

# Highlands Newspaper

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Thurs., Oct. 2, 2025

## No cell phones, ear buds, etc., allowed 'bell to bell' in MC schools

By Kristin Fox

At the recent regular meeting of the Macon County Board of Education, two new board poli-

cies were approved by the board – Board Policy 4318 Use of Wireless Communication Devices/Cell Phone Use Policy and Board

Policy 5030- Community Use of Facilities.

After a motion made by

• See **CELL PHONES** page 19

## Sept. Town Board tidbits

By Kim Lewicki

The backside of the First Presbyterian Church along Church Street has been hit by vehicles that have jumped the sidewalk three times by drivers attempting to park on the street.

The curb is low along the street adjacent to the church which is likely why it has been

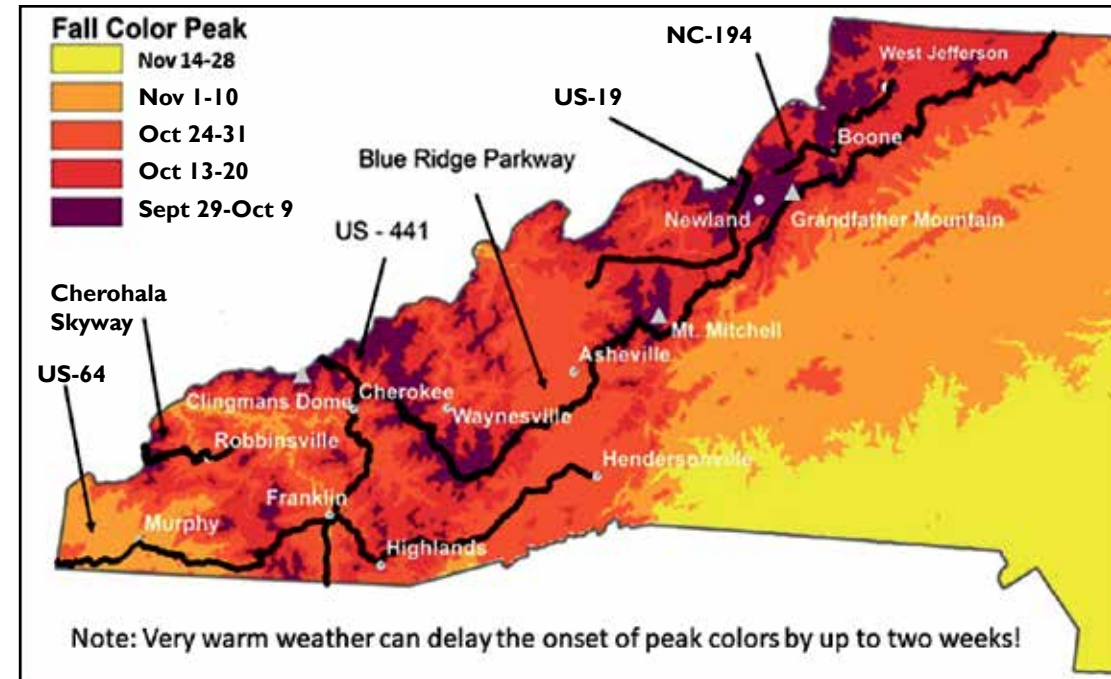
• See **TOWN BOARD** page 11

## ROAD CLOSURE

The NCDOT will be replacing culverts on US 64 east from the area around Cherrywood Drive to the Jackson County line Thursday, Oct. 2, 7pm-7am.

There are several culverts to replace so it will likely take multiple nights but so far ONLY Oct 2 has been designated. Please check the electronic message boards for additional closure dates.

The alternate route to Cashiers from Highlands is Horse Cove Road to Whiteside Cove Road to NC 107.



## Fall color peak times for NC mountains

By Howard Neufeld and Michael Denslow  
App State Dept. of Biology

The Western North Carolina (WNC) 2025 fall foliage season is forecast to be long and vibrant, with peak colors starting in higher

elevations in late September and mid-October, moving to mid-elevations around the first two weeks of October, and reaching lower elevations and the Asheville area from mid-to-late October.

Warm summer weather and

a healthy forest canopy are setting the stage for brilliant reds, golds, and oranges

The map, created by Michael Denslow, gives an estimation of the timing of fall color peaks for

• See **FALL COLOR** page 10

## MLIA sets fundraising goal for next phases

*\$2.5 million more is needed*

By Kim Lewicki

Now that phase one of the Mirror Lake dredging plan is finished, plans are being developed for phases 2-4.

The initial \$500,000 raised for dredging by the a 501c3 non-profit Mirror Lake Improvement Association (MLIA) was used to complete phase one. The job was completed by Riversand Dredging who is also eligible to bid on phases 2-4 when the time comes.

According to Pat Gleeson, president of MLIA, bids for phases 2-3 and possibly 4 will be let sometime in 2026.

"I would also anticipate the work on phase 2 beginning sometime in 2026," he said.

Phase One involved removing sediment immediately south and north of the bridge to eight

• See **MIRROR LAKE** page 7



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# • THE PLATEAU'S POSITION •

## • MAYOR ON DUTY •

### Road work in the works; expect delays

The big news is the NCDOT road closing of US 64 between Highlands and Cashiers. They plan to replace about 11 culverts in the coming weeks. Starting Thursday, October 2, from 7p.m. to 7a.m., US 64 east, located somewhere between Cherrywood Drive and the Jackson County line, will be closed.

The other dates for the road closures are unclear, as much depends on weather conditions. I expect this culvert project to take several weeks to complete. NCDOT has been replacing aging and failing culverts throughout Macon County and in other areas. It is work that must be done. Their strategy is to completely replace one or two culverts per night, even repaving the area before reopening the road at 7 a.m. the following morning.

We will depend on NCDOT getting out the information about planned closures. As soon as the town receives updated information, it will be posted on the town's app and website.

Additionally, Tom Neal of the Highlands-Cashiers Hospital has been in discus-



Highlands Mayor  
Patrick Taylor

sions with officials regarding access to the hospital during the closures. Our fire chief, Ryan Gearhart, has also been in discussions about securing fire protection.

NCDOT is also doing major work at Bridal Veil Falls on US 64. The road in that area is beginning to erode, like what happened in the gorge area a few years ago. In that event, at the gorge, the road had partially washed away. The good news about the road at Bridal Veil is that it has not washed away;

however, it could at any time if another significant rain event occurs. The NCDOT plan is to drive soil nails back into the road where there are rock formations. After that process is complete, metal webbing will be secured to the soil nails. A concrete material will be applied to the metal webbing to provide stabilization of the roadbed.

There will be days when one lane of traffic will be in place so the work can proceed. Some might ask why this repair couldn't be delayed until after leaf season. My response is that the road is in a critical condition that requires immediate attention to prevent a catastrophic loss of the road. When the lower gorge area was partially washed away, the entire gorge road was shut down for several weeks. NCDOT is being proactive to avoid a total road shutdown.

If you have ridden by the Mirror Lake bridge, you will notice that the dredging barge has been removed. Additionally, the containment barriers in the lake have been removed, as has much of the equipment that River Sand used during the first dredging phase. Work areas have been restored through hydroseeding of disturbed land.

The first phase of the Mirror Lake dredging project is complete. The Mirror Lake Improvement Association funded this phase of the project. The five million dollars allocated by the state will fund the remaining phases.

McGill Associates continues to develop dredging plans and secure the necessary permits. Once this engineering work is done, the project will be sent out for bids. The resumption of dredging in Mirror Lake is expected to occur sometime in the first or second quarter of 2026. It will be a significantly longer process than Phase One and will involve more equipment and construction activity. Phase One accounted for approximately 10% of the total dredging effort.

## • SNAPSHOTS •







### HC Hospital staff immortalizes Hurricane Helene

On Monday, at the ribbon cutting of the hospital's advanced diagnostic and compassionate care unit – new CT and MRI scanners, phlebotomy area and rehabilitation gym – CEO Tom Neal said that throughout Hurricane Helene the

flag flew above the campus. Tattered and torn, it was removed and signed by everyone who worked during and after Helene. It now hangs in memory of the event in the lobby of the new unit next to the ER.

Photo by Kim Lewicki

## • WEATHER •

Thu, 2-Oct	Fri, 3-Oct	Sat, 4-Oct	Sun, 5-Oct
			
67°F 42°F	67°F 41°F	65°F 51°F	65°F 55°F
Mostly sunny	Plenty of sunshine	Partial sunshine	Cloudy with showers around
RealFeel®	RealFeel®	RealFeel®	RealFeel®
High: 73° Low: 52°	High: 72° Low: 45°	High: 71° Low: 46°	High: 64° Low: 54°

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## • INVESTING AT 4,118 Ft •

### Weather...or Not

I think we can safely say we dodged a bullet with Hurricane Humberto and Hurricane Imelda, and being within a few days of the one-year anniversary of Hurricane Helene, the sigh of relief is magnified. Even though Highlands wasn't unscathed last year, what we endured was like being barely grazed by that bullet compared to some areas of western North Carolina who were the bullseye.

I heard a new-to-me weather term the other day. Not only was our area dealing with the future Hurricane Humberto forecast, but with Imelda coming right behind it, we may have had to deal with Fujiwhara. Fuji wha??? The Fujiwhara effect happens when two cyclones meet, fall in love, get married, and become one, as in one HUGE storm. It sounds like the beginning of one of those disaster films like The Poseidon Adventure. I believe I can speak for everyone in saying those aren't the kinds of adventures we ever want.

If it's one thing meteorologists try to do, it's to keep us informed so that we can be prepared. Whether we have any more hurricanes this season or not, we are not immune to other weather-related instances. The Old Farmer's Almanac predicts that the Southern Appalachians will have a colder and snowier than usual winter. The precipitation may be below normal, but the snowfall will not, with the heaviest snow to be at the end of December. That long-range forecast goes right along with my favorite local fog-watcher, Naomi, who witnessed 21 fogs during August this year. Legend has it (and it's right more than not) is that the number of morning fogs in August predict the number of snows for the coming winter. A 'snow' may be a slight dusting, but it could also mean several to many inches of the white stuff.

But, before you get your ski poles out, you may also want to consider the NOAA prediction. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration forecasts higher than normal winter temperatures and average/normal precipitation.

Whatever we get is what we'll get, but the main thing is to be prepared. If you own a home in the mountains of upstate SC, western NC, North GA, or eastern TN, you probably already know how weather can change on a dime and how important it is to follow some precautions to keep you and your property safe. Here are some important tips you should know for the upcoming fall



**Jeannie Chambers**  
Chambers Realty  
& Vacation Rentals

and winter season.

- Keep your emergency kit supplied and ready. Batteries, flashlights, candles, matches, lighters, water (water, water and more water- more than you think you'll need. Drinking, cooking, cleaning and if you're on a well- flushing.)

- If you have a generator, make sure it is being serviced.

- Have your HVAC systems, if any, checked. Make sure your filters have been changed. If you have a furnace fueled by

oil or gas- fill it up now and/or make sure your supplier keeps it on an auto-fill basis.

- Remove fallen leaves from roofs, gutters, and keep them from collecting around the foundation of your home.

- If you have a chimney in use, please have it checked/cleaned before winter.

- Practice fire pit safety! Fall and winters can be unusually dry at times. If there are leaves, pine straw or a tree canopy overhead, there's a chance for sparks to ignite.

- Winterize\* your home if you will be gone during the winter. If you're coming back and forth to your mountain home, leave the heat on low and at the very least, turn the water off "at the street" or wherever your water source enters your home.

If you are going to be gone for the winter season, consider having your home completely winterized. Yes, you can DIY and do most of this yourself, or have a friend or a friend do this, but the best thing is to have a plumber do the winterization, but don't wait to see if it's needed this year. Plumbers need at least two-three weeks lead time to schedule winterizations.

- This one is up for debate, but I think you should not put a chain across your driveway. Gates are one thing because they're up all year, but a chain across your drive for three-four months is an invitation you probably don't want.

- Consider hiring someone to check on your house monthly and especially after bad weather. If you insist on that chain across your drive, someone making tracks in the snow is a good thing. It's also not a bad idea to let the police department know of someone local who has access to your home.

#### Remember:

Whether or not the weather is kind  
Being prepared will bring peace of mind.



# HC Hospital celebrates \$5 million investment in advanced imaging, rehabilitation, and laboratory services

By Nancy Lindell  
and Kim Lewicki

Highlands-Cashiers Hospital proudly hosted a ribbon cutting celebration on Mon., Sept. 29, to mark the completion of a \$5 million capital investment in its facility. The hospital extends its heartfelt thanks to all community members, local leaders, and partners who joined in the celebration.

This milestone event celebrated the addition of a new CT scanner, MRI scanner, expanded therapy gym, and modern laboratory and phlebotomy area — all designed to improve access to high-quality, compassionate care for patients across the Plateau. The improvements are part of a larger \$17 million investment by HCA Healthcare in Highlands-Cashiers Hospital.

“We’re incredibly grateful to everyone who came out to sup-

port this exciting step forward for our hospital,” said Tom Neal, CEO of Highlands-Cashiers

Hospital. “These investments are more than just equipment and spaces — they are about elevating

care for our neighbors, friends, and families right here in our community.”

The celebration included remarks from Tom Neal; Zach

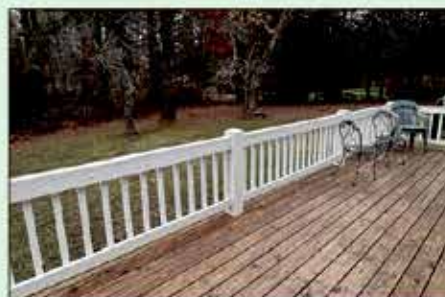
• See HOSPITAL page 9



On Monday, HC Hospital staff, board members, Highlands' mayor and an HCA officer gathered to unveil the new \$5 million addition to the hospital.

Photo by Kim Lewicki

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## ...MIRROR LAKE continued from page 1

feet if possible but according to Gleeson, bedrock was hit in a few places so in some areas Riversand was only able to go down six feet.

The \$5 million state grant secured by Senator Kevin Corbin and Representative Karl Gillespie will help with subsequent phases but some of the money is being used to finance the engineering plans for phases 2-4, which is being completed by McGill and Associates at the request of the town who is holding the purse strings to the \$5 million.

"The \$5 million is locked in a vault in Raleigh and is being spent at the direction of the Town of Highlands, exclusively," said Gleeson.

So, fundraising continues with the aim of restoring the water quality of Mirror Lake, which is designated NC Trout Waters, because the health of the lake is not what it was five years ago when all this started.

"The plans that were drawn up to restore the water quality of the lake were done five years ago and since that time more siltation has occurred," said Gleeson. "So, the 3-phase dredging plan has now grown to likely 4-phases all of which will require more money."

At the MLIA annual meeting last month, Gleeson outlined a new fundraising goal of \$2.5 million.

"This will cover the removal of the increase in siltation and enable us to build 'siltation catches' upstream from the lake which will help catch sediment before it reaches the lake," Gleeson said. "This is an aggressive prevention measure but one that is vital to restoring and preserving all the work we've done in phase one and plan on doing in phases 2-4."

Gleeson said the \$5 million awarded to help restore Mirror Lake was let as part of the water quality initiative created by Mayor Pat Taylor and the Town Board.

"The reason we received the grant in the first place was due to the dredging plan MLIA presented the Town Board three years ago which was further validated by McGill and Associates," said Gleeson.

But Gleeson said it's critical that private fundraising continue.

"We must continue this for the Mirror Lake of today, tomorrow and on into the future. This is truly a public/private partnership that not only restores the lake but protects the connected upstream and downstream watershed which is designated NC Trout Waters."

At the August Town Board meeting, past MLIA president Mike King said he hopes the community can continue to raise money to keep the dredging going.

"This is expensive," said King. "But I

hope there is no lull between the private money and the government funds they graciously provided to us so we can hopefully restore the lake to the extent that people want to see it and be able to keep it that way."

Gleeson said the overall goal is to create as much depth as possible in the lake and beyond.

In his words: "Depth creates flow; Flow creates turbidity; Turbidity creates oxygen; Oxygen creates a healthy stream habitat."

To help restore Mirror Lake and its trout waters, please contact Pat Gleeson at 828.782.0472.

## TESTAMENT TO A FISHERMAN

### I AM MIRROR LAKE... a designated NC trout stream

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– John Voelker

**To help restore Mirror Lake and its trout waters,  
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# • HERE'S THE THING •

## Fact versus Opinion

Back in the last century I was toiling in the news business when my then 11-year-old daughter asked if I would visit her middle school class to discuss the difference between fact and opinion. I told her I'd be thrilled to face a room full of pre-teens to talk about something in my wheelhouse. At least, that's how I viewed the matter at the time.



**Bud Katz**

On the morning of, I armed myself with the daily newspaper which, back in those days, could be found by subscribers in their driveways every morning. When I arrived, I encountered an auditorium filled with curious eyes and minds. I should have been terrified, right? Before I had a chance to cut and run, my daughter's teacher asked for quiet and introduced me.

With as much humility as possible – I was an extremely minor celebrity in those days – I stepped onto the stage to absolutely no acknowledgement. Middle-schoolers are a notoriously tough crowd.

In what constituted a 'cold open,' I read a headline.

"Showroom Roof Collapses at South County Furniture Store"

I followed with the first paragraph of the Page One story.

"Sunday's heavy rain over most of the metropolitan area caused the roof at Austin Furniture on South Orange Avenue to collapse into the store's showroom. There were no reported injuries, however much of the inventory on display in the 2,600 square foot space was lost to the effects of the storm and the collapsed roof."

The story was accompanied by a photograph of two people standing amid the obvious carnage. The cutline beneath the photo named the newspaper's photographer and identified the owner of the store and the sales associate who was working when the roof collapsed.

I let those words and picture sink in, then asked if what I'd just read were facts or opinions. Most of the students correctly recognized facts, as reported. So far, so good.

Facts typically fall into the "Five Ws of news reporting, who, what, where, when, why, and sometimes, how. Facts must be supported by verifiable evidence. Also, when available, facts can be validated by something tangible, in this case, a photo.

I turned next to the editorial page of the newspaper and held it up for the room

to see. The page was titled "Our Positions." The headline over the three hundred words or so on the left-hand side of the page featured the words "Our View" at the top. The sub-headline beneath read, "Primary Election a Coin Flip; We Prefer Stuart." The place buzzed before the more confident students let me, their teachers, and the other students know that, in this simple

example, this page was where opinions resided.

Someone in the auditorium, no doubt the school's thirteen-year-old smarty pants, shouted, "What about God? Fact, or opinion?" While I attempted to frame a quick, but respectful response, one of the teachers threw a life preserver. "Different discussion for a different day." We moved on.

Here's the thing. A former close friend once told me that he was 'frustrated by what he knew but comforted by what he believed.' To me, that rather stunning confession meant, to him, at least, facts mattered less than beliefs, or, in this case, opinions. Back then, I couldn't have fathomed not really wanting to know the facts, or, perhaps, not caring about the facts.

Over time, as our consumption of information has adjusted to new channels and platforms, plus many more readily available sources, the lines between fact and opinion are often blurred. Cable news, social media, podcasts, influencers are all relatively new vehicles for the sharing of information. Science and other credible sources have become less influential with many people than confirmation of our own entrenched beliefs and disbeliefs. If someone we like and/or respect says something that confirms what we already believe or want to believe, that belief tends to morph into fact.

Over time, this has become, and continues to be, a problem. But that's just my opinion.

• 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](http://brucefkatz.com), and you can contact him, regarding this column or for information about the Highlands Writers Group, at [brucefkatzauthor@gmail.com](mailto:brucefkatzauthor@gmail.com)



# ...HOSPITAL continued from page 5



Mayor Taylor speaks prior to the unveiling.

— Photo courtesy of the Chamber of Commerce

McCluskey, HCA Healthcare NC Division chief administrative officer; Hack Trammell, chair of the Highlands-Cashiers Hospital Board of Trustees; and Pat Taylor, Mayor of the Town of Highlands.

Board Chair Trammell who had a career with Atrium Health Services and now lives in Highlands said he's proud to be with HC Hospital.

"This is a caring culture and a culture of excellence," he said. "Ten years infection-free in various categories means they are doing the little things right. I extend a huge debt of gratitude to HCA for supporting this community. Healthcare on the plateau is on a steep upward trajectory."

Mayor Pat Taylor said the new additions to the facility are a testament to the leadership of Neal and the HC staff.

"They are dedicated to healthcare on the plateau and this means we don't have to leave Highlands or Cashiers to get the healthcare we need," he said.

Zach McCluskey, HCA Healthcare NC Division chief administrative officer said HCA has made a big investment in the Highlands-Cashiers communities.

"This additional \$5 million installation says a lot. HCA is providing healthcare where it's needed and how it's needed," he said.

Attendees also enjoyed facility tours and light refreshments following the ceremony.

Highlights of the Capital Improvements:

## CT Scanner:

- New 64-channel/128-slice CT Scanner with metal reduction software and upcoming cardiac imaging capabilities

- Radiation dose reduction software reducing exposure by up to 40%

## New MRI Scanner:

- Advanced metal artifact reduction,

AIR Recon technology for faster, clearer scans, and a patient-choice music option for comfort

- In-hospital MRI scanning, eliminating the need for ambulance transfers across the parking lot

## Rehabilitation Gym:

- Relocated to a larger, new space for physical therapy, occupational therapy, and speech-language pathology

- Private treatment room, fully functional therapeutic kitchen, and specialized equipment tailored to patient-specific care plans

## Laboratory and Phlebotomy:

- Full-service laboratory with multiple phlebotomy stations

- Private specimen collection restroom with pass-through door

- Dedicated waiting area, including a

• See HOSPITAL page 12

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## ...FALL COLORS continued from page 1

the various regions of North Carolina. This map differs from most other such maps because it combines the effects of both elevation and latitude on fall color, whereas most other maps simply use elevation alone.

The map was constructed using the following assumptions. First, it was assumed that fall color would start earlier at higher elevations. Then it was figured (guessed!) that for each 1,000 ft. increase in elevation, peak fall colors would occur about one week earlier, with the exception of those areas near the coast, where elevation was divided the into 500 ft. sections.

For the latitude effect, data from published papers was used suggesting that each degree of latitude north is equivalent to going up in elevation by about 200m (656 ft.).

This means that if you were to com-

pare 3,000 ft. down in Murphy with 3,000 ft. in northern Ashe County (which are about 2.5 degrees apart), it would be as if you were really at 4,640 ft. in Ashe County, at least fall color peak-wise, they said.

In other words, the same elevation in the north is cooler than the same elevation in the south, which causes the vegetation to differ. The resultant cooler temperatures mean that peak fall colors will come earlier to those same elevations in the north than in the south.

Thus, the map is among the first to take both elevation and latitude into consideration. However, it is only an approximation,

Over the next few years, the hope is to "adjust" the map to better model the progression of fall colors throughout the state.

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# ...TOWN BOARD continued from page 1

“jumped.”

At the September Town Board meeting, Rev. Kelley Connelly, Associate Pastor at First Presbyterian Church requested infrastructure be installed to prevent accidents from occurring again.

“We are lucky no one has been hurt but the exterior and the interior of the church building has been damaged, even the inside wall close to the organ,” she said.

In a letter to the town, Senior Pastor Emily Wilmarth requested attention to three issues:

That the curb stops be installed be concrete and not plastic like the yellow ones on the side of the Church of the Incarnation.

“The plastic curbs are easier to install but they would provide minimal protection, as the yellow ones by Incarnation have already begun to be destroyed by large vehicles,” she said.

In addition, she requested bollards similar to those at KH Founders Park be installed between the curb stop and the sidewalk; and the next time Church Street is resurfaced, to consider milling the asphalt to restore the curb.

Commissioner agreed the bollards were necessary because high trucks and vans may not be stopped by the curb stops.

They asked Public Works Director Lamar Nix to move forward on the project.

## Playground

Brian Stiehler, who was at the meeting to both say good-bye and update the board on the playground, said the plan for the playground has come to fruition.

To date \$1.56 million has been raised and collected. He has also applied for a \$50,000 grant through the Hospital Foundation to fill the small funding gap. Now it's time for the playground's site prep, he said.

“I'm asking the board and staff to begin the process of bidding on this project and I'm hoping for a grand opening the

summer of 2026. I'm really excited about what's going to come and this will be a wonderful addition for the children of Highlands,” he said.

The board OK'd his request.

## The Playhouse

With no one coming forward to save The Playhouse – neither with a plan nor funding – it will now be demolished by Bryson Grading and Paving.

The board OK'd an appropriation of \$76,000. It's hoped that some elements of the building – the façade and bricks – will be saved and used perhaps by the Performing Arts Center in some capacity.

During the public comment portion of the Town Board meeting, Alice Nelson suggested a park rather than a parking lot of any kind replace The Playhouse.

Commissioners are considering options for the lot, but nothing has been finalized.

## •CHHS NEWS•



Photo by Marti Boone

Five-year-old Dinah is one of the longest resident felines at our no-kill shelter. This beautiful kitty loves cats and would thrive best in a quiet home that has other cats in the household. Dinah's adoption fee is only \$50 which includes already being spayed, microchipped, and up to date on vaccinations. To adopt or foster this sweet, shy feline, please call (828)743-5752.

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## A look at the Highlands Heritage Jamboree Saturday, Sept. 27

KH Founders Park on Pine Street was the site of the culmination of the Heritage Jamboree and celebration of Highlands 150th birthday put on by the Highlands Chamber of Commerce and Highlands Historical Society.

People were entertained by Highlands Bagpipers, the U.S. Navy Band – which blew people away with its stellar rock n’ roll performance – the nationally reknown JC Cloggers – who regaled with stories and dance – and finally the Sledhouse Trio with Darren Nicholson performing as the last Saturday night Music in the Park for 2025.



Photos by Kim Lewicki

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## MC Youth Volleyball in training for school leagues



## ...HOSPITAL continued from page 9

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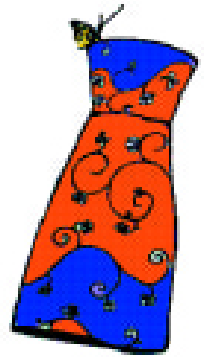


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# HS Team Sports



## JV Volleyball

Keely Bosdell, Aubree Brooks, Anabelle Hays, Bella Lopez, Brenda Mendoza-Cortez, Miley Zagal-Damian, Monserrat Zamora. Head Coach Brandy Zagal-Damian. Asst. Coach Reese Schmitt.



## Varsity Volleyball

Taylor Hays, junior; Cayden Pierson, senior; AE Woods, Senior; Jordyn Borino, junior; Olivia Corbin, senior; Claire Worley, senior; Birdie Sherwood, senior; Jaylin Raby, senior; Head Coach: Reese Schmitt. Asst. Coach: Brandy Zagal-Damian

## • HS SPORTS WEEKLY RECAP •

### Clean sweeps, overtime thrills, and athlete honors

The Highlands High School athletic programs saw a week of dominant victories, thrilling finishes, and an inaugural award presentation spanning September 23rd through the 30th.

#### Volleyball Dominance Continues

The High School Volleyball teams had a stellar week, securing two clean sweeps. On Tuesday, September 23rd, the teams traveled to Rabun County High School for a non-conference match and came away with decisive wins:

- The JV girls won 2-0 with scores of 25-13 and 25-23.
- The Varsity girls completed the clean sweep, winning 3-0 (25-17, 25-11, 25-13).

On Thursday, September 25th, the Highlanders hosted Summit for Senior Night, Pink Out Night to honor all those affected by Breast Cancer, and Youth Volleyball Night. The home crowd was treated to more victories:

- The JV team opened the night with a 2-0 win (25-10, 25-20).
- The Varsity team ended the night with a hard-fought 3-1 win (25-12, 26-28, 27-25, 25-20).

Unfortunately, the Middle School Volleyball team opened their conference tournament on Monday, September 29th with a tough loss at home to Rabun Gap, falling 0-2 (20-25, 19-25).

#### Soccer Teams See Action

The Middle School Soccer team had an impressive outing on Wednesday, September 24th at Swain, pulling out a decisive 5-0 win. Goals were scored by Camden Westendorf (2), Jesse Diaz (2), and Todd Vilardo (1).

The team's match on Tuesday, September 30th against Blue Ridge was declared a forfeit victory for Highlands due to a lack of players on the Blue Ridge side.

The Varsity Boys Soccer team had a mixed week, starting with a 0-0 tie at Swain on Wednesday, September 24th. They rebounded in a major way on Monday, September 29th, pulling out a thrilling 4-3 overtime win over Summit.

- Regulation goals by Isaiah Vilardo and Kris Magliocca ended the score at 2-2.



Brett Lamb  
Athletic Director

• Summit scored in the first overtime, but Rowen Carnes netted a goal in the second overtime to tie it 3-3.

• The dramatic finish came late in the second overtime when Ian Batista scored the game-winning goal — his first goal of his high school career!

#### Cross Country Update

The Middle School Cross Country team ran at Rabun Gap this past week. Top finishers were Riley Brooks, who finished 8th for the girls, and Asa Garner, who finished 9th on the boys side.

#### Inaugural Athlete of the Month Award

On Thursday, the Highlands Athletic Department presented its first-ever Athlete of the Month Award, sponsored by Bryson's Grading, to senior Claire Worley.

A standout in both Cross Country and Volleyball, Claire is the only female cross country runner and finished 2nd and 6th in her races this month.

In volleyball, she is a key defensive presence and server. Academically, Claire holds an impressive 4.36 grade point average and is ranked in the top five of her class. She plans to major in nursing at a four-year university.

#### Upcoming Events

Don't miss the Highlanders in action this week:

##### • Thursday, Oct 2:

MS Soccer Conference Championship (Home) vs. the winner of Rabun Gap/Summit at 4 PM; HS Boys Soccer (Home) vs. Andrews at 6 PM.

##### • Friday, Oct 3:

MS Swim has its lone home meet at The Highlands Rec Park Pool at 5 PM.



HS Athletic Director Brett Lamb with Athlete of the Month senior Claire Worley and sponsor Ryan Bryson of Bryson Grading & Paving.





Senior Volleyball players from left: Cayden Pierson, Olivia Corbin, Claire Worley, Anne Elizabeth Woods and Jaylin Raby.



Varsity Soccer rebounded in a major way on Mon., Sept. 29, pulling out a thrilling 4-3 overtime win over Summit. Regulation goals by Isaiah Vilardo and Kris Magliocca ended the score at 2-2. Summit scored in the first overtime, but Rowen Carnes netted a goal in the second overtime to tie it 3-3. The dramatic finish came late in the second overtime when Ian Batista scored the game-winning goal — his first goal of his high school career!



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# • BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NEWS •

## Outstanding community contributors recognized by the Highlands Chamber of Commerce

The Highlands Chamber of Commerce proudly honored exceptional individuals and organizations at its annual Fall Finale Business After Hours, held September 25 at Trailborn Highlands. The event gathered Chamber members to celebrate outstanding contributions that exemplify leadership, service, and dedication to the Highlands community.

### 2025 Honorees:

#### Volunteer of the Year: Tracy Foor

This award recognizes an individual who demonstrates exemplary leadership, commitment to volunteerism, and community service. As President of the Highlands Historical Society, Tracy devoted countless hours combing through archives to uncover photos and stories that commemorated Highlands' 150th anniversary. His work has been featured in the Chamber's 2025 Experience Guide and shared weekly through local newspapers. Tracy also spearheaded the innovative Historic Buildings Audio Tour, which uses QR codes on plaques around town to bring Highlands' rich history to life.



Tracy Foor

#### Del Roberts Award for Outstanding Business: Bryson Enterprises Ryan Bryson

Established in 2005, this award honors businesses or individuals who have made unselfish and lasting contributions to Highlands' business community. Bryson Enterprises has been a cornerstone of Highlands for more than 45 years, and their impact in



Ryan Bryson



Brian Stiehler

#### Robert B. Dupree Award for Outstanding Community Service: Brian Stiehler

This prestigious award recognizes a long-standing and distinguished record of selfless service. For more than 14 years, Brian served as a Town Commissioner and consistently put community first. His leadership has strengthened Highlands through initiatives such as supporting the Scholarship Golf Tournament, chairing and serving on numerous committees including for the Chamber, and championing the creation of an inclusive playground. This project is poised to become a lasting part of his legacy.

"It was a pleasure to be able to acknowledge and thank each of our award winners," said Johanna Fein, Executive Director of the Highlands Chamber of Commerce/Visit Highlands, NC. "For the work they do, for the spirit they bring, and for their ongoing support of the Town of Highlands."

For more information on the Highlands Chamber of Commerce, call 828-526-5841 or visit [highlandschamber.org](http://highlandschamber.org).

2025 extended far beyond business as usual. When Hurricane Helene caused a wash-out on Highway 106/Dillard Road, cutting off access for students, workers, supplies, and visitors, the Bryson team worked swiftly to make critical repairs. They reopened the road weeks ahead of schedule. This achievement underscored their deep commitment to serving Highlands.

## From 5th-generation Highlander, Mike Thompson

Origin stories about the early days of Highlands and Cashiers are always crowd pleasers. Recently, historian and realtor Mike Thompson, a fifth-generation Highlander, delighted members of the Rotary Club of Highlands with memories of his paternal family's trek to Highlands.

The McKinnies had settled in Surry County, NC in 1750. One son, James, migrated West by mule to settle a farm outside Salem, SC, near the intersection of Little River and Fiddler's Creek. Once settled, McKinney set out searching for a reasonably close, cooler habitat for summer grazing for his cows, sheep, and horses and his own comfort.

James rode his horse into what is now Cashiers, but the story of the valley began long ago, shortly after his arrival. He purchased 600 acres in the 1830s and came back to clear the site, establish grazing, and build a cabin. The following spring, they moved their livestock to the lush green pastures and cooler environment of the valley. Among his herd was a white stallion named Cash because he was a wild boy who loved to race and earned his name by winning often.

When it was time to return the herds to Little River for winter grazing, they rounded up the animals except for Cash, who hid out. McKinney reluctantly left Cash behind, stating that whether Cash lived or perished, he knew he was happy in this valley.

The following spring, the herd was moved back to the valley. Upon arrival, James McKinney was elated when Cash emerged from the woods to greet him. At this time, McKinney proclaimed the land would be known as "Cash's Valley". Over the years, the name changed to Cashers Valley, shortened to Cashers, and finally to "Cashiers". Thompson said he always thought it was a plot to change the name to Cashiers, noting, "If you pronounce the name like cashiers in the grocery store, locals will correct you politely and tell you to say 'Cashers'. I completely agree this is the proper response. I do it myself."

Thompson finished by acknowledging that there are several variations to this story, but the horse named Cash is by far the most compelling one.

Rotarians agreed, with laughter and appreciation for Cashiers' origin story.



From left: McKenzie Thompson, Mike Thompson, Andy Chmar and Randy Foster.

## P.E.O.'s pecans are ready for sale

Bags of pecans - chopped or whole - are once again available for P.E.O.'s (Philanthropic Educational Organization) annual fundraising effort.

P.E.O. is a non-profit organization focused on supporting the further education of women of all ages around the world.

Through scholarships, grants, awards,

loans, and stewardship of Cottey College. P.E.O. chapters celebrate the advancement of women and strive to motivate women to achieve their highest aspirations.

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They sell out quickly.



# • BIZ/ORG NEWS •



Highlands Country Club Ladies Golf Association (HCC LGA) continued their support of The Highlands Community Child Development Center (HCCDC) with a recent donation. From left: Pat Hedden, Executive Director of HCCDC receiving a check from Jennifer Manning, President of the HCC LGA. Ann Flynn of the HCC LGA & Demitra Passmore of HCCDC are also shown..

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# SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING

## Transition



Rev. Dr. Marcus B. Robertson is Interim Priest in Charge of Christ Anglican Church, Cashiers.

One of the most anticipated times of the year in the mountains is “the fall colors.” We are now in that transition as we see the leaves begin to turn and the colors begin to splash across ridgelines and peaks, slowly descending to the lower climes. It’s a beautiful time of the year but also a season that reminds us of more difficult things.

Transition is not always easy. It can visit us early in life, like our first few days in school, away from home and family and surrounded with strangers, rules and a new environment. It comes to us in adolescence as we struggle with puberty, relationships and learning to become an adult. Transition also visits us as many of us enter marriage, start a career, have children, buy our first car or perhaps our first home and many other episodes in life. Getting older, we encounter declining health, the loss of loved ones, loneliness, isolation and eventually our own mortality and death.

In one sense, we could say that life itself is one transition after another, each with its own set of blessings but also with its own set of challenges.

Transition looks to the future. As we enjoy the fall colors, we are reminded that nature itself is preparing for the harsher weather of winter. During winter, the bark of most trees grows harder, protecting it from burrowing insects that emerge in the spring. While transition can seem daunting and hard, it often brings with it the necessary opportunities for protection and growth.

One way to navigate transition and change is to discover a stable point of reference. Ancient mariners navigated by the stars, using their position in the sky as a stable source of direction when crossing large bodies of water. Doctors prefer to do thorough exams of new patients to gain a benchmark of where the patient is medically at the time of their arrival. In the Christian tradition, we are taught that “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever” (Hebrews 13:8). It is the person and work of Christ that provides that “true north” for His followers amid a tumultuous world.

Are you facing a transition in your life? Remember that transition often has embedded within the prospects of hope and progress for the future. Look for that “true north” that will guide you and sustain you in the months to come. For me, that true north is the person of Jesus Christ.

As we enjoy the fall colors, may we find hope and promise in whatever transition may come our way.

• *The Rev. Dr. Marcus B. Robertson and his wife enjoy taking care of 65 acres of mountain land surrounded by the Nantahala National Forest.*

# • PLACES TO WORSHIP •

## BLUEVALLEY BAPTIST CHURCH

Rev. Oliver Rice. Pastor 796-782-3865  
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. Marc Robertson & Rev. Nick McGee  
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](mailto:jacob@cashiers.church) • 743-5470  
[www.cashiers.church](http://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](http://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

## EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF THE INCARNATION

Rev. W. Bentley Manning, Rector • 526-2968  
5th and Main streets • [www.incarnationwnc.org](http://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](http://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](http://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

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242 Hwy 107N. 1/4 miles from Crossroads in Cashiers  
[www.gracecashiers.com](http://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. & 6p. Wednesday Worship is 6p

## HIGHLANDS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Rev. Dr. Randy Lucas. Pastor 526-3376  
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[www.highlandsmethodist.org](http://www.highlandsmethodist.org)

## HOLY FAMILY LUTHERAN CHURCH: ELCA

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Rev. Ken Langsdorf

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Visit our website: Holy Family Lutheran Highlands NC

## MACEDONIA BAPTIST CHURCH

8 miles south of Highlands on N.C. 28 S in Satolah  
Pastor Zane Talley

Sundays: School: 10 a.m.; Worship: 11. Choir: 6 p.m.

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

## MOUNTAIN SYNAGOGUE

Franklin • 828-634-1312 • [mountainsynagoguewnc.com](http://mountainsynagoguewnc.com).  
Services: 1st Fri. and 3rd Sat. and Rosh Hashanah & Yom  
Kippur.

## MOUNTAIN BIBLE CHURCH

743-2583 • Independent Bible Church  
Sun: 10:30 a.m. at Big Ridge Baptist Church. 4224 Big Ridge  
(4.5 miles from NC 107)

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

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

Sat. 4pm 5/24/25-10/25/25; Sun. - 11am

## SCALY MOUNTAIN BAPTIST CHURCH

Rev. Marty Kilby  
Sundays: School - 10 a.m.; Worship - 11 a.m. & 7  
Wednesdays: Prayer Mtg.: 7 p.m.

## SCALY MOUNTAIN CHURCH OF GOD

290 Buck Knob Road; Pastor Donald G. Bates • 526-3212  
Sun.: School: 10 a.m.; Worship: 10:45 a.m.; Worship: 6 p.m.

## SHORTOFF BAPTIST CHURCH

Pastor Rev. Richard Salmonson  
Sundays: School: 10 a.m.; Worship: 11 a.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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## UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP

85 Sierra Drive. Franklin • [uufranklin.org](http://uufranklin.org)  
Sunday Worship - 11 a.m.

## WHITESIDE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Rev. Sam Forrester/Cashiers • 828-743-2122  
Sunday School: 10 am. Worship Service: 11 am



# • POLICE & FIRE REPORTS •

**Highlands Police entries from Aug. 23. Only the names of persons arrested, issued a summons/citation, issued a Class-3 misdemeanor or those of public officials have been used.**

**Aug. 23**

• Judson Chad Garner, 54, of Highlands, was issued a Criminal Summons for the misdemeanor of stalking. His trial date was Sept. 23.

**Aug. 23**

• Laura Ashby Underwood, 53, of Clayton, GA, was issued a Criminal Summons for stalking. Her trial date was Sept. 23.

**Sept. 6**

• At 11 a.m., officers responded to a report of waste being discharged into water by dumping paint into the stream and storm drains.

**Sept. 23**

• At 1:13 p.m., officers responded to a one-vehicle accident on NC 28 south near Many Road.

**Sept. 26**

• At 4:13 p.m., officers responded to a two-vehicle accident in the Farmers Market parking lot.

**Sept. 27**

• At 11:45 a.m., Salvador X Xanquix, 24, of Greenville, SC, was arrested for DUI on US 64. He wasn't issued a bond but a written promise was required. His trial date is Jan. 28, 2026.

**The Highlands Fire & Rescue log from Sept. 23.**

**Sept. 23**

• A little past midnight, the dept. was first-responders to a residence on US 64 east (Cashiers Road).

• At 8:15 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on NC 106 (Dillard Road).

**Sept. 24**

• At 12:21 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a location on Skyline Lodge Road.

• At 12:45 p.m., the dept. provided traffic control on S. 4th Street.

• At 9:52 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Falls Village Court. It was canceled en route.

• At 11:44 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on US 64 west (Franklin Road).

**Sept. 25**

• At 11:22 a.m., the dept. was first-

responders to a residence at Highlands Mountain club.

• At 1:22 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on NC 106 (Dillard Road).

• At 9:01 p.m., the dept. responded to a call of a possible motor vehicle accident on NC 28 south (Walhalla Road) but nothing was found.

**Sept. 26**

• At 10:51 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Hemlock Lane.

• At 1:34 p.m., the dept. responded to a Co2 alarm at a residence on Creekwood Lane.

• At 4:03 p.m., the dept. responded to a motor vehicle accident on NC 106 (Dillard Road).

• At 5:09 p.m., the dept. responded to a motor vehicle accident on Buck Creek Road.

• At 9:29 p.m., the dept. responded to a motor vehicle accident on US 64 west (Franklin Road).

**Sept. 28**

• At 4:48 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Holt Road.

• At noon, the dept. was first-responders to a location on Main Street.

• At 12:53 p.m., the dept. responded to a call of a tree down on Hickory Hill Road.

• At 3:57 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Rock Gap Road.

• At 8:17 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Mountain Laurel Drive.

## ...CELL PHONES continued from page 1

School Board Member Diedre Breeden, the board voted 3 to 2 to approve the stricter Option B of the proposed policy to ban all personal electronic wireless communication devices including cell phones, earbuds/Air Pods and smart watches from “bell to bell” meaning students will not be allowed to use devices from the beginning of the school day to the end of the school day. The new policy took effect immediately within the week it was passed by the school board.

School Board Member Hilary Wilkes and Chairman Jim Breedlove cast the two opposing votes for the “bell to bell” option. Option A would have allowed students the option to use phones and other electronic devices during breaks, lunches and between classes.

The board action is in response to House Bill 950 passed in July by Governor Josh Stein banning cell phone use during school instructional time in public schools. While the bill did not call for a complete ban on cellular devices for students, the new legislation did require school districts to implement policies that restrict cell phone use in classrooms during instructional time. The state requires school systems across the state to have a policy in place by January 1, 2026.

The new policy approved by the board will change the cell phone usage policy Highlands School already had in place. Prior to the policy change, students were allowed to use cellular devices including smart watches and headphones in the non-academic areas in the building during non-academic time defined as before school (before 7:55 a.m.) and after school (after 3:10 p.m.), during high school break and during high school lunch.

Exceptions can be made to the new policy such as when a teacher authorizes phone use for educational purposes or in emergencies or when a student's individualized education program (IEP) or 504 plan requires electronic device use. In addition, an exception can be made if a student uses their phone to monitor a documented medical condition such as if a student uses their phone to monitor blood glucose levels.

School board member Hilary Wilkes asked how the new policy applies to instructors or adults in the classroom.

“It is acknowledged that teachers at times would have the need to use cell phones for communication from time to time; however, it is not supposed to take away from instructional time,” said School Board Attorney John Henning. “I don't know of anyone who has tried to address that at this time. If I was the principal, I would be telling my teaching staff you cannot be standing in front of a group of kids saying, ‘do as I say, not as I do.’”

“It is addressed in our faculty hand-

books in regards to what faculty staff etiquette is expected,” added Superintendent Josh Lynch. “It has also been a topic that we have discussed in our principal meetings as well. Principals are aware of what is at stake, and if we are going to restrict use of electronic devices during instructional time then as a teacher you are not going to be in front of your class during that time using your cell phone or during times when you are supposed to be monitoring behavior such as at recess.”

**Community Use of Facilities**

The second policy approved by the board concerned community use of school facilities. Wilkes made a motion to accept the facility use agreement with the amendment under section D to read: “Since school facilities must primarily serve students, parents, and staff, and secondarily the needs of community users, regular ongoing use of facilities extending more than 90 days at a time are generally not allowed. An agreement to span more than ninety days must be approved in advance by the board.”


Breeden seconded the motion which was passed by a four to one vote with Chairman Breedlove opposing the amendment to the policy.

During the public comment period, Casey Wilson representing a local church came before the board to request that the board allow churches like any other community group to rent school facilities on the weekends. According to Wilson, there was a church that was meeting at a school and they were asked to no longer meet at the school.

“I am speaking in reference to the policy not just for churches, but also other community groups,” said Wilson. “This is not about giving preference to religion, it is about fairness, community benefit and wise stewardship of our public resources.”

“Our schools already grant facilities to community groups such as sports leagues, civic clubs and cultural organizations to deny churches access simply because they are a religious group would be discriminatory,” he added. “The Supreme Court has already ruled on this, and it's clear neutrality is where they stand when it comes to religious and non-religious groups.”

The school board had previously halted all “long term” use of school facilities until further discussion which they completed at last Monday night's school board meeting. They moved to change the policy to read that “our facilities could now be leased for a period of up to 90 days.” A fee structure will need to be put in place but that has not been done just yet.



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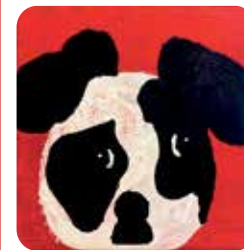
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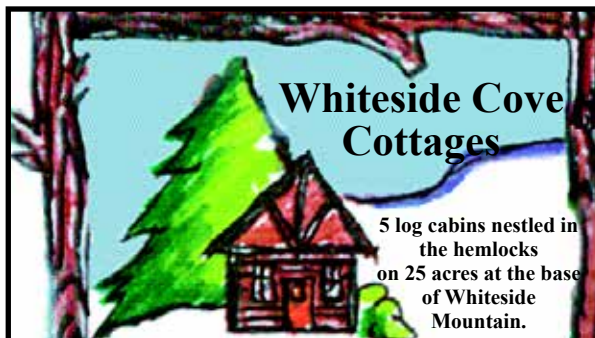


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**HIGHLANDS 1-2 SPACES** - 1 large or 2 smaller spaces for rent in popular Mill Creek

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)

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# • 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 Thurs.. 3:30-7pm, 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),

## MOUNTAIN FINDINGS

• Open: 10 am - 1 pm. Spruce Street. [www.mountainfindings.org](http://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](http://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](mailto: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 Zoom. For 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](mailto: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.

## 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](mailto:ncpost370@gmail.com) or just join us at 9am.

## Sundays

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

## Fri. & Sat., Oct. 3-4

• In Brevard, Pumpkin Fest at Silvermont Park. Family friendly Halloween 6-9p. Lighted pumpkin trail, games, storytelling, scavenger hunt, face painting, food trucks. Mansion open with guided tours. Proceeds benefit Silvermont Mansion and Park. Ages 13+ \$7; Ages 3-12, \$5; under 3, free. Onsite parking \$5. Free parking a block away.

## Sat., Oct. 4

• Join the Highlands Plateau Greenway for a hike on the historic Kelsey Trail. Register now before it fills up. Email [highplateaugreenway@140687645.mailchimpapp.com](mailto:highplateaugreenway@140687645.mailchimpapp.com). \$100 per person. Shuttles will leave from the back parking lot of the Rec. Park (600 N 4th Street) on Saturday morning at 7:30, 8, 8:30, and 9. The five-mile walk takes about four hours.

• At Gorges State Park the 3rd annual free Mountain Monarch Festival 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. This free event, hosted by the park and sponsored by the Friends of Gorges State Park and other partners, will celebrate the monarch butterfly during its migration and raise awareness about the species' declining numbers.

• Fall Fest at Skyline Lodge. 2-7pm. pumpkin decorating, axe throwing, a bounce house and slide, a festive apple cider bar, and an outdoor movie under the stars with popcorn. Tickets for children under 12: \$10, Adults: \$20, Axe Throwing: +\$20 (available for purchase day-of). Portion of proceeds to benefit the Highlands Biological Foundation.

• Pop up Pipers at First Pres-

byterian Church. 4-5:30p.

## Sun., Oct. 5

• At Blue Valley Baptist Church, Homecoming at 10am with music by High Mountain Harmony.

## Thurs., Oct. 9

• Rotary bingo at the Community Building for Highlands Wreaths Across America, helping to insure we honor our interred local veterans with a wreath this holiday season. Join us for a night of fun! If you have any questions, please contact Phil Potts 828-200-9753 or [ppotts63@frontier.com](mailto:ppotts63@frontier.com).

## Fri. & Sat., Oct. 10-11

• At The Bascom, 14th annual Fall Pottery Show with pieces handcrafted by Bascom Studio members. All items will be for sale.

• In Brevard, Pumpkin Fest at Silvermont Park. Family friendly Halloween 6-9p. Lighted pumpkin trail, games, storytelling, scavenger hunt, face painting, food trucks. Mansion open with guided tours. Proceeds benefit Silvermont Mansion and Park. Ages 13+ \$7; Ages 3-12, \$5; under 3, free. Onsite parking \$5. Free parking a block away.

## Fri., Oct. 10

• Join La Poste and the Cashiers Historical Society on Friday, from 11a to 3p for their first-ever Cooking Through History class. This hands-on workshop brings the past to life through food and conversation. Register at [lapostenc.com](http://lapostenc.com).

## Sat., Oct. 11

• The Cashiers Quilt Show, featuring a quilt display, bake sale and boutique sale of handmade crafts and gifts, will take place Saturday, from 10 am to 4 pm at the Cashiers Library. The quilt pictured, which is currently on display at the library, will be raffled at the end of the show. Tickets are available for purchase from members and will also be available at the show for \$1 each or six for \$5.00. Winner does not need to be present to win.

## Sun., Oct. 12

• The 14th annual Empty Bowls community lunch is at the Highlands First Presbyterian Church from 11am to 2 pm. Proceeds go to the Highlands Food Pantry. Tickets are \$35 per person and include a handmade bowl and soup. Tickets online at <https://highlandsfriendshipcenter.org/empty-bowls-2025> or at the Highlands Food Pantry, on the bottom floor of the HUMC, accessible via Spring Street, on Mon., Tues., and Thurs., between 10 am and 5 pm.

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