowns for the entire senior class
- New gym equipment and countless classroom supplies

We're also the team behind teacher appreciation lunches, kindergarten welcome gifts, and special experiences like the school art show. Every student at Highlands School has benefited from PTO efforts in some way.

We need parent participation now more than ever.

In years past, PTO meetings filled the old gym with parents eager to get involved. Today, that participation has dwindled dramatically. During the 2024-2025 school year, PTO meetings averaged just six parents attending – even though Highlands School serves 350 students. Many of us on the PTO board are full-time working parents, juggling family and careers while trying to keep these important traditions and sup-

ports alive for our children.

While we're deeply grateful for the community's generous financial support over the years, we now urgently need people's time.

We're asking all parents and guardians of Highlands School students to please consider getting involved. Meetings last just one hour each month, and the more parents who participate, the lighter the workload and the more diverse voices we'll have deciding how funds are used to benefit your student.

Whether you can help run a booth for an hour at the Fall Festival, grill hot dogs for St. Patrick's Day Bingo, vote on getting wobble chairs for wiggly students, or even step into a leadership role for the coming year, your involvement matters.

Without increased participation, the Highlands School PTO faces the real possibility of dissolving in 2025. That would mean losing support for teachers, classroom resources, and cherished traditions like the Fall Festival that bring our community together.

Please join us at our next meeting on August 7, 2025, 6:00 PM, at The Highlands Rec Park or online via Zoom.

If you're interested in learning more or volunteering in any way, email us at hspto@macon.k12.nc.us. Together, we can ensure Highlands School—and all the students who pass through its halls—continues to thrive for generations to come.

Thank you for being the incredible community that has always stepped up when it matters most. Let's keep this spirit alive.

Community Barn Dance!

Aug 14 | 5:30 - 7:30 pm

**\$10 General Admission
12 and under FREE**

Join us for an evening filled with toe-tapping rhythm and lively tunes, as bluegrass band, Jackson Grimm and the Hidden Valley Ranchers takes the stage. Enjoy dancing with the help of an old-time country caller, create unforgettable memories, and embrace the spirit of community.



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This event is made possible by the Highlands Chamber of Commerce/
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For more information:
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828-526-5841

• BIZ/ORG NEWS •



The Highlands Chamber of Commerce/Visit Highlands, NC recently hosted a Ribbon Cutting for Summit Sweet Ice Cream at their location in Wright Square, 173 Main Street, Highlands. With 29 irresistible ice cream flavors, more than 50 toppings, warm waffles, mini-pancakes, and Magic Pops, it's a go-to spot for families and sweet-toothed visitors alike.

The proud owners of Summit Sweet Ice Cream – Mayra Pioquinto and Luis Munoz and their sons Owen, Michael and Bryan – at their official ribbon cutting, hosted by the Highlands Chamber of Commerce/Visit Highlands, NC.

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Friends, family, school chums and community members came out to celebrate Summit Sweet Ice Cream during its Ribbon Cutting in Wright Square last week.

...REACH continued from page 1

nificant barriers in accessing timely forensic medical care,” said Andrea Anderson, Executive Director of REACH of Macon County. “This program will ensure 24/7 access to compassionate, trauma-informed forensic nursing services right here in Macon County.”

All services are provided completely free of charge. The program is fully funded by community support through donations that help pay for medical supplies and exam kits; staff training and resources; survivor comfort items (clothes, blanket and toiletries); and advocacy and follow-up care.

When someone experiences violence the help required needs to be safe, respectful and accessible. REACH's new program ensures that survivors no longer have to visit the emergency room to receive medical attention or evidence collections. They now have a trusted, local option.

Services will be provided at Dr. Clayton Davis's office at 55 Medical Park Drive, Suite 118, Franklin. Under the leadership of Renee Collette, RN, trained forensic nurses will care for victims. Collette has worked in forensic nursing in Ohio and North Carolina since 1986.

Forensic nurses specialize in caring for victims of trauma, violence, abuse, and other situations with legal implications. They not only provide medical care but also collect and preserve evidence, document injuries, and may testify in court.

“We are so honored that we have been able to get to this point,” said Bonnie Peggs, President of the REACH board. “We certainly couldn't have gotten here without the support of the Cherokee Indian Hospital Authority and the nurses who stepped up to

make this service possible.”

Eventually REACH will build a Victim Advocacy Center. The new facility will offer improved service delivery, expanded services, sexual examination room, therapeutic spaces, education & training and confidential intake spaces.

Community members, healthcare professionals, law enforcement, advocacy partners, and local leaders had the opportunity to learn more about the initiative and explore potential collaborations.

The program emphasizes a community-based approach, partnering with healthcare professionals, law enforcement, and advocacy partners to strengthen the overall re-

sponse to these crimes.

REACH will continue to work with other agencies and organizations to provide training as well as supporting and referring survivors to forensic nursing services.

Peggs said having forensic nurses makes all the difference in the world. “For years we had five forensic nurses and then we had none,” she said. “To have forensic nurses again is going to make all the difference, not only for the people who suffer from sexual assault and strangulation but also for the families.”

Founded in 1989, REACH of Macon County provides comprehensive services to individuals and families impacted by do-

mestic violence, sexual assault and human trafficking. Through advocacy, shelter, prevention education and now forensic nursing services, REACH is committed to ensuring safety, healing and justice for all survivors.

“This is a program we have wanted and needed for years and today is a day to celebrate,” said Peggs. “This has been a long journey and taken a lot of extra work. It is a matter of moments that makes a difference and today is a start of wonderful moment.”

For more information about the forensic nursing program or other services provided by REACH, contact them at (828) 369-5544 or visit their website reach@reachofmacon-county.org.


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SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING

What do men need to do?

Pastor Sam Forrester
Whiteside Presbyterian
Church, Cashiers

Men are being told they are worthless in our modern society. This has led many young men to shirk the responsibility toward their family and children. They are refusing to take their place as the head of their homes and guide their children. This has caused a serious failure in children learning how to interact with others, especially in boys learning how to properly and respectfully deal with women.

In the Old Testament there was a man named Eli. He was the high priest of Israel before the time of the kings. He had two sons, Hophni and Phinehas. Both grew up to be priests but because Eli failed in his responsibility to teach them, they were unworthy priests. They would take from the sacrifices what was not lawful for them to take. They seduced the women who would come and sit at the gate of the Tabernacle. Eli knew about all of these things. He knew what they were doing was wrong. He at times spoke to them about these sins but his sons would not listen to him. Eli, as the high priest, was responsible for the purity of the Tabernacle but he allowed the impurity of his sons to go on. He showed that he cared more for the fellowship of his sons than the fellowship of God.

A father's job is to teach his children about authority and respect of others. He is not to be their friend and buddy but to be their teacher, their pedagogue.

God came to Eli through his young apprentice Samuel and warned him about his sons. He told him that if they were not brought under control Eli's house would be cut off and his sons killed. Still, he refused to intervene.

Because of Eli's inaction his priesthood ended in awful tragedy. War came with the Philistines. The Israelites were losing. Eli's sons decided to take the ark of the Lord into battle with them, thinking it would give them the strength to win. Eli sat and waited for news from the battlefield. A runner came and told him the bad news, both his sons were dead, and the ark had been captured. Eli fell over backward and broke his neck. His daughter-in-law as she died in childbirth spoke the words that best summed up the circumstances, "The glory has departed from Israel" (1 Samuel 4:21).

This story shows the laxness of an uncommitted father and the tragedy it can cause. Eli knew what was right and how he should have raised his sons. His position as high priest afforded him ample opportunity to do what was required of him. But he refused to take the stands necessary with his sons. He refused to discipline them, to teach them and to punish them when needed.

I cannot think of a greater tragedy than a father who refuses to take his rightful place as the head of his home and guide to his children. It is a horrible mistake when a father does not teach his children God's Word. It is a serious problem when he does not live his life as an example to show his children how to live theirs. It is tragic when he does not

• See SPIRITUALLY page 19

• PLACES TO WORSHIP •

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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

GRACE CHAPEL ON HIGH HOLLY

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Pastor Steve Kerhoulas. <http://www.Graceonhighholly.com>

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and Women's Bible Study throughout the week

CHRIST ANGLICAN CHURCH

The Rev'd Dr. Michael Matlock, Rector

464 U.S. Hwy. 64E, Cashiers, NC

CAC@christanglicancashiers.org • 828-743-1701

Sunday: Adult Christian Ed, 9:15a; Holy Eucharist, 10:30a; Fellowship

11:45a; Wed: Bible Study/Contemplative Prayer, 5p

CHRIST CHURCH OF THE VALLEY. CASHIERS

Pastor Jacob Tedder • jacob@cashiers.church • 743-5470

www.cashiers.church

Sun. 10:45a; Wed Study 5:15p supper and childcare.

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

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

Wed.: Youth 5:30-7pm; Women's Bible Study: Mon. 4:30pm, Tues.

10am; Men's Bible Study: Wed. & Thurs. 7am @ Zookeeper Bistro

COMMUNITY BIBLE CHURCH OF SKYVALLEY

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,

Morning 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

Rev. Emily Wilmarth, pastor; Rev. Kelley Connelly Asso. Pastor

828-526-3175 • fpchighlands.org

Sun.: Adult Ed.: 10a; Worship 11a.; Tues: Men's Group 10a;

Wed: Bell Choir 4p. Chancel Choir: 5:30p

GOLDMINE BAPTIST CHURCH

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Sunday School: 10 am. Worship Service: 11 am

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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 shar-

ing 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

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Rev. Ken Langsdorf

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

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

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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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SHORTOFF BAPTIST CHURCH

Pastor Rev. Andy Cloer

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

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

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(Spanish); Wed., 9:30a (English)

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WHITESIDE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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Sunday School: 10 am. Worship Service: 11 am

• POLICE & FIRE REPORTS •

Highlands Police entries from June 28. Only the names of persons arrested, issued a summons/citation, issued a Class-3 misdemeanor or those of public officials have been used.

July 28

• At 3:07 p.m., officers responded to a call of a larceny/lost property at the Ugly Dog Pub on S. 4th Street where a man said more than \$20,000 of jewelry was stolen.

July 31

• At 12:55 p.m., officers responded to a call for service regarding a verbal confrontation at a store at 371 Main Street.

...STIEHLER continued from page 11

Mayor Taylor said the town is gratified that Stiehler offered to continue to be involved in such key initiatives such as the completion of the playground project and the scholarship golf tournament.

"Although this is the end of your long tenure as a town commissioner, it is certain you will continue to make major contributions to the town and community," he said.

...SPIRITUALLY continued from page 18

discipline them when they are wrong and show them how important respect of authority is in life. It is an unbelievable error when he does not daily uphold his children in prayer, claiming God's covenant promises for them. It is a tragedy when he does not love their mother and treat her with the utmost respect.

The real father, the one who strives to do all of these things to the best of his ability, is the man who has learned through study of God's Word the discipline of the Lord. He understands that the Lord is the one he must follow, if he is to be a good father. He strives to honor God in all he does, for he knows what God has said, "Those who honor me I will honor, but those who despise me will be disdained" (1 Samuel 2:30).

...LETTERS continued from page 9

for dominance while undeniably complimenting each other at the same time. I suspect they like each other but wouldn't necessarily admit it. And I suspect they have different points of view but are able to get along well enough and to maintain a reasonable and respectful balance between the two sides.

In reviewing this partial and personal inventory, have I reached any conclusions or been granted any special insights? That

The Highlands Fire & Rescue log from July 29.

July 29

• At 11:05 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Edwards Creek Road.

• At 8:19 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Worley Road. It was cancelled en route.

July 30

• At 5:07 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Clear Creek Road.

• At 10:22 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a location on Main Street.

Stiehler said he has appreciated Highlands Country Club's support of his commission position all these years, and focusing on just "one job" will take some getting used to, but he's ready.

"I know the mayor and current board members have the best interest for Highlands at heart, and I know they'll continue to serve the community well," he said.

If you are a father, do not be like Eli. Find yourself a church that teaches God's Word and commit yourself to growing in your understanding of it. It will teach you how to be a good father and how to raise godly well-mannered children who respect life and those in authority. It will help you learn how to love your wife and treat her with the respect she deserves. It will testify of you that you are a man who understands his responsibility as a father. Don't allow the false teaching that men are worthless in this world.

It is mankind that God created to be the leader of all societies. So, what do men need to do? They need to study God's word and follow Christ's example and be godly men filled with grace and mercy toward those God gives them authority over.

no one's perfect? That variety is indeed the spice of life? Or perhaps the simple truth is that differences and opposites of any nature can, in fact, come together to form one more or less imperfect, but nevertheless harmonious whole in cooperation with all our individual parts and differing points of view. And is applicable to both the human body and the body politic.

Alice Nelson
Highlands, NC

July 31

• At 10:15 a.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Ridge Lane.

• At 11:18 a.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Ridge Lane.

• At 7:28 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to Highlands Plaza.

Aug. 1

• At 12:30 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a location on Half Mile Drive.

• At 6:21 p.m., the dept. responded to a CO2 alarm at a residence on Summit Trail.

• At 6:51 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Sanctuary Ridge.

Aug. 3

• At 4:31 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Clubhouse Trail.

• At 6 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Flat Mountain Road.

• At 8:25 a.m., the dept. responded to a call of a tree down on Mountain Laurel.

• At 7:14 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Keener Road.

• At 8:52 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Wagon Road.

Aug. 4

• At 8:20 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Laurelwood Ridge.

• At 12:59 p.m., the dept. responded to a

medical alarm at a location on Main Street.

• At 5:37 p.m., the dept. responded to a motor vehicle accident on S. 4th Street.

Aug. 5

• At 8:18 a.m., the dept. responded to a motor vehicle accident at Cole Mountain Road and Buck Creek Road.



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• UPCOMING CLE EVENTS •

Philosophy and Technology, Modern Medicine, and Mountain Diversity

The week of August 11th finds speakers at the Center for Life Enrichment presenting an array of talks on the ethics of technology, the realities of modern medicine, and the mysteries of mountain biodiversity.

In an era of social media filters, AI-generated content, and digital anonymity, the temptations of dishonesty have accelerated. Christian Miller, Professor of Philosophy at Wake Forest University and a nationally recognized scholar on moral character, will explore how modern technology is reshaping our ethical landscape. This lecture, titled *Our Dishonesty Crisis: How Technology Is Eroding Honesty*, presented on Mon., Aug. 11th from 2 to 4p, will offer practical strategies to combat this crisis.

What really happens behind the closed doors of the operating room? And how reliable are hospital quality ratings? Dr. Cynthia Emory, Chair of the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery and Rehabilitation at Wake Forest University, will pull back the curtain on the medical world, offering a candid look at the complexities of surgical care, hospital performance metrics, and the future of surgical care in the next 20 to 30 years. Her lecture, titled *Behind the Scrubs: A Behind the Scenes View of the Operating Room and Hospital Quality Ratings*, will be on Tuesday, Aug. 12th from 10a to noon.

Even the most accomplished and experienced hiker no doubt

misses the abundance of life in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. But Discover Life in America (DLiA), a nonprofit organization, has been studying and conserving biodiversity in the Park since 1998 and has been documenting the estimated 60,000 to 80,000 species within the park. DLiA's Executive Director, Todd Witcher, will discuss the organization's flagship project, All Taxa Biodiversity Inventory, which has uncovered and cataloged thousands of species, doubling the number of known species in the Park and identifying 1092 species new to science. Unveiling the Smokies: How Discover Life in America (DLiA) Is mapping the Hidden Biodiversity of the Great Smoky Mountains will be presented on Friday, August 15th from 10a to noon.

CLE is also delighted to welcome back US Presidential Historian Douglas Brinkley on Wednesday and Thursday, although these programs are sold out. Brinkley will present two lectures, Jimmy Carter: an American Giant and the Boys of Pointe du Hoc: D Day and US Army 2nd Rangers.

These presentations will take place at CLE's Lecture Hall, located in the Peggy Crosby Center at 348 South 5th Street. The cost for each program is \$30 for CLE members and \$40 for non-members. Walk-ins are welcome. For more information, please visit clehighlands.com or call (828) 526-8811.



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• HIGHLANDS AREA EVENTS •

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• Lap Swim: Mon.-Fri. 6am-9:45am, and Saturday 10am-11pm - 6 lanes. Water Aerobics: 18 y+ Mon.-Fri. 10-11am with Karen Chambers. Adult Swim: 18y+ Mon.-Thurs. 11am-3:30pm, Friday 11am-1:30pm. Public Swim: Mon. thru Fri. 11a-7pm, Saturday 11am-6pm and Sunday 1-6pm

PICKLE BALL

• At the Recreation Dept. every Monday - Friday 10am-1pm indoors for the winter (notice the days and time has changed),

THIS WEEK'S MOVIES

• No movies until September

MOUNTAIN FINDINGS

• Open: 10 am - 1 pm. Spruce Street. www.mountainfindings.org

SATURDAY MARKET

• Farmers Market in KH Founders Park on Pine Street from 8a-12:30p rain or shine.

ALL WEEK

Highlands/Cashiers Alcoholics Anonymous "Open Meetings" are for anyone who thinks they may have a drinking problem or for anyone interested in the A.A. recovery program. Open meetings are held in Highlands @ the 1st Presbyterian Church, 471 Main St., on Mon-

day at 5:30 p.m. and on Wednesday & Fridays @ noon. Open in person meetings are held in Cashiers @ the Albert Carlton Cashiers Community Library, 249 Frank Allen Rd. on Sunday at 5 pm, on Tuesday @ 7 pm, on Friday at 5 pm and on Saturday at 9 am. For more information, please visit our website www.aawnc80.org or to speak with a member of A.A. 24/7 call our HELP Line 828 349-4357.

Mon. Thurs.

• At First Presbyterian Church, ArtSpace is open from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The next exhibit will start in mid-August. For information contact fpchkelley@gmail.com

Mon-Wed-Fri

• Aerobics with Tina Rogers 8-9am at the Rec Park.
• Balance, Stretch & Strengthen Class at the Rec Park 8:30-9:30am. The cost for the class is \$30 a month and is led by Cathy Hodgson. Call the Recreation Department at 828-526-3556 for more information.

Mon., Tues., Thurs.

• The Food Pantry behind the Methodist Church on Spring Street is open from 10a-6p.
• Exercise Class with Michelle Lane at the Rec Park at 5:30. A combo class with different types of exer-

cise. 828-526-3556

Mondays

• At the Literacy Council, Free Online Weekly Classes. 6:30 - 7:30p. Online via ZoomFor the link, visit <http://theliteracyandlearningcenter.org/esl>

Second Mondays

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

2nd Tuesdays

• Highlands Writers Group meets on alternate Tuesday afternoons at 3pm. Writers still uncomfortable with in-person gatherings may participate via Zoom meetings For more info contact Bud Katz at either 828-526-3190 or at budandlynn@me.com

Tuesdays

• Strength Training at the Rec Park 8:15-9:15 am.
• At Wayfarers Chapel, Workshop for Writers - Tuesdays from 5-6:30 PM.

Wednesdays thru Sept.

• Farmers Market every Wednesday May-Sept. at the Cowee School Arts & Heritage building in Franklin at 51 Cowee School Dr.

2nd Wednesdays

• Hudson Library, in partnership with VAYA Health, is hosting an educational series on adult mental health topics, at 11 AM.. To register, stop by the library or call 828-526-3031.

2nd & 4th Wed.

• Digital Navigators will be at the Hudson Library the second and fourth Wednesdays 1PM - 3PM of each month to help patrons with their tech needs. Bring a smartphone, laptop, or other digital device to receive free assistance and support. No appts are required - all are welcome.

Thursdays

• Kickboxing 8:15-9:15a. at the Rec Park. No martial arts background necessary Contact the Recreation Department at 828-526-3556 for more info.

• At First Presbyterian Church a free concert "Music for Prayer" at noon. These casual concerts are almost entirely improvised and last 30-45 minutes. This offering is called Music For Prayer.

• At Hudson Library, special children's events will be on tap on Thursday afternoons at 3:30 Kids

Zone programs.

• At the Highlands Nature Center, free Zahner Conservation Lectures at 6 p.m. Small reception follows.

Fridays

• At Hudson Library, Friday afternoons at 2 PM, there's a variety of children's programs including board games, STEM programs, and crafts.

3rd Saturdays

• The American Legion Post 370 meets at the First Methodist Church at 315 Main St. in their community room/909 chapel. We serve breakfast at 9a and hold our monthly meeting at 10a. We invite ALL veterans to attend. Email ncpost370@gmail.com for more information or just join us at 9am.

Sundays through August

• Church in the Wildwood, on Horse Cove Road. Old Fashioned Hymn Sing 7-8 p.m.

Sundays

• At Wayfarers Chapel, Sunday Service: 10a Sunday Morning. Stick around for visitation and coffee hour immediately after service. (Coffee hour is replaced by potluck dinner the 1st Sunday of each month).

Thru Aug. 30

• At PAC, Mountain Theatre Company presents The Burnt Part Boys. For tickets go to boxoffice@mountaintheatre.com. 828.526.2695

Fri.-Sun., Aug 8-10

• Antique Show on The Village Green Commons at 180 Frank Allen Road, Cashiers. Fri. 7:30-9a (Early Buying); Fri., Aug. 8 9a to 5p; Sat., Aug., 9 9a-5p; Sun., Aug. 10, 11a to 4p. Early Buying tickets are \$35 and good all days; Regular tickets are \$18 and good all days. For more information call 828-226-5325

Sat., Aug. 9

• Highlands Dems Summer Gathering at the Community Building from 6-8 p.m. Dinner served and featuring Anderson Clayton, chair of the NC Democratic Party. Suggested donation is \$100..

Thurs., Aug. 14

• At The Bascom, the annual Bascom Barn Dance from 5:30-7:30 p.m. This year's event features the high-energy bluegrass sounds of Jackson Grimm and the Hidden Valley Ranchers, accompanied by old-time country caller, Harrison Keeley, who will guide dancers of all experience levels. Tickets are \$10 for adults and children under 12 are free. Reserve your tickets today by visiting thebascom.org or calling 828.526.4949

Sun., Aug. 17

• An afternoon musical - classical, jazz, gospel and spirituals with world renown soprano Indra Thomas and Atlanta Boy Choir Alumni Daryl Dixon, tenor, Christian Harrington, baritone, Ricky Victrum, baritone accompanied by Mark Thomas, director of music and artist in residence at the Rabun Gap Presbyterian Church at 4 p.m. Admission is free.

Wed., Aug. 20

• At First Presbyterian Church on Main Street, Charles Wood & Friends at 2pm.

• Highlands School will host an open house/meet the teacher on Wednesday, August 20th, from 3-6p.
• Mirror Lake Improvement Association Annual Meeting. 5-7 p.m. at the Community Building next to the ballpark.

Aug. 22-30

• Cashiers Designer Showhouse featuring Showhouse tours, community events, Showhouse Shops and an Art Auction. Tickets are \$50 in advance and \$60 at the door. Visit CashiersHistory.org for tickets or to learn more.

Fri. & Sat., Aug. 22-23

• At Peak Experience, Suzy Landa Trunk Show. 2820 Dillard Road. 828-526-0229

Fri., Aug. 22

• Free Community Shredding Event in Highlands Plaza 9a to 12p. Donations to benefit The Gordon Center and the Literacy & Learning Center.

• Laurel Garden Club's Elevated Living Home and Garden Tour is from 10 am until 4 pm. and begins at the Church of the Incarnation, 520 Main Street in Highlands. Tickets can be purchased on the LGC's website: laurelgardenclub.com/home&gardentour. Select your tour times

• Community Shred Event. Protect personal information and help the environment by bringing documents to the Community Shred Event for secure, eco-friendly disposal. For more info, go call 828-526-2112.

Sat. & Sun., Aug. 23-24

• MountainTop Art & Craft Show at Kelsey-Hutchinson Founders Park on Pine Street 10a to 5p. The shows feature great regional art and craft vendors, music and food. Free admission.



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