

Highlands Newspaper

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Thurs., July 24, 2025

Ballot set for Nov. 4, 2025 election

By Kim Lewicki

The ballot is set for the Nov. 4, 2025, municipal elections in Highlands and Franklin and the race is on – at least for Franklin.

Terms for Highlands com-

missioners and mayors are four years. There are five board members and one mayoral slot. This year, the mayoral spot and two commissioner seats are open.

Running for the seat of may-

or in Highlands, is incumbent Pat Taylor who is running for a fourth term. He has served for 12 years.

Also running for mayor is Paul Ordner.

• See ELECTION page 21

Playground could break ground mid-Sept.

Funds are still needed by goal post is in sight.

By Kim Lewicki

Fundraising efforts for the Highlands Playground isn't over, but there is enough money in hand to at least get started.

"We still need \$140,000 but it's time to get going," said Commissioners Brian Stiehler and Jeff Weller. "If we can at least get the equipment ordered and the site prepped by this mid-September, we can have a Memorial Day 2026 grand opening."

Having come away from the Macon County Commission meeting a few weeks back with an extra \$50,000, Commissioner Stiehler requested the same from the town, which would mean a matching grant offered by an anonymous donor is a done deal.

• See PLAYGROUND page 10



It's last call for the Highlands Playhouse

By Kim Lewicki

Badfinger's 1970 song says it all.

"If you want it, here it is, come and get it; But you'd better hurry 'cause it's goin' fast."

That was the message from the Town Board Thursday night concerning the future of the Highlands Playhouse that has stood vacant since the close of 2021.

Since that time, after an architect's \$2.6 million estimate to make the building safe for the public, the town decided to demolish it.

To that end, Town Manager Josh Ward presented the bid of \$75,523.50 from Bryson Grading and Paving. Mayor Pat Taylor said Pam Carver with the Playhouse, now Mountain Theatre Company, requested dibs on the engraved

bricks that grace the patio as well as the theatre seats.

But before a vote was taken on the demolition bid, Commissioner John Dotson said he had talked to an esteemed business owner in town who said he would be "sorely aggrieved" to see the Playhouse building no longer there. And so, Dotson asked for a

• See PLAYHOUSE page 12

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Alcohol use at July 4th festivities in the park is being considered

By Kim Lewicki

This year's 4th of July gathering in KH Founders Park on Pine Street – likely the most well-attended ever with an estimated 2,000+ people – went off without a hitch but was nevertheless the subject of discussion at the July Town Board meeting.

Fourth of July festivities in the park always include music, like Saturday's Music in the Park, but include fireworks once it gets dark.

People are allowed to adorn their Saturday night Music in the Park picnics with alcohol but though the evening elements are the same – live music and picnics

• See ALCOHOL page 10

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• THE PLATEAU'S POSITION •

• MAYOR ON DUTY •

Staying informed is easy if you pay attention

At the Highlands Town Board meeting last Thursday, a concern was raised that some folks felt they had not been informed about the recent changes to employee parking in the business area. The board voted to implement these changes at the June meeting, following reviews of the proposed changes at several earlier meetings.



Highlands Mayor
Patrick Taylor

I probably came across as being defensive when I stated that this had not been a sudden decision and that nothing was concealed from the public in the process. Throughout the many years I've served as mayor, the board and I've worked to maintain the highest level of transparency possible.

Several meetings ago, Commissioner Patterson brought up her concern that adjustments were needed in the employee parking zones. The board engaged in a discussion of the matter. At the following board meeting, the employee parking issue was again on the agenda. After further discussion, the board members agreed that

the issue was complicated. They sent it to the Highlands Planning Board for their study and recommendations. In their public meeting, the planning board reviewed the employee parking issues and sent recommendations to the Town Board.

At the June meeting, the town made a few minor adjustments but voted to accept and approve the planning board's recommendations. During this lengthy review period, no one voiced any concerns about the proposed changes at the public comment periods. The town had announced this entire process on several occasions, and the news media covered the issue at every meeting with extensive articles.

I suppose my point is that the communication we all want from local government and the community has to be a two-way street. I humbly suggest that for those wanting to be informed, there are several key options.

First, our local weekly newspapers do an excellent job of covering all items in town government meetings. I suggest that people read the papers to stay informed about their local government. Additionally, the town maintains a sunshine list, where all agendas, reports, presentations, and proposals are shared with everyone on the list. Anyone can call the town hall and request to be placed on the sunshine list. Third, we have a town website where that same information is posted. We are now improving and updating the website. Through that website, citizens can also access all Town Board meetings. And just recently, the town developed the Town of Highlands App. It is free on any site where apps are obtained. The app sends our current announcements and a schedule of town meetings and events, and much more.

And if that were not enough, I write this column every week for the newspapers, do a weekly radio show on WHLC, and hold a community coffee each month during the season. I also post information on my website, AskMayorPat.com.

Many, many residents access all these sources. Nevertheless, I encourage everyone to learn what is going on and express their views to the town commissioners. They are willing and ready to listen, as am I. Additionally, everyone is invited to speak and make

• SNAPSHOT •







Photo by Ginny Parker

'After midnight ...' the watch begins.

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.

• WEATHER •

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• INVESTING AT 4,118 Ft. •

One year after the NAR settlement: Still clear as mud

It's been just over a year since the National Association of REALTORS® (NAR) and several major real estate brokerages settled a series of class-action lawsuits over alleged anticompetitive commission practices – a legal battle that made national headlines and promised sweeping changes to the way agents are paid.

For a while, it was all anyone in the industry could talk about. But here on the Plateau, almost a year since new practices were actually implemented, the question remains: what's really changed?

From my perspective – leading a team of more than two dozen brokers – it hasn't brought the clarity many expected. If anything, it's made things more confusing for both real estate professionals and the clients we serve.

To quickly summarize: sellers across the country brought lawsuits – most notably Sitzer/Burnett v. NAR – claiming that NAR and several large brokerages conspired to keep commission costs artificially high, violating antitrust laws. The core of the issue was the long-standing practice of sellers paying the commission for the buyer's agent, which plaintiffs argued reduced competition and inflated costs.

As part of the settlement, NAR (the trade organization that most licensed real estate agents belong to, making them REALTORS®) agreed to adopt several key changes:

First, listing agents can no longer publish an offered buyer agent commission in the MLS. And second, buyer agents must now have a signed agreement with their client before showing any properties, whether in person or virtually.

So what's the real impact on our local market?

The biggest shift is that buyer agents now have to reach out to listing agents individually to ask whether a commission will be offered – and if so, how much. That information used to be clearly posted in the MLS, streamlining communication and helping buyers make informed decisions.

In most cases, sellers here are still offering a buyer's agent commission of 2.5-



Lauren Dahl
828-279-4700

lauren@landmarkrg.com

3%. (It's important to note: there is no fixed or "standard" commission rate. While brokerages may set internal guidelines, compensation is – and always has been – negotiable.)

We typically disclose any seller-offered compensation to buyer agents using Form 220, a new form created jointly by the NC REALTORS® and NC Bar Association. It's an important tool, but not all brokerages are using it the same way. In fact, in some cases, they're withholding it until offers are made, which only adds to the confusion.

Here's how that plays out in practice: A buyer's agent shows a property. The buyer is interested and wants to make an offer. The buyer's agent contacts the listing agent to request the Form 220 or confirm the buyer agent commission. Instead of receiving the information, the listing firm asks to see the offer first. Only then does the seller decide whether – and how much – to offer as buyer agent compensation, based on the strength of the offer itself.

On the opposite end of the spectrum, some firms have chosen to publish the buyer's agent commission for each property directly on their websites, or they proactively share that information via email or text when a showing is scheduled. While this adds some logistical complexity, it also fosters transparency and sets a positive, communicative tone between brokers – which is always appreciated.

Clear as mud, right? What frustrates me most about this practice is that both the purchase price and the buyer's agent commission have always been negotiable. In my opinion, if an offer comes in lower than what a seller is willing to accept and the seller wants to maintain their intended buyer's agent commission, the seller should simply counter with a higher price that preserves their desired net proceeds.

This is far from a perfect system. In fact, I'd argue that the current approach has created more confusion, inconsistency, and frustration than it has solved. Personally, I hope we eventually return to a system where cooperation is clearly stated, consistent, and understood upfront.

In the meantime, buyers and sellers should remain vigilant. Make sure your bro-

• See INVESTING page 15

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• OBITUARY •

Horst Winkler

Horst Winkler became a legend in the city of Indianapolis when he established his own Mercedes-Benz distribution company.

In the early '60s he was brought from Germany to the U. S. by the Mercedes-Benz corporation.

Mr. Winkler loved to regale that he sailed from Germany on a luxury liner and upon debarking in New York, he was immediately "limousined" off to Rockefeller Center and shown his executive office.

Horst grew up in the picturesque town of Heidelberg, Germany and was born into an illustrious winemaking family that dates back to the 1600s under his mother's name Anna Scharfenberger.

Mr. Winkler had delightful stories pertaining to the harvesting of the grapes to be processed into their notable wines, along with the local countryside festivities that followed. It was a joyous celebration for the entire community.

In his youth, he was educated in a local monastery and continued his education at the Heidelberg University in engineering.

His father Oscar Winkler was a renowned German inventor and engineer.

Horst and his late wife Margaret Hertel, met during college years and married within months.

In New York City, Mr. Winkler worked alongside the famous Mercedes-Benz executive Heinze Hoppe during the reorganization of Mercedes-Benz worldwide and the expansion of territories throughout the United States.

Later Mr. Winkler utilized his knowledge of the inner workings of Mercedes-Benz and established his own dealership in Indianapolis, IN. He remained the sole dealership in the area from its inception to his recent retirement and the sale of the company.

In Indianapolis, Horst was socially and philanthropically involved until his wife Margaret's death in 2015.

Horst enjoyed residences in several states including Florida and North Carolina.

His greatest pleasure was his hobby of traveling in his luxurious Prevo motorhomes.

Returning to Highlands, NC over a year ago, he met and married, Heather Lowe. Horst described this mountain resort as "his place of happiness."

As a resident of Highlands, Mr. Winkler benefactions included the Highlands-Cashiers Hospital, the Highlands Performing Arts Theatre, Hudson Library and The Bascom where visitors can enjoy the Horst Winkler Nature and Sculpture Trail.

On July 5, 2025 Mr. and Mrs. Winkler celebrated The Bascom unveiling of the Heather and Horst Winkler Patio and Lawn area at the salt kiln.

Everyone who knew Horst always had the same phrase describing him "He was a legend."

A Memorial Service will be held Saturday, July 26, at 10:30 a.m. at the First Presbyterian Church in Highlands, NC.



— Submitted by Heather Lowe Horst
• See OBITUARIES page 19

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
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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.

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• LETTERS •

Refuting recent letters

Dear Editor,

I am writing this letter to letter contributors, Emily Wright and David Snell, whose letters appeared in Volume 22 Number 29 (July 17) edition referring to letters both I and Bodie Catlin, "A letter of perspective," and "Highlands-Asheville south 'No Kings' rally," respectively, wrote in the July 3 edition of this newspaper after which he and I are accused of saying things we didn't say and doing things we didn't do.

The constant failure of the left to understand that as Marines we understand the Constitution and the democratic principles which underpin that document. After all, we signed a document offering to exchange our lives for the freedoms our founders envisioned.

Again and again, we are accused of all the things the left does and they say we are brainwashed. They also threw in another roundly disputed January 6th lie of an insurrection that never happened, called the Supreme Court radically unethical plus our Marine Commandant of violating Federal law.

Then Bodie, one final thought, there is no such thing as a "former Marine," and I don't know one of them that is "struggling" with the decisions made by this President.

Semper Fi,

Ed McCloskey
Scaly Mountain

Dear Editor,

Ed McCloskey's response above response was "Very well said."

We know what is going on. They don't. They ripped us both with lies.

Semper Fi,

Bodie Catlin
Highlands

My corrections to Moore's letter

Dear Editor,

Jerry Moore's letter "It's not beautiful, it's stupid and a classic bait and switch game" in the July 10 edition of Highlands Newspaper, contains one glaring error. It is stated that "we can fix this if we simply take away Federal Employee Health Benefits (FEHB) from our legislators."

The correct fact is that since 2014 Congress is no longer under FEHB. As part of the compromise to pass the Affordable Care Act, Congress must obtain health coverage under the Affordable Care Act, or plans offered via a health insurance marketplace.

I cannot attest to the remainder of the statements made, however, with an error of that size one can only speculate on the accuracy of the remainder of the letter.

Rick Ford
Bryson City

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...PLAYGROUND continued from page 1



Proposed site plan at the Highlands Rec Park.

The Town Board unanimously agreed, which means the Highlands Playground is clearly on its way to becoming a reality.

Thanks to the extra the county and town have kicked in and the private donations, the fundraising tally is \$1.46 million with a goal of \$1.6 million.

Both commissioners would like to have some contingency built in for items not included, fencing for example, said Stiehler.

Three companies have been considered with Kompan rising to the top. According to Town Manager Josh Ward one of those three companies can be chosen

without a bid process because they are each already approved as a state contractor.

Stiehler said a standard bidding process would be difficult anyway because each company has its own proprietary product so it would be an apples to oranges kind of thing.

Once the town finds a company to do the site work, that company will be working under the playground company's umbrella with those costs part of the whole.

It's likely the company doing the site work will be announced in the coming weeks.

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...ALCOHOL continued from page 1

with family and friends – the town doesn't allow alcohol at Fourth of July festivities in the park.

Keeping people from drinking alcohol falls on the shoulders of one or two Highlands Police officers, something that HPD Chief Andrea Holland said is impossible any Fourth of July, but particularly this one due to the number of people which is why she brought the subject up.

"We literally couldn't walk through the crowds so ended up walking the perimeter and eventually just stayed in our vehicles at

both ends to make sure people weren't leaving the park with alcohol," she said.

Holland questioned the purpose of the rule, since it can't be enforced.

"We have never had any issues with drunk and disorderly people or problems of any kind related to alcohol at Music in the Park on Saturday or on the Fourth of July. I am bringing it up because logistically we can't do what you want us to do, which is keep people from drinking, so why not just allow it on the Fourth like on Satur-

• See **ALCOHOL** page 19

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...MAYOR continued from page 2

a statement on any town issue during the public comment period at each monthly Town Board meeting.

Some may say that maybe you're just blowing smoke; the board does what it wants to do. Not so! Let me give you a recent example. The board was about to change one side of 4th Street from diago-

nal parking to parallel parking to improve safety on the hill past Main Street. Merchants where the parking change would be made attended a board meeting and expressed their concern that their businesses would be harmed. They suggested simply moving the center line to provide more space on that side of the street, thereby im-

proving safety. The board listened, and now that is the plan we have with NCDOT.

Let me review the available communication options: weekly newspapers, the Sunshine List, the town website, the Highlands Town App, the mayor's weekly broadcast on WHLC, the mayor's monthly community coffee event, attendance at the Town Board

meetings, and Ask.MayorPat.com, which currently features 192 information videos and over 200 information letters (eBlasts).

Effective communication requires a back-and-forth exchange of ideas and information. Let us discuss the issues together, especially before the town board takes a final vote.

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• BIZ/ORG NEWS •



From left: Ryan Bryson, Scott Carter, Dave O'Harra, President Randy Foster, Josh Bryson, Bob Buchanan, Jessica Farrell, Tim Dearth.

It was a very busy last meeting of the 4th quarter at the Rotary Club of Highlands last Tuesday. We inducted 2 new members, Bud Katz and Julie Upshaw, held our quarterly Club Assembly, and presented a grant to the Gordon Center for Children, a program of the Highlands United Methodist Church. Each quarter of the Rotary year, the club dedicates a program for committee heads and board members, give a short report on the activities of their committees, and the board members share what great things are happening in our club.



Mauricio Hernandez, now a two-time winner of the final Super Bingo game (\$150), with Ryan Bryson, Board Chair, Gordon Center for Children; Tim Dearth, Bingo Caller, Rotary Club of Highlands; and, Bob Baxter, Chair, Rotary Club of Highlands Bingo Committee.

On Thursday, June 26th, The Rotary Club of Highlands partnered with the Gordon Center for Children to sponsor Bingo. All net proceeds benefited the Center's work providing early childhood education opportunities to families of Highlands and the surrounding areas.



Mountaintop Rotary Club President Cathy Connolly presents grant check to Linda Kirkman of The Counseling and Psychotherapy Center of Highlands



From left: Randy Foster, President, Rotary Club of Highlands; Tracy Franklin, Program Host; Chandler Ellenburg, Macon Co EMS.

Learning about Macon County EMS

Today at the Rotary of Highland's meeting we were honored to hear from Rotarian Tracy Franklin and her special guest Chandler Ellenburg, Paramedic, Macon County Emergency Medical Services.

A seven-year veteran for the EMS, Chandler serves the residents of Macon County and beyond with expertise and training that requires not only EMS certification, but over 120 hours Continuing Education per year.

Chandler shared that every ambulance is staffed with a Paramedic during operation, urgent response and transfers. Chandler encourages utilizing refrigerator 'medical info-magnets' along with updated cellphone medical data that can provide life-saving contact, allergy, and prescription drug information.

For more info: <https://gis.maconnc.org/www.maconnc.org/ems.html>

...PLAYHOUSE continued from page 1

reprieve.

"As a last hurrah, so to speak, let's put the word out to see if someone would be willing to put up the money to keep the building standing and make it into something we all wish it had been 70 years ago," he said.

Mayor Pat Taylor said he realized there is a sentimental connection to the building but according to the report, it would have to be completely taken down to the studs and rebuilt for it to have any functional use and be safe for habitation.

"Or, could that money be better put to use at the new Performing Arts Center which is ready for some new direction?" he asked.

Commissioner Jeff Weller said he was sure it would take closer to \$3.5 million to "fix" the structure – something he would not be comfortable agreeing to – and further questioned what it would be used for.

"I have yet to hear what it would be used for," he said. "A museum? We have a historical society that does a phenomenal job, so what else? At this point the building is past the point of return."

But he said he thought Commissioner Dotson's idea was a good one.

"We have been discussing this for two years. A lot of people knew this was being discussed tonight, but there is no one here. But let's give the community a chance to come up with the money and some ideas as to its use. Maybe a grass roots effort can make it happen," he said.

Commissioners said they could wait a bit longer prior to moving forward with demolition, but not five years.

"That building would not be standing in five years," said Weller.

The board agreed to table Bryson's bid to give the public a chance to come forward and participate in an in-depth discussion during the 6 o'clock August Worksession prior to the Town Board meeting at 7 o'clock.

"After that we can decide whether to move forward at the Town Board meeting," said Dotson.

Commissioners said they want to hear how it will be used and how it will be funded.

As part of the town campus, the use has to be for a nonprofit that allows general public use and access – the arts, events, historical, something along those lines.

• BIZ/ORG NEWS •



BHHSMMR Realtors Cristina Vives, Betty Holt, and Kara Hardy. Back row: Lorna Alexander, Dayne O'Quinn, and Katy Postell-Dearth.

Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Meadows Mountain Realty awards Leland and Bessie Speed Scholarship to local graduating senior

On June 25, 2025, Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Meadows Mountain Realty awarded the Leland and Bessie Speed Scholarship to Dayne O'Quinn, son of Lesley and Eric Galloway. O'Quinn is a recent graduate of Highlands School in Highlands, NC. The scholarship is a \$5,000 award toward tuition to a post-secondary school of the winner's choice.

Hall will attend Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University. He plans to become a pilot. The Realtors and staff at BHHS Meadows Mountain Realty are happy to be able to contribute to his success.

The scholarship is named in honor of Bessie Speed and her late husband, Leland R. Speed. Hailing from Jackson, MS, Mr. Speed's life was marked by service to his community and to his fellow man, positively influencing many along the way. He was passionate about service and loved his community. As executive director of the Mississippi Development Authority, he helped rebuild the Gulf Coast after Hurricane Katrina,

working for just \$1 a year because he believed in making a difference.

Education was also paramount to both Mr. and Mrs. Speed. Mr. Speed enjoyed long-time service on the Mississippi College board of trustees as well as on the Jackson State University Foundation. He also helped start charter schools in Mississippi, opening new opportunities for students who wanted a chance to shine.

Highlands was also very important to the Speeds, and Leland was the driving force behind the development of Highlands Falls Country Club, building it into what it is today. He was president of the club for five years.

About Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Meadows Mountain Realty
Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Meadows Mountain Realty is a Highlands-based real estate firm with two offices in Highlands, NC and one in Cashiers, NC. They have been in business since 2003. For more information on BHHSMMR, visit www.MeadowsMountainRealty.com.

Week Four Concerts July 26-29



Saturday, July 26th, Highlands, 5 PM | Sunday, July 27th, Cashiers, 5 PM

"The Enchanted Harp"

Elisabeth Remy Johnson, harp; Ransom Wilson, flute;
Jesse McCandless, clarinet; Vega Quartet

Monday, July 28th, Highlands, 5 PM | Tuesday, July 29th, Cashiers, 5 PM

"Eternal Love Triangle"

Vijay Venkatesh, piano; Jesse McCandless, clarinet; Vega Quartet



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• BIZ/ORG NEWS •

Historical Society raises \$9,000 by hosting recent historic homes tour

On June 21, the Highlands Historical Society celebrated the 150th Anniversary of the founding of Highlands by hosting a tour of three of the most historic homes in Highlands tucked high in the clouds above. Shuttle vans transported guests to each home where a “ghost” of the first homeowner greeted them and provided unique insights into the home and their own past. Docents and the homeowner were available to guide the guests through the home and to answer any additional questions.

The three homes on the tour were the Sloan House (“Cheeonondah”) owned by Chuck and Pam Auster, the Lapham House (“Faraway”) owned by Bill and Julia Grumbles

and the Ravenel House (“Wolf Ridge”) co-owned by Ray and Diane McPhail and Will and Karen Stolz. “These three homes were selected due to their rich history and the impact that their original owners had on early Highlands,” relates Tracy Foor, President of the Historical Society. “We are so thankful for the generosity of the current owners in allowing us the use of these beautiful and unique homes for our fundraiser.”

Foor said the use of “ghost” actors portraying the original owners was a fun way to introduce guests to the history of the house and the family that once called it home,” said Foor.

“Each of these homes has



The ghost of Marguerite Ravenel - portrayed by Trish Foor - welcomes guests to Wolf Ridge.

an important story to tell and we were so excited to give others the chance to hear those stories through the voice of the original owners,” he said.

The Historical Society raised over \$9,000 with this fundraiser which will further their mission: “to persevere and promote the rich heritage of Highlands for present and future generations.” The Historical Village is open for the season Thursdays thru Saturdays from 10a – 4p and on Sundays from 1a- 4p. The Historical Village is located at 524 N. 4th Street in Highlands.

Highlands Hurricanes Boys win MSL Conference meet; Upset Franklin

**By Steve Hott
Head Coach**

On Saturday, July 12, the Highlands Hurricanes traveled to Franklin for the 2025 MSL (Mountain Swim League) Conference Championships only this time the results were different.

For the first time in decades for sure, maybe forever, the Highlands Boys team beat Franklin 300.5 to 290. Smoky Mountain Aquatics Club SMAC) finished 3rd, Jackson County Swim Team (JCST) 4th, and Cherokee County Aquatics Club (CCAC) 5th. High-

lands girls finished 3rd.

Leading the scoring for the Hurricanes were three Jr. Olympians, Jasmine Abranyi, Finneaus Garner, and Dodo Zhang, all who scored 26 pts. Hayden Bysura brought home 24.5 points. Both Zhang and Bysura broke team records in the 100-yard backstroke in their respective age groups.

Jr. Olympians Ian Batista, Aniah McKim, Emma Denisoff, Elizabeth Burnette, and Bella Batista won 24, 22, 21, 18.5, 17.5, and 16.5 points, respectively. MSL Allstar Asa Garner had

15.5, Jr. Olympians Aleks Petric-Saconjic and Jaycee Powell had 15 pts. All-stars Rocco Basil, and Lucas Zabrian had 14.5 and 14, Jr. Olympian Justin Powell, All-star Emily Mason 14, Allstar Zana Maseko and Jr. Olympian Chase Kenter 12.5 and 11.5. All-stars Hananiah Edwards, Morgan Mason, Agatha Justin, El-



Members with their trophies.

Shchegachov, Luka Maseko, Max Basil, and Katherine Wise scored 11, 10.5, 10, 9, 9, 8.5, 8, 8, and 7.5, respectively.

Sadie Bysura and Melanie Zabrian scored 7 and Stella Kerr, Nehemiah Edwards and Benjamin Edwards each had 5. All-star Max Jestin had 4.5. Anna Shchegachova, Zoe Ivy, Kate Vanderweile, Blakely Hedden, and Andre Jimenez brought home 3.5, 2.5, 2.5, 2 and 1 pts., respectively. Sena Sherrill and Azariah Edwards swam well for the Hurricanes.

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• BIZ/ORG NEWS •

...INVESTING continued from page 4

ker is explaining how commissions work, what agreements you're signing, and how compensation is being handled in each transaction.

If you're not getting clear, thorough guidance? It might be time to find a new broker.

• *Lauren Dabl is the General Manager and Broker-in-Charge at Landmark Realty Group and Landmark Vacations where she supports an elite team of brokers. She can be reached at 828-279-4700 or via email at lauren@landmarkrg.com.*



Rotary President Randy Foster and Marion Macy.

It's all about balance

The Rotary Club of Highlands was pleased to host Marion Macy, physical therapist and owner of Physical Therapy on the Plateau as our guest speaker. Interestingly, her presentation included having all our members participate in several tests so that we might judge for ourselves what physical condition we might be in. The tests are called the Adult Functional Independence Test, and the tests are for strength, endurance, and balance. The success of the scores

one achieves in these tests are different based on one's age. The main emphasis that Marion wanted the club to understand is the importance of moving and maintaining our strength and endurance as we age. Falls are a major cause of injuries as we get older, and practicing balance skills could help us avoid those injuries. Her presentation was well received and highly appreciated!



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JULY 11
Nitrograss

JULY 18
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JULY 25
ABC Combo

Saturdays on Pine

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Silly Ridge

****Special holiday Saturday concert in Town Square****

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Shane Meade & The Sound

JULY 19
The Breakfast Club

JULY 26
The Boomers



visithighlandsnc.com

Steve Harris,
Board
Chair;
Executive
Director
Jeanne
Piazza,
Former
Executive
Director;
Mary Adair
Trumbly



Highlands PAC celebrates retirement of new facility debt

Milestone marks new chapter of growth and community impact

**By Charlotte Muir
Development Director**

The Highlands Performing Arts Center (PAC) is proud to announce the full retirement of the debt associated with its new, state-of-the-art facility, marking a major milestone in the organization's history.

Thanks to the generosity of PAC donors, community partners, and ongoing support from patrons and volunteers, the PAC has successfully paid off all remaining construction and capital campaign obligations. This achievement secures a strong financial foundation for the future, ensuring that the PAC can continue to invest in world-class performances, educational programming, and community outreach.

"This is an extraordinary moment in our journey," said Jeanne Piazza, executive director. "This is a testament to our community's belief in the power of the performing arts to inspire, uplift and transform lives, and their support has allowed us to reach this exciting milestone. Being debt-free gives us the freedom to dream even bigger."

Board Chair Steve Harris also reflected on the significance of the moment:

"The retirement of our facility debt is not just a financial milestone — it's a symbol of the unwavering belief this community has in the PAC's mission. We are deeply grateful to every individual who made this

possible."

Former Executive Director, Mary Adair Trumbly said, "The Performing Arts Center was truly built for the community by the community. I am deeply appreciative of this community's commitment to constructing this magnificent venue."

The facility, which opened in June of 2022, was made possible by an effective capital campaign, raising nearly \$15 million that brought the vision to life. The new theater includes 298 seats in a beautiful and intimate performance space and features comfortable theater-style seating, ample parking and a spacious lobby.

With the debt officially retired, the PAC is launching its "Next Act" — an ambitious slate of initiatives including expanded arts education, the newly launched Highlands Cashiers Film Festival, and enhancements to its facility and year-round programming.

The Highlands Performing Arts Center remains committed to enriching the cultural life of the Highlands-Cashiers Plateau, and now, free of debt, is positioned to do so with even greater impact and sustainability.

For more information or to support the PAC's continued growth, visit www.highlandsperformingarts.com.

• BIZ/ORG NEWS •

It's a 'Labor of Love'

For Chris Walker, the residents at the Eckerd Living Center are the stars of the show.

By Kim Lewicki

For Chris Walker it's a Labor of Love. For the residents at the Eckerd Living Center it's a familiar face who brings life in from outside the center.

It all started March of 2024 when Chris met Betty Fennell who was living with her son a few doors down from Chris and her husband Gerard in Cashiers.

Betty ended up going to the Eckerd Center for a short while, so Chris began visiting her there and that's when her commitment to bringing joy to whomever she could blossomed.

"This is the only thing in my life that I have control over," said Chris. "Making a difference in others' lives brings me and them joy."

Four or five times a week, Chris goes to the center and hangs out with whomever is free to join her for most of the day.

She brings hot brewed coffee, cookies, candy, conversation and laughter.

"Sometimes I bring music, but mostly it's about social interaction and my ability to bring the outside world to them," she said. "We just hang out."

The group in the picture is just a small sampling of the residents who usually hang with Chris; it all depends on the time of day and what's going on. Early in the

evening the crowd thins out when the dinner bell rings.

Some residents are there for the long haul, others are there for respite, but she makes herself available to everyone.

"When someone can't come out of their rooms, I go to them. We talk, we tease and we laugh," said.

Breaking up the daily routine is a welcome distraction and Chris says it's good all the way around.

"They bring me joy and I hope I bring them joy, too, she said.



From left: Alan Bennett, Leroy Johnson, Chris Walker, Goshia Babcock, and Craig Crowe at the Eckerd Living Center.



From left: Chris Walker and Betty Fennell at the Eckerd Living Center.


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SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING

Awakenings



Jacob Tedder
Congregational Pastor
Christ Church of the Valley
jacob@cashiers.church

Dr. Oliver Sacks walked into a Bronx hospital in 1966 and changed the lives of many patients who were living lives of neglect, disvalue, and degradation. These patients were suffering from a mysterious sleeping sickness which rendered them catatonic. They could neither move nor communicate. The staff treated them as they saw them: useless and unworthy of their devoted care and love. Sacks was in disbelief and worked diligently to change the value system of the hospital, the staff, and of the treatment of the patients. These people, as he saw them, were worth value and love despite their condition.

If this story sounds familiar, that's because it was put to screen in the movie "Awakenings" starring Robin Williams and Robert De Niro. It is an incredible true story of man who sought to instill love and value into these catatonic patients while they lived with their condition. He noticed that, despite their inability to move or communicate, they would respond to certain things. Some would catch a ball; some would respond to their name. Some would suddenly move to the sound of familiar music. To Sacks, something was going on beneath the surface that needed to be "awakened."

That's precisely what he did. He heard of the drug L-DOPA which was working with Parkinson's patients and started to administer it to his patients. Miraculously, it "awakened" them. They became human again: moving, talking, and dancing. They were, unfortunately, at the age of when they started their "sleeping sickness," but no matter – they were awake.

I watched this movie years ago and believe it is one of the best representations of the gospel I have ever seen in media. Sacks saw a value in people that the staff had seemed to forget. They had grown cold to these human beings because they could not move or communicate. Sacks was the catalyst that jolted them out of their own form of "sleepiness." But who was more asleep, the staff or the patients?

One of the main themes of the movie is the total transformation that happens, not only to the patients, but to the staff. They had grown complacent and uncaring. They needed to be awakened to love once again. Sacks was the fuel that lit the fire of dying embers in the hearts of the staff.

How do you need to be awakened to love once again? Have you grown complacent in your life? Are you content to live life day by day with only caring for yourself, or, do you see in yourself some higher purpose? One of the ways our spiritual life dies is by only caring about ourselves. We are made to be an extension of the love of God to others. If God has loved you enough to give his Son for you, then you must be a living embodiment of that love. "A branch that does not produce fruit will die," as scripture tells us. Is that literal or figurative? Maybe, to our horror, it is much more literal than we dare consider. Any heart that closes itself to the love of God will die.

Fret not, fear not. The cascading fear of a life that has not been lived well can suffocate our lives and bring that terrible

• See SPIRITUALLY page 21

• PLACES TO WORSHIP •

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 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

GRACE CHAPEL ON HIGH HOLLY
 9615 Dillard Rd Scaly Mountain, N.C.
 Pastor Steve Kerhoulas. <http://www.Graceonhighholly.com>
 Sunday School 9:45; Worship 11; Prayer Service Wed 5:30p Men's
 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
 (Off Franklin/Highlands Rd)
 Sunday School: 10 am. Worship Service: 11 am

GRACE COMMUNITY CHURCH OF CASHIERS
 Non-Denominational-Contemporary Worship
 242 Hwy 107N. 1/4 miles from Crossroads in Cashiers
www.gracecashiers.com • Pastor Steve Doerter 743-9814

Services: Sundays 10am - Wed. - 7pm; Dinner - Wed. 6pm

HAMBURG BAPTIST CHURCH
 Hwy 107N. • Glenville. NC • 743-2729 • Nathan Johnson
 Sunday: School 9:45a. Worship 11a & 7p. Bible Study 6p
 Wed. Kidsquest 6p.; Worship 7p.

HIGHLANDS ASSEMBLY OF GOD
 Randy Reed. Pastor 828-421-9172 • 165 S. Sixth Street
 Wed. Bible Study: 6 p.m.; Sundays: Worship: 11

HIGHLANDS CENTRAL BAPTIST CHURCH
 Pastor Dan Robinson • 11339 Buck Creek Road
 The Highlands Central Baptist Church is temporarily sharing
 the facilities of the Shortoff Baptist Church.
 Sunday Worship is at 9a. Wednesday Worship is 6:30p

HIGHLANDS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
 Rev. Dr. Randy Lucas. Pastor 526-3376
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www.highlandsmethodist.org

HOLY FAMILY LUTHERAN CHURCH: ELCA
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 Rev. Ken Langsdorf
 Worship/Communion: 10:30 All are welcome.
 Visit our website: Holy Family Lutheran Highlands NC

MACEDONIA BAPTIST CHURCH
 8 miles south of Highlands on N.C. 28 S in Satolah
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 Wed: Bible Study and Youth Mtg.: 7 p.m.

MOUNTAIN SYNAGOGUE
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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
 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 (English); Mon. 9:30a (Vatican II in Latin); Tues. 7p
 (Spanish); Wed., 9:30a (English)

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• POLICE & FIRE REPORTS •

Highlands Police entries from July 1. Only the names of persons arrested, issued a summons/citation, issued a Class-3 misdemeanor or those of public officials have been used.

July 1

• At 4:50 p.m., owners of Yoga Highlands on Carolina Way notified police that someone was playing music too loud through an outdoor speaker.

July 17

• At 4:33 p.m., owner of the

High Dive on Carolina Way reported that a customer had failed to complete a payment in the amount of \$211.56.

• At 6:47 p.m., officers responded to a report of a intoxicated disruptive person at 200 Main who was cursing, and shouting and being rude to others.

• At 7 p.m., Francisco Picaco, 31, of Dallas, TX was arrested for being intoxicated and disruptive in public and for resisting arrest while at 200 Main. He was issued at \$1,500 unse-

cured bond. His trial date is Aug. 7.

The Highlands Fire & Rescue log from July 14.

July 14

• At 10:01 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Cheney Lane.

July 15

• At 11:57 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Holt Circle.

• At 1:16 p.m., the dept. responded to a medical alarm at a

residence on Dog Mountain Road.

• At 3:38 p.m., the dept. investigated the source of smoke at a residence on Upper Divide.

• At 6:09 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence at Highlands Mountain Club.

July 16

• At 12:32 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Wilson Road.

• At 7:33 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a location on Main Street.

July 17

• At 12:33 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a location on Main Street.

• At 10:14 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a location on Carolina Way.

July 18

• At 4:28 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Leonard Road.

• At 2:17 p.m., the dept. provided public assistance at a residence on Hummingbird Lane.

• At 2:55 p.m., the dept. investigated the cause of smoke at a resi-

dence on Biscuit Rock Road.

July 19

• At 11:18 a.m., the dept. was first-responders/rescue at a residence on Centennial Lane where a tractor rolled over on someone.

• At 1:56 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Happoldt Drive.

• At 9:30 p.m. the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Hummingbird Lane.

July 20

• At 11:26 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a location on S. 5th Street.

• At 4:43 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a location on W. Church Street.

• At 9:26 p.m., the dept. responded to fire alarm at a location on Oak Street.

July 21

• At 5:19 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Clubhouse Trail.

• At 9:54 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a location on N. 4th Street.

...OBITUARIES continued from page 7

Ruby Lee Shaheen

Mrs. Ruby Lee Shaheen, 83, of Scaly Mountain, NC, passed away Saturday, July 19, 2025. She was born September 22, 1941 in Beaufort, NC to the late Herman Earl Gaskins and Evelyn Hayes Gaskins.

She was married for 64 years to William Arthur Shaheen, Sr. who died in 2023. She lived in Florida from 1959 to 1985, retiring from the Florida Highway Patrol, and then moved to Scaly Mountain and Highlands, NC.

Mrs. Shaheen was a Health Care Technician at Angel Medi-



cal Center and volunteered in the gift shop at the hospital in Highlands; she was also Hospice Director for Macon County.

She owned "Wee Care Baby Sitting Services" and a catering service. Mrs. Shaheen was a member of Highlands First Baptist Church,

she enjoyed reading, sewing, the Gardening Club, and attended Joy Group at Highlands United Methodist Church. She was very active and loving to the community.

She is survived by her sons,

William Arthur Shaheen, Jr. (Peggy), Timothy Earl Shaheen (P.J.), and Jonathan Hayes Shaheen (Gilberta); a sister, Martha Anderson and a brother, Herman Gaskins; grandchildren, Savannah Brooke Shaheen Hopper (Dean), Rachel Elizabeth Shaheen, and John Hayes Shaheen (Kayleigh); great-grandson, Sawyer Dean Hopper and one great-granddaughter on the way.

A Celebration of Life Service will be held in the future.

Online condolences may be made at www.bryantgrantfuneralhome.com.

Bryant-Grant Funeral Home is honored to serve the Shaheen family.

...ALCOHOL continued from page 10

days," she asked.

Commissioner Eric Pierson said allowing on Saturdays in the park when there is music and not allowing it on Fourth of July in the park when there is music is confusing to people.

"They assume it's like every other Saturday," he said. "Plus, if the police can't enforce it, then the town is liable."

Chief Holland said if they don't see alcohol – either a bottle of some kind or someone pouring it – then they move on. If they do, they say you can't have that here and people are compliant and say, "I didn't know."

"I would like to allow it to happen on July 4th like we do on Saturdays, say, starting at 6 p.m."

she said.

But Commissioner Amy Pierson was against the idea.

"Saying you can't have alcohol is a tool in their toolbox. This is a family-oriented affair. Everyone should be able to come and have a good time, see the fireworks without seeing everyone walking around drunk. Maybe they don't want to do the Saturday night concert because it's a bunch of drunks, but this is the Fourth of July. We need to decide if we want to have 2,500 people drunk on town property which makes other people not able to have a good time because we have said 'Come and party.'"

Mayor Pat Taylor said he likes to have wine with his picnic.

"I don't sit there and chug it to get drunk," he said.

Commissioner Jeff Weller agreed.

"Drinking doesn't mean you are drunk. It's like you are seeking a solution without a problem," he said. "The chief has verified that nothing has ever happened. People aren't walking around drunk."

Chief Holland said police are still on site, both for the Fourth and Saturday nights.

"At least we can not allow people to leave with it which is what we do Saturday nights."

She said the department has tools like arresting someone if they get rowdy and disruptive and that's really all they need.

Commissioners said they have plenty of time to make a decision before next year.

A Retreat with Immaculee

Our Lady of the Mountains Catholic Church
315 N. 5th Street, Highlands

AUGUST 1

Registration/Bookstore: 4-5pm

Immaculee Talk One: 5-6:30pm

Break/Book Signing: 6:30-7pm

Immaculee Talk Two: 7-9pm

AUGUST 2

Fellowship/Book Signing 8-9am

Immaculee Talk Three: 9-10:30am

Break/Book Signing: 10:30-11am

Immaculee Talk Four: 11am-1pm



Join us for a weekend with Immaculee Iligaziba, author of the New York Times best seller "Left to Tell" and most recently "The Rosary: The Prayer That Saved My Life."

Immaculee's story of survival of the 1994 Rwandan genocide captured the imagination of the world. Since then, she has been a source of inspiration by sharing her journey of faith, hope and forgiveness, and the power of the Rosary in her life before and after the genocide. Immaculee also leads annual pilgrimages to Medjugorje, Lourdes and Kibeho, Rwanda.

The event is FREE to all. Donations will go to the Capital Campaign for the building of the new church.

The suggested donation is \$35.

For further information call Ellen Nolan at 307-690-4111
Register by emailing the office at olmountainshighlands@rcdoc.org

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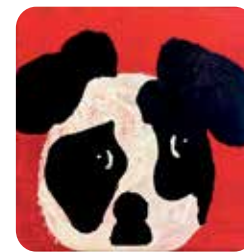
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...ELECTION continued from 1

The two incumbent candidates are the only commissioners who signed up for the Nov. 4 election – Commissioners Amy Patterson and Eric Pierson.

Patterson was elected Nov. 1989 for her first four-year term, which began 1990. She took two years off and has been on the board consistently since then serving 33 years in total.

Pierson was on the board for two consecutive terms; came off for two years was elected again and is now running for a fourth term.

In Franklin, there are five Council Members and the mayor.

Current Council Member Stacy Guffey and newcomer Matthew Holland are running for mayor. The current mayor, Jack Horton is not running again and if Guffey loses, he vacates his Council seat.

Therefore, there are three Council Member spots open – incumbent, Rita Salain's seat and David Culpepper's who isn't running again, as well as Guffey's seat.

On the ballot for those three seats are Rita Salain, Jeff Berry, Travis Higdon, Kelton Bailey, Tim Cook, Paul Thatcher, Bob Scott and Kore Newman.

Meanwhile, according to Deputy Director Campaign Finance for the MC Board of Elections, Judy Fritts, write-ins will be accepted for both municipal elections and when it comes to the winner, as a nonpartisan municipal election, it simply comes down to the number of votes.

For Highlands, the ballot will have two write-in spots,

lands. Furnished or unfurnished. Annual lease. \$1,500/mth. Call Tom. 404-213-2431. (st. 7/24).

3BD/2BA HOUSE IN FRANKLIN – 74 Gibson Ridge Road. Short-or long-term. \$1,500/mth. Call 828-526-2239 (st. 7/17)

HIGHLANDS 1-2 SPACES – 1 large or 2 smaller spaces for rent in popular Mill Creek Shopping Center next door to Blue Bike Cafe. Each space is 800 sq/ft at \$2,333/mo OR both spaces at 1,600 sq/ft for \$4400/mo. Inquires to Debi: bock7@me.com or 404-323-9444. (st. 7/10)

4 BDM/3 BATH HIGHLANDS – Updated farm home, located between Highlands & Cashiers off Hwy 64. \$4,500/month, includes all utilities with high speed wifi. Call Marcy 828-482-4239 (st. 7/10)

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and the highest two vote-getters would get the seat. If there is a tie, the result would be a random lottery draw.

According to Fritts, the process of running as a write-in, or to be the subject of a write-in for a nonpartisan municipal election in North Carolina is simple.

The write-in candidate must be a U.S. citizen, at least 18 years old by Election Day, be a resident of the municipality for at least 30 days before the election, be registered to vote at the current registered address, and not be serving a felony sentence, including probation.

Filing paperwork is not required, no petition is required, no declaration of intent is required, and no party affiliation is required, she said.

"If you want to be a write-in, tell voters you are running," said Fritts. "They won't see your name on the ballot, so they must write it in one of the two spots on the Highlands ballot."

...SPIRITUALLY from page 18

existential fear into our hearts. The echoing punishing words of, "I haven't done enough" will tear at your heart and kill you with guilt. Is there any way out? Only through the cross.

Our sins are put to death and our hope is raised up. Even though we fail, Christ doesn't. And if Christ doesn't fail, that means that our weak works will one day be redeemed for good, because Christ will make all things new. Open your heart. Experience his love, and be an extension of his love. Maybe you too will be blessed to see other "awakenings" as well.

• HIGHLANDS AREA EVENTS •

POOL SCHEDULE

• 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 Monday 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 exercise. 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).

Through Sat. July 26

• At CK Swan, a Clara William Trunk Show. 233 N. 4th Street. 828-526-2083.

July 21 - 25

• At the Literacy Council, FREE summer camps. College Essay Boot Camp. 2 - 4 pm. High School Seniors and Recent Grads

Sun., July 27

• For the Literacy Council, Swingin' Soiree at The Farm at Old Edwards. To purchase tickets and for information visit <https://www.theliteracyandlearningcenter.org/swingin>

• The Barak Norton Heritage Association cordially invites all descendants and friends of Barak Norton to the annual family reunion on Sunday, at 11:30a. This year marks the 153rd anniversary of the family reunion started in 1872 that is at the Historic Whiteside Cove School House located at 4601 Whiteside Cove Road, Highlands, NC. Bring your favorite dish to share and join us for a day of music, stories, food, and fellowship as we celebrate our mountain heritage.

Wed., July 30

• At the Literacy Council, Tin-

ker Time for Tots and Caregivers. 11 am - Noon. FREE. No registration required

July 28 - Aug. 1

• At the Literacy Council, FREE summer camps. Craft Camp. 1 - 4 pm. K - 2nd grade

Fri. & Sat., Aug. 1-2

• A Retreat with Immaculee at Our Lady of the Mountains Catholic Church in Highlands. 315 N. 5th Street. Join us for a weekend with Immaculee Iligaziba, author of the New York Times best seller "Left to Tell" and most recently "The Rosary: The Prayer That Saved My Life." The event is FREE to all. Donations will go to the Capital Campaign for the building of the new church. The suggested donation is \$35. For further information call Ellen Nolan at 307-690-4111. Register by emailing the office at olmountain-shighlands@rcdoc.org

Sat. Aug. 2

• The Pop-Up Pipers will appear in unexpected locations throughout downtown Highlands 4:30-5p.

Tues. Aug. 5

• National Night Out, where communities come together with law enforcement, first responders, and local organizations to build relationships, have fun, and strengthen the neighborhoods we call home is from 5-8p at the MC Recreation Park.

Aug. 6 - 30

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

Wed., Aug. 6, 13

• At the Literacy Council, Tinker Time for Tots and Caregivers, 11 am - Noon. FREE. No registration required

Wed., Aug. 6

• At First Presbyterian Church on Main Street, Gray Pearson, Organist at 2pm.

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



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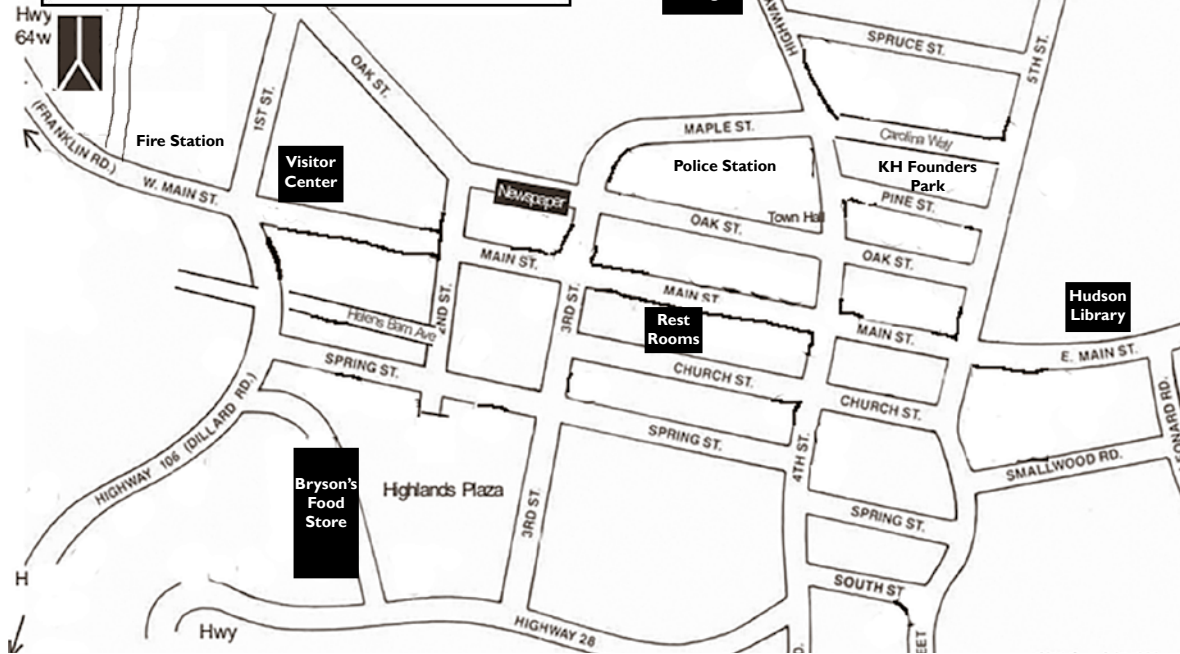
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