

Highlands Newspaper

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Thurs., Aug. 13, 2026

Public speaks out against data centers

Highlands Commissioner Amy Patterson urges county to adopt a moratorium

By Kristin Fox

This month's regular meeting of the Macon County Board of Commissioners opened with

a public hearing concerning data centers being located in Macon County. Following the public hearing, the board voted unani-

mously to adopt the changes as recommended by the planning board.

• See DATA page 14

Highlands Police Dept. News

Traffic stop leads to drug arrest

On Aug. 6, at approximately 1:35 a.m., officers with the Highlands Police Department conducted a traffic stop after observing a vehicle with an inoperable tail light.

During the stop, officers developed suspicion that the driver was impaired. During the investigation officers conducted a search that resulted in the seizure of approximately 15.67 grams of suspected cocaine and 2.23 grams of suspected methamphetamine.

Silviano Trejo Hernandez, DOB 4/18/1999, of Blue Island, Illinois, was arrested and transported to the Macon County Detention Center. Hernandez was given a \$10,000 bond.

As with all criminal charges, the defendant is presumed

• See POLICE page 13



Nature Center to temporarily close for renovations, Aug. 16

Reopening early 2027

Marissa Nieddu

Marketing & Communications

The Highlands Nature Center, a beloved community destination for environmental education and discovery, will temporarily close beginning Sunday, Aug. 16 as it undergoes a series of important preservation and improvement projects designed to protect the historic building and enhance

its long-term sustainability.

For nearly a century, the Highlands Nature Center has connected residents and visitors to the remarkable biodiversity of the Southern Appalachians. Founded in 1927 as the museum of the Highlands Biological Station, the Nature Center is housed in the historic Clark Foreman

• See NATURE page 12

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Mission Hospital is back in 'substantial compliance' with federal safety regulations

After its fourth Immediate Jeopardy, the Asheville hospital was placed on an enhanced plan of correction

By Ted Clifford
Asheville Watchdog

Six months after being threatened with the loss of Medicare and Medicaid reimbursements, Mission Hospital told employees that it is officially back in compliance with federal regulations.

In an email to staff Tuesday reviewed by the Asheville Watchdog, Mission Hospital CEO Greg Lowe announced that the hospital was in "substantial compliance" with the enhanced plan of correction imposed by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS). The federal agency imposed the enhanced plan of correction following Mission Hospital's fourth Immediate Jeopardy finding in January. "This is an important mile-

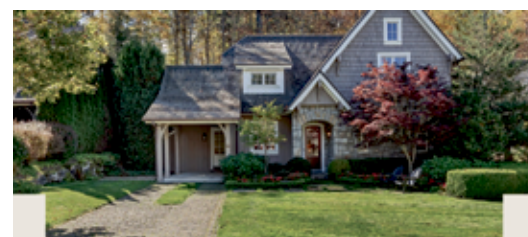
stone for Mission," Lowe wrote. "It is the result of your work over the past several months to strengthen the care we provide to our patients every day."

In an email to the Watchdog on Thursday, a CMS spokesperson confirmed that Mission was in substantial compliance with the conditions to participate in the Medicare programs.

"CMS is continuing to engage with the hospital and is monitoring its ongoing implementation of the Enhanced Plan of Correction," said a spokesperson for CMS in a statement.

Immediate Jeopardy is one of the most severe sanctions that can be handed down by CMS. It is issued when viola-

• See MISSION page 4



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• THE PLATEAU'S POSITION •

• MAYOR ON DUTY •

Without change there is stagnation

I hear this refrain or a variation of it all the time. It goes like this, "Mayor, Highlands is changing!" Or "Mayor, Highlands is changing too much." Or "Mayor, we don't want Highlands to become..." Or a more extreme declaration of the mayor should be tarred and feathered for allowing change to take place in our beloved Highlands.



Highlands Mayor
Patrick Taylor

My general response is that those protesters of stability and stasis for our community actually do want change, only just the way they want it to change. Honestly, all of us who have moved here have been catalysts for change in Highlands by our demands for this and that service or amenity.

I was at the final concert of the 45th Season of the Highlands Cashiers Chamber Music Festival this past Sunday. The jammed-packed concert hall was the venue for a world-class concert. The festival has a bright future for years to come

because it has evolved from an initial small season supported by a handful of classical music aficionados to a full, jam-packed series featuring some of the best chamber music performers in the world. At the dinner celebration after the concert, Will Ransom, the festival director, declared that the schedule for next season will be better than ever.

Like so many other organizations and events in our community, this event is the result of a dynamic organizational structure. It is constantly evolving, making changes and deliberative improvements.

Dynamic change is described as a continuous multi-dimensional adaptation within complex systems. A community where people want to and take pride in living and embracing dynamic change. It is contrasted with static, linear positions.

At the chamber music dinner, many people were recognized and thanked for their work and support for the season and festival over the years. That organization has had a core value of collective action, which is many people working together toward a common goal — the love of live, dynamic performances. They have embraced a model of shared accountability to create a dynamic organizational structure. And, from their supporters and audience, they have embraced a culture of continuous feedback. At the dinner, I overheard multiple discussions about how to im-

• See MAYOR page 10

• CORRECTION •

Bud Katz's Here's The Thing column in the August 6th edition of the Highlands Newspaper may have left readers with the mistaken impression that the developer of High Camp on Flat Mountain Road employed the term 'glamping' to describe the usage of the property. The term 'glamping' should be solely attributable to Bud Katz, and no one else. Bud apologizes for any misunderstanding on the part of readers or the developers of High Camp.

• SNAPSHOT •



A fungal albino butterfly

Photo by Kim Lewicki

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

• WEATHER •

Thu, 6-Aug	Fri, 7-Aug	Sat, 8-Aug	Sun, 9-Aug
			
72°F 64°F	73°F 64°F	77°F 61°F	78°F 62°F
Humid; a p.m. t-storm or two	Humid; an afternoon t-storm	A shower and t-storm; humid	A p.m. t-storm in spots
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...MISSION continued from page 1

tions of federal standards of care endanger patient safety and it warns that a hospital is in danger of losing Medicare and Medicaid funding.

After January's Immediate Jeopardy finding, which, among other issues, cited the deaths of two patients and a potential measles exposure, CMS took the unusual step of saying the hospital remained in "noncompliance" and imposing an enhanced plan of correction.

This came after surveyors on behalf of CMS found what one letter from the agency described as "systemic deficient practices" at the hospital.

Since being acquired by Nashville-based HCA Healthcare in 2019, the former well-regarded nonprofit was placed in Immediate Jeopardy on four occasions. Investigators for CMS connected nine patient deaths to lapses in federal standards of care.

Even after the most recent Immediate Jeopardy was lifted in February, CMS found that Mission was still in non-compliance with standards concerning patient rights, nursing services and infection prevention and control and antibiotic stewardship.

CMS gave Mission until July 26 to demonstrate that it was in substantial compliance with these standards or they risked the termination of its agreement with Medicare and Medicaid.

The most recent inspection was conducted from July 6-9. While it found that the hospital was in substantial compliance, a letter from CMS to Lowe did note that inspectors identified several "standard-level deficiencies." These included failing to report dog bites to ani-

mal control, not completing a patient's "interdisciplinary care plan" within 24 hours of the patient arriving and not alerting a physician that a patient had not received a dose of medication when it was out of stock in the automated dispenser.

The report also identified two incidents where employees did not follow the correct procedures for sanitizing equipment, as well as deficiencies in food safety, which included failing to label when a package of noodles has been opened, keeping bread dough past its "use-by" date and not fully drying pans before storing them.

However, CMS did not find that any of these deficiencies stood in the way of Mission achieving substantial compliance with the standards required to participate in the Medicare and Medicaid programs.

In previous communication with CMS, Lowe indicated that Mission had made changes to hospital leadership and enhanced staff training in areas where the agency had identified deficiencies. In his email, Lowe described additional steps taken by the hospital including "daily operational reviews," increased engagement by leadership in hospital rounds and "more responsive feedback mechanisms" such as Mission's 24/7 patient care line.

As part of the requirement for the enhanced plan of correction, Mission Hospital hired Bryant Healthcare Consultants. While not required by CMS, Bryant will continue to assist Mission, Lowe wrote in his email.

• See MISSION page 5



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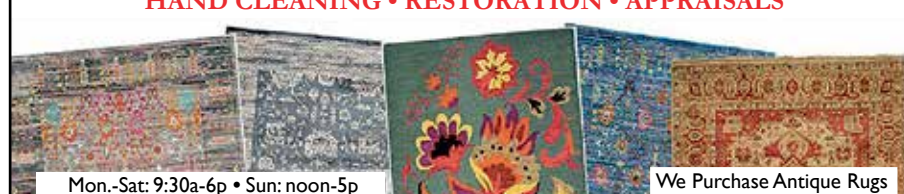
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...MISSION continued from page 4

While Lowe said that his staff should "take pride in reaching this milestone" he added that "our work is not finished. Our responsibility is to sustain this progress and continue raising the standard for the care we deliver."

Mission Hospital's Fourth Immediate Jeopardy

Among the incidents cited in the most recent Immediate Jeopardy was the death of 88-year-old Lucero Sierra who was recovering from hip surgery at Mission Hospital after going 13 hours without receiving a needed blood transfusion. An investigation by the Watchdog found that hospital leadership had been warned months ahead of her death about a loss of experienced staff in the unit where she ultimately died.

In another case, a patient's heart stopped for 15 minutes leading to brain damage after staff didn't respond to an urgent request for heart monitoring. That patient died two weeks later in a hospice facility.

Other incidents included when

short-staffed night-shift nurses falsely documented that a 14-year-old patient had taken psychiatric medications that she never received.

Investigators also cited two occasions when they said the hospital failed to take adequate steps to prevent the spread of highly contagious diseases. In one, twins with measles weren't placed in isolation for more than two hours, potentially exposing scores of patients. In another, a 55-year-old man diagnosed with influenza was allowed to remain in the emergency department for almost five hours with no precautions.

The Immediate Jeopardy report also described a serious attack on a staff member. A nurse in the behavioral health unit was nearly choked into unconsciousness by a patient while security staff were occupied elsewhere in the building.

• *Asheville Watchdog is a nonprofit news team producing stories that matter to Western North Carolina. Ted Clifford is The Watchdog's investigative reporter focusing on healthcare. He can be reached at tclifford@avhwatchdog.org.*



A prelude to the Highlands Cashiers Film Festival ... A viewing of 'Never not Yours'



The 2025 Best Feature Film Award winner will be shown for FREE at the Village Green in Cashiers on Sun., Aug. 16 at 2pm. The film directors will be on hand to discuss the film and its genesis.

"Never Not Yours" is a drama short film directed by Steve Kniss and John Klein that follows three adult siblings who travel to their family's remote cabin for a weekend visit.

The weekend takes a chaotic turn when their parents, Jonathan and Maddie, unexpectedly announce their divorce.

The film earned significant accolades at other major stops on its film festival circuit and is considered a festival favorite.

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The art of Real Estate matchmaking

Selling real estate is, in many ways, the art of matchmaking. It requires reading personalities, listening with intention, knowing the available inventory and, occasionally, aiming Cupid's arrow in a direction no one expected.

If real estate is matchmaking, Zillow might be its version of Tinder. The photographs need to be good enough to prevent an immediate swipe, while the property description should reveal just enough to entice a buyer into asking for that all-important first date – a showing.

Some homebuyers find “the one” and remain happily matched with their property for decades. Others fall out of love after a brief tryst and soon find themselves searching for their next real estate romance. Either way, that's the beauty of the business.

After selling homes in this area for 27 years, I have had the pleasure of matching many families with beautiful properties. Some of those relationships have lasted all these years, while others have traded homes around like a well-worn deck of cards. Either way, I am grateful to have been part of their journeys. One thing is certain: there is never a dull moment in real estate.

And sometimes, despite all our matchmaking skills, fate takes over.

Years ago, I worked with a couple who had been searching for a home for nearly two years. I knew exactly what they said they wanted because we had looked at plenty of houses together. One afternoon, while taking the scenic route back to town, I asked if they would mind making a quick stop. I needed to check on a house for one of my sellers.

They agreed – and promptly fell in love with it.

I thought they were kidding.

The house had almost none of the attributes they had spent two years telling me they wanted. Yet somehow, it was



Cathy Garren
Cathy.garren@highlandssotbeys.com
828-226-5870

exactly the right house. They bought it, and to this day, they remind me each year on the anniversary of their purchase and thank me for showing them the home I never intended to show them.

I like to say I sold that house by mistake. Perhaps Cupid simply had better aim that day.

My own real estate matchmaking story began 39 years ago. At the time, I was the rental manager for

a real estate company. One day, I rented a house to a young man. Apparently, I matched him with more than a rental – I eventually married him.

So, I suppose I have firsthand experience with both kinds of matchmaking.

For buyers, there is a lesson in all of this. Be clear with your real estate agent about what you want. Share your priorities, your must-haves and even your deal-breakers. But also leave a little room for the unexpected. An experienced agent listens not only to what you say you want but also watches how you respond to the homes you see. Sometimes the perfect match looks very different from the picture you originally had in mind.

For sellers, the matchmaking begins before a prospective buyer ever walks through the front door. Great photography creates the first attraction, while a well-written description provides just enough intrigue to make someone want to know more. The goal is simple: turn that online glance into a first date.

Because whether we are matching people or properties, sometimes the best relationships are the ones we never saw coming.

• *Cathy Garren is the Broker-in-Charge of Highlands Sotheby's International Realty's Downtown office. She is a proud native of Western North Carolina. She has lived and sold real estate in Highlands for 27 years. She may be reached at 828-226-5870 or Cathy.garren@highlandssotbeys.com.*

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• LETTERS •

As political theatre aims to dismantle science ... beware, the bells toll for us all

Dear Editor,

I would strongly advise those readers lauding the recent attacks upon Anthony Fauci, MD, the retired 85-year-old former national director of infectious diseases, to seriously rethink just what this unfortunate spectacle signifies.

Dr. Fauci is one of the most respected public health experts in the world. Whether it was SARS, HIV/Aids, H1N1 "swine flu," MERS, Zika, or COVID-19, the worldwide medical community relied upon Dr. Fauci and his team for advice and treatment protocols. The more information that could be accrued and shared, the better the treatments became over time. This is the

way scientific medicine operates when dealing with new, emerging infectious disease disasters. Medicine is always evolving and improving as experience and knowledge increase.

Now, for various political and personal reasons, some politicians and their followers have declared open season on this respected infectious disease leader, and indirectly on the entire scientific medical community. The seeds of distrust and dissension have been sown. Our country's public health institutions are rapidly being gutted for purely political reasons. An alternative universe has been created in which proven science is ignored. Unproven and harmful treatments and theories are spontaneously touted by politicians and influencers instead of relying upon proven scientific information. The public reacts to this confusing turmoil by refusing vaccinations, masking, isolation, and other basic public health measures.

The next infectious disease pandemic is coming; we just don't know when. At present, we are totally unprepared to meet the challenge.

In recent weeks, our drastically reduced public health response teams have been unable to control a gastrointestinal epidemic. Cases of measles (a potentially fatal, easily communicable disease) are at a 35-year high and rising. What will happen when the next pandemic occurs? Will the public be willing to follow any health directives, no

matter how basic? Will we have adequate public health organizations capable of responding? Will young physicians be willing to risk their lives and careers by entering the public health field?

During the Middle Ages, the scientific knowledge developed by the Greeks, Romans, and Arabs was forgotten or ignored. When the Bubonic Plague arrived, it is estimated that over one-third to one-half of the European population died. Families and friends turned against one another and the authorities in fear and ignorance. Basic public health measures such as the quarantine of ships and travelers, isolation, and limited masking saved some lives, but were vigorously resisted as too restrictive by the ignorant public.

Will our response to the next pandemic be any different than that occurring during the Middle Ages? Do the rights of the individuals really trump those scientific measures designed for the greater common good of all citizens? The scientific medical community has observed the vicious attacks upon Dr. Fauci (and others) with concern and alarm. We should all be concerned. The significance of this political theater far exceeds the persecution of one dedicated physician. The damage may well be irreparable. The bell tolls for us all.

Marc Grinberg, MD
Highlands, NC

Serving in Congress shouldn't be a lifelong appointment

Dear Editor,

If we really believe in the spirit of the constitution and the genius of our founding fathers, we would be more willing to amend that constitution to address the glaring deficiencies based on our current situation.

Did the founding fathers have any idea that representatives and senators would make careers out of allegedly representing the interest of the people they claim to represent?

I would argue they had some understanding, but they did not realize how much of an impact money and power would have on the overall framework of our Republic.

The definition of insanity is sometimes defined as repeating the same behavior but expecting different results. I think our current system of allowing representatives and senators to remain in their powerful positions for decades, and expecting different results from those same people is clearly insane. The average terms served in the House of

Representatives is 4.5 terms and the Senate is 1.8 terms, but we all know the outliers and they are usually the members that carry the most power.

Additionally, the average cost to run a campaign for representative is \$3 million and for senator is \$20 million with a high of \$200 million.

If the people want to take back their government, the constitution needs to be amended to limit the number of terms an individual can serve in the House or Senate, or maybe both. The constitution also needs to be amended to limit or eliminate campaign contributions from corporations. Individual contributions also need to be limited.

If we do not make these basic changes to our constitution, we will continue down this path that most Americans find disappointing.

Jerry Moore
Dillard, GA

...HURRICANES continued from page 15

as the anchor leg of the 200 Medley Relay; Justin Powell scored 2 pts and medaled in the 200 butterfly (arguably the most difficult event in competitive swimming). Also swimming well for Team MSL was Highlands Hurricane's swimmer Ian Batista.

The Highlands Hurricanes Swim Team is a Highlands

Recreation Park Team that practices mostly in the evenings at the Highlands Recreation Park Pool. The only requirement to join is that a prospective swimmer must be able to swim 25 yards (the length of the Recreation park pool) unassisted. For further information, please call Steve Hott, Head Coach, at 828.421.4121.

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Militaria
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Modern Weapons

• OBITUARY •

William Kenneth Godsey



William Kenneth Godsey, 52, of Highlands, North Carolina and Atlanta, Georgia, passed away on July 31, 2026. He will be remembered for his adventurous spirit, intellectual curiosity, quick wit, and the deep love he shared with his family and friends.

Born in Columbia and raised in Greenville, South Carolina, Kenneth graduated from East-side High School before attending Clemson University, where he earned his bachelor's degree in Chemical Engineering in 1995 and master's degree in Environmental Engineering in 1997. He later earned his MBA from the Kenan-Flagler Business School at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 2003.

Kenneth built an accomplished career spanning more than 23 years with AT&T, where he was respected for his dedication, intellect, and commitment to excellence.

At the heart of Kenneth's life was the love he shared with his husband, Brian, with whom he spent nearly two decades. Their love and adoration for one another were steadfast and true, carrying them through a life filled with laughter, adventure, and countless memories. From journeys around the world to the rhythms of everyday life, theirs was a partnership built on deep devotion and shared experience.

Never far from Kenneth's side was Rosy, his beloved four-legged sidekick, with whom he shared a bond all their own.

One of Kenneth's greatest passions was exploring the world. An avid traveler, he embraced every opportunity for adventure. From hiking the ancient trails of Machu Picchu to experiencing Iceland, the Faroe Islands, Norway, Finland, Canada, Australia, and Istanbul, Turkey, every journey became another cherished chapter in a life lived with curiosity and wonder.

Kenneth also believed in living life with purpose and discipline. CrossFit became one of his greatest passions, and he rarely missed a workout. A dedicated runner, he completed multiple marathons, including races in Europe. He approached every challenge with determination, consistency, and enthusiasm.

Kenneth treasured the

people he loved. He was a devoted husband, son, brother, uncle, and friend whose kindness, loyalty, adventurous spirit, and quiet generosity enriched the lives of those fortunate enough to know him. He cultivated friendships from grade school through adulthood and leaves behind countless lifelong friends, many of whom considered him their very best friend.

Kenneth was preceded in death by his father, William Gilder Godsey, Jr., and his grandparents. He is survived by his husband, Brian Scott Young; his mother, Carolyn Timms Godsey; his sister, Karen Quinn (Jeff); his brother-in-law, Cliff Young (Pamela); his nieces, Elleigh and Kasey; his nephew, Kiefer Young; and countless friends whose lives were forever changed by his friendship and love.

Kenneth's legacy is one of curiosity, perseverance, generosity, and love. Although his time here was far too short, the memories he created and the lives he touched will continue to inspire those who knew and loved him.

A celebration of Kenneth's life will be held at a later date, with details to be announced. Memorials may be made to the American Heart Association.

...MAYOR continued from 2

prove the upcoming season. In summary, the folks involved with the festival do not want to keep it the same; they constantly strive to make it better, and if you will, more beautiful and uplifting than before. They are also mindful that they also must preserve and honor the chamber music art form.

That dynamic mode can also relate to the Highlands community at large. I contend

that we want a dynamic community that adapts to change and new situations. This is not a new concept; the Highlands Improvement Association was created well over a century ago and morphed into new community organizations over the years that strove to make Highlands a better community.

The alternative, no change in a community, is the moniker of many dying towns that blot

the maps throughout the country. They are communities with dwindling populations, stagnant economies, and dwelling or nonexistent organizations.

With all the talk about change in Highlands, the alternative does not seem practical to me. The challenge as we move into the future is always to balance progress with preservation; this is the theme that runs through the Highlands Comprehensive Plan.

• UPCOMING EVENT •

2026 Town of Highlands Scholarship Golf Tournament Registration is filling up!

Registration is now officially open for the 2026 Scholarship Golf Classic, brought to you by the Bryson Family of Highlands. The event is scheduled for Monday, September 21st at Cullasaja Club, marking the 51st Anniversary of the Town's Scholarship Fund. Since 1975, the town has been awarding scholarships to graduates of the Highlands School, who are pursuing a post-secondary education. Students attending universities and trade schools are eligible provided they're a graduate of Highlands School. All students receive some level of support for the duration of their education provided they reapply each year.

The day will begin with a light breakfast, followed by at 10:30AM shotgun start. Following golf, you'll sit down to a full buffet dinner in the beautiful Cullasaja Club clubhouse. The event will be capped off at 28 teams, so be sure to reserve your spot. The cost for the event is \$1000 per team (\$250/player). Hole sponsorships are available, as well as a variety of sponsorship levels. Mike and Jim Bryson are

continuing to support this event, ensuring it continues to be a revered community event, one that everyone looks forward to year after year. For the foreseeable future, the Bryson Family will be a partner for the event and cover all the expenses associated with the golf tournament.

Event Chair, Brian Stiehler, said, "It is an honor to have the support and partnership of the Bryson Family because it enables us to generate substantially more for the Town of Highlands Scholarship Fund. This is such a unique program, and we know the community has been, and will continue to be, behind this 100%." Highlands Mayor, Pat Taylor, said, "the Town is so fortunate to have Bryson Family's support for this important annual event." This year is particularly special because we are celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Scholarship Fund."

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

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"Hold Onto Me" Brings Sundance-Winning Drama to HCFF

Sept 16-19, 2026

A film that earned a double standing ovation at its sold-out Sundance premiere comes to the Highlands-Cashiers Film Festival (HCFF) this September at the Highlands Performing Arts Center.

Directed by Cypriot filmmaker Myrsini Aristidou, *Hold Onto Me* (Κράτα Με) follows eleven-year-old Iris as she tracks down her estranged father, Aris, at a dilapidated shipyard following her grandfather's funeral. What begins as a stubborn attempt to reconnect slowly develops into a complex, powerful bond between two people who know of each other but don't truly know one another. The film won the Audience Award in the World Cinema Dramatic Competition at the 2026 Sundance Film Festival.

Hold Onto Me is the final installment in a trilogy Aristidou began with her short films *Semele* and *Aria*, both exploring the evolving bond between fathers and daughters. "This film reaches further inward," Aristidou has said of the project, "tracing the quiet, often unspoken longing that forms in the absence of a father." Reflecting on her own personal experience, Aristidou set the story in Cyprus, capturing what she calls the island's worn-out backdrops and slow movement of time, textures she says mirror Iris herself: "small and overlooked... left to endure, until this distant promise of care draws near."

Aristidou's work has screened at Venice, Berlin, Sundance, Toronto, and Tribeca. *Hold Onto Me* marks her feature debut.



Hold Onto Me is one of eight competition films at this year's HCFF, a four-day festival bringing world-class documentaries and narratives to downtown Highlands. Weekend passes are now available at: www.highlandscashiersfilmfestival.com/passes

...NATURE continued from page 1

Museum building, a Works Progress Administration (WPA) structure constructed between 1939 and 1941 using native granite and salvaged wormy chestnut.

The renovation project, scheduled to begin in mid-August and continue through late fall, will focus on three primary areas:

- Replacing aging chestnut support columns along the exterior walls with structural metal beams while preserving the building's historic appearance by incorporating the original chestnut columns into the finished interior design.

- Installing new energy-efficient windows throughout the building. The windows will feature bird-friendly etched glass designed to reduce bird collisions, a leading cause of bird mortality in North America.

- Protecting the building from water intrusion through foundation sealing and site improvements, including grading adjustments around the building and rear parking area to improve drainage.

The Nature Center will remain open through Sat., Aug. 15, operating on its regular summer schedule of Monday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Visitors are encouraged to stop by and enjoy the exhibits before construction begins.

While the building will be closed during renovations, the Nature Center grounds will remain open to the public.

Educational programming will continue through outreach initiatives, outdoor programs, and events held at the Sto Pavilion and across the Highlands Biological Station campus. Additional details about fall programming will be announced in the coming weeks.

Visitors should also note that the rear parking lot will close before construction begins to accommodate project preparations.

These improvements represent an investment in preserving a beloved Highlands landmark while ensuring the Nature Center can continue serving residents and visitors for generations to come.

The Highlands Nature Center is part of the Highlands Biological Station, a multi-campus center of Western Carolina University. The Nature Center, educational programs, and public outreach initiatives are operated and funded by the Highlands Biological Foundation, whose mission is to support research, education, and conservation in the Southern Appalachian region.

The Nature Center is expected to re-open in early 2027 following completion of the renovation project.

For updates and information about upcoming programs, visit the Highlands Biological Station website or follow their social media channels.

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...POLICE continued from page 1

innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

"I want to personally thank the officers involved for a job well done," said HPD Chief Andrea Holland. "Their professionalism, attention to detail, and commitment to keeping our community

Highlands PD increases traffic enforcement

Slow down. Follow the rules. Help us keep Highlands safe.

The Highlands Police Department has received a number of complaints about speeding and other traffic issues throughout town. In response, officers will be increasing traffic enforcement in the coming weeks.

Speeding is a major concern, but officers will also be looking for stop sign

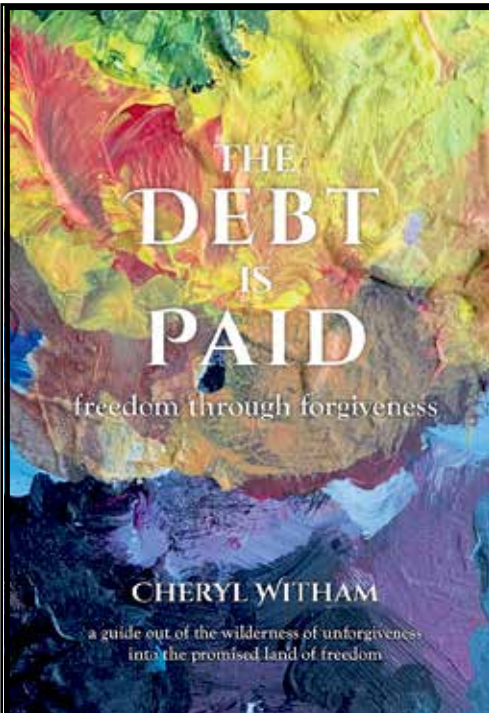
violations, failure to yield, improper turns, distracted driving, and other traffic violations.

The purpose of this effort is to help keep our roads safe for everyone. Our officers will be focusing on areas where complaints and safety concerns have been reported.

We also ask everyone to do their part. Drivers should slow down, obey stop signs and posted speed limits, and watch for pedestrians and cyclists. Pedestrians are reminded to use crosswalks when crossing the street and to make sure traffic is aware of them before entering the roadway.

Highlands is a busy community, especially during the summer months. With more vehicles, pedestrians, and bicycles on our streets, paying attention and following the rules is important.

We appreciate the community bringing these concerns to our attention and ask everyone to be patient, pay attention, and look out for one another.



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Save One Life: Resistance During the Holocaust

Thursday, August 13, 2-4 PM, Cost: \$35 Members/\$50 Nonmembers, Sponsored by the Fred A. Moss Charitable Fund



Say it Ain't So: Scandal in American Sport

Friday, August 14, 10 AM - 12 PM, Cost: \$35 Members/\$50 Nonmembers, Sponsored by the Fred A. Moss Charitable Fund



William Franklin: Divided Loyalty

Wednesday, August 19, 10 AM - 12 PM, Cost: \$35 Members/\$50 Nonmembers, Sponsored by the Cullasaja Women's Outreach Grant



Will We Ever Trust the News Again?

Monday, August 24, 10 AM - 12 PM, \$35 Members/\$50 Nonmembers, Sponsored by Dan and Abbey Evans



Why 1776 Matters

Tuesday, August 25, 10 AM - 12 PM, \$35 Members/\$50 Nonmembers, Sponsored by the Fred A. Moss Charitable Fund



Combined Double Lecture: The Twin Land Scandals of Early Georgia and the Lost Stone Mountain Memorial

Wednesday, August 26, 2-4 PM, \$35 Members/\$50 Nonmembers, Sponsored by Marty and Dan Boone

For more information or to register, please visit
www.clehighlands.com or call (828) 526-8811

...DATA continued from page 1

During the public hearing, 12 citizens expressed their opposition to data centers being located in the county. Scaly Mountain and Highlands were well represented at the public hearing including Highlands Town Commissioner Amy Patterson who is a non-voting member of the MC Planning Board.

"The moratorium state law says you can make a moratorium for a specified period of time or until you have tightened your rules," said Amy Patterson. "The one

thing that has not been mentioned about the specific ordinance that is on the floor tonight is making the data center an additional use or special use permit as opposed to a 'use by right.' The way it is right now if you have a data center come in, we have an ordinance that covers the enforcement of it, but we don't actually have any way of negotiating what you can or cannot do, what is acceptable or what is not acceptable. If you make it a special use or conditional use then you are able to specify what

we want or don't want, you can specify by use what works best in a particular situation."

Patterson said there are a lot of problems with the current ordinance because it is very vague, nonspecific and basically unenforceable.

"I have a lot of experience, and we have learned a lot of lessons from our mistakes if we don't do ordinances correctly," she said.

Most citizens stated the ordinance was not strict enough and requested the county adopt a moratorium against data centers; the board only voted to adopt the changes to the existing ordinance at this time.

However, the commissioners also discussed the possibility of considering a moratorium being adopted on top of the revised ordinance at an upcoming meeting.

The public hearing was held to consider an amendment of Chapter 157 of the Macon County Code of Ordinances to include updated definitions of server-based facilities as recommended by the Macon County Planning Board. At the August 6, 2026 meeting, the planning board voted to recommend the amendments to the ordinance.

Planning Board Chairman David Culpepper explained the planning board made the decision to recommend changing the ordinance to address the vulnerabilities identified in the current ordinance. Although at this time, no data centers have tried to locate in Macon County, he said time was of essence to address the concerns in the ordinance.

This ordinance is known as the Amended and Restated Ordinance Regulating High-Impact Land Uses in Macon County. The provisions of this ordinance shall apply to all unincorporated areas of Macon County lying outside of the corporate limits and the extraterritorial jurisdiction of any municipality.

The set purpose of this ordinance is to promote the health, safety and general welfare of the citizens of Macon County by diminishing the impacts of certain land uses which, by their nature, produce noise, odors, vibrations, fumes, light, smoke, dust and other impacts which interfere with the quiet enjoyment of adjacent lands and disturb the peace and dignity of the county.

The provisions of the ordinance were changed to add data centers to the definition of high-impact uses of any land now defined as "cryptocurrency mining, data centers and server-based facilities."

The definition states: "Cryptocurrency mining, data centers and server-based facilities. The use of land, buildings, or structures for cryptocurrency mining, data processing, cloud computing, data storage, server hosting, colocation services, artificial intelligence computing or similar server-based operations utilizing specialized computer equipment. Such uses include facilities that may operate continuously, involve significant electrical demand, water usage, cooling infrastructure, backup power generation or the generation of sustained ambient noise from servers, cooling equipment and related systems."

Under locational, screening and mitigation requirements data centers were added to specifications as follows:

Hours of operation – High-impact uses shall conduct operations only between the hours of six o'clock a.m. and ten o'clock p.m. "except those operations that fall under the definition of "cryptocurrency mining, data centers and server-based facilities" which shall be confined to operating between the hours of eight o'clock a.m. to five o'clock p.m. (change)."

The use of cargo containers, railroad cars, semi-truck trailers and other similar storage containers for any component of the operation within a cryptocurrency mining facility, data centers (added) and/or similar server-based facilities is prohibited.

"We are navigating a vast unknown," said speaker Amy Medlock. "When I think about the impact of data centers, I think about of our environment. I grew up here hunting, fishing, kayaking and camping. It is easy to see we live in a special part of western North Carolina. Our value is our environment; it's our forests, rivers, trails and wildlife. A data center would vastly affect our environment. We need companies and small business that see that value come here, not companies that want to destroy and devalue our property."

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Highlands Hurricanes swimmers score at Nationals

Steve Hott
Head Coach

From July 27 to Aug. 2, six members of the Highlands Hurricanes joined eight members of the four other Mountain Swim League Teams (JCST, CCAC, FAST, and SMAC) to compete in Swimming Nationals (AAU Jr. Olympics) as Team MSL.

They competed against the likes of Team Florida, Team Hawaii, Team New England, Team Nebraska, Team Arkansas – Far Western NC’s Team MSL’s 12 and under boys finished 9th in the country. The 12 and under girls finished 13th. The 13-18 boys finished 16th. Team MSL was coached in Des Moines by Highlands Hurricanes Coaches Steve Hott and Jackie Powell.

Team MSL brought home 33 medals, two of them gold. Sixteen of the medals and both of the golds were won by the six Highlands Hurricanes.

Leading the way for Team MSL were Highlands Hurricanes brother and sister Luca and Zana Maseko. Both brought home six medals (the most possible for them). Luca’s medals included two gold (50 and 100 breast stroke), two silvers (50 free and 50 butterfly), and a bronze (200 IM). Zana’s medals included two bronzes (50 and 100 breaststroke). Luca scored 40 pts, and Zana scored 28. Bella Batista scored 4 pts and medaled in the 200 Individual medley (IM); Rocco Basil scored 2 pts and medaled in the 50 freestyle and

• See HURRICANES page 9



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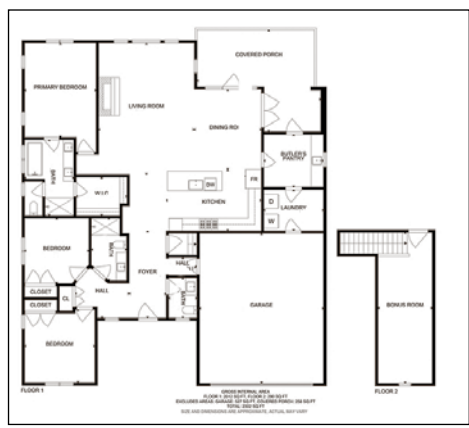


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Town Square | 343 Main Street

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mountain music and local talent

AUGUST 7
Johnny Webb

AUGUST 14
McClain Family Band

AUGUST 21
Shawn Lane Trio

AUGUST 28
Spare Parts Bluegrass Band

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411-499 Pine Street

Featuring a variety of popular,
regional bands and musicians

AUGUST 1
Yacht Rando

AUGUST 8
Blake Ellege + The Resonators

AUGUST 22
Will Thompson Band

AUGUST 15 & 29 - NO CONCERT



• HS SPORTS RECAP •

They are off to a great start!

Highlands School athletics are officially underway as athletes gear up for an action-packed fall season. Student-athletes across both middle and high school levels have returned to the courts, fields, and pools to represent the Highlanders.

This fall, the school will field teams in four key sports across middle and high school divisions:

- Volleyball (Middle School & High School)
- Boys Soccer (Middle School & High School)
- Cross Country (Middle School & High School)
- Swim (Middle School)

Pre-season preparation has been intense for the volleyball program. To sharpen their skills before official play, the high school squad traveled to Smoky Mountain for a series of pre-season scrimmages, while the middle school team gained valuable match experience testing their lineup at Macon Middle School.

That hard work immediately paid off when the high school volleyball teams opened their regular season on Monday, August 10, on the road at Swain.

The Junior Varsity squad kicked off the night with a thrilling, down-to-the-wire victory. After battling through three tough



Brett Lamb
Athletic Director

sets, JV secured a dramatic 2-1 match win, clinching the final deciding set 15-13. The varsity team followed with a fiercely competitive match, displaying strong effort before ultimately dropping a tight 3-1 contest.

High School volleyball looks to bounce back quickly with two matches scheduled this week. They host Hayesville on Tuesday for their home

opener before traveling to Cherokee on Thursday. Meanwhile, High School Boys Soccer is deep in preparation for its season opener, a road matchup against county rival Franklin on Monday, August 17.

Middle School Volleyball also joins the action this week, opening its season at home against Hayesville on Tuesday before hitting the road to face Andrews on Wednesday.

Highlands' Cross Country and Middle School Swim teams are hard at work in practice, fine-tuning their conditioning as they prepare for their upcoming competitions.

Come out, pack the stands, and support the Highlanders as the fall season takes off! For live game updates, schedule changes, and team news, follow the Highlands Booster Club on Facebook and Instagram.

Go Highlanders!

HF&R extricates driver from flipped car



At approximately 2:55 p.m., Aug. 9, Highlands Fire and Rescue was dispatched to Buck Creek Road in reference to an iPhone crash notification. Upon arrival, units located a vehicle that had traveled over an embankment and came to rest on its roof, with one occupant trapped inside. Crews immediately began working to safely extricate the patient from the vehicle. The patient sustained minor injuries and was successfully extricated before being turned over to Macon EMS for transport. We would like to thank all responding agencies for their assistance and cooperation on scene.

HIGHLANDS FIRE & RESCUE OPEN HOUSE SAT., AUG. 8

First and foremost, we want to extend a big thank you to everyone who came out to support our Annual Open House today! We had a fantastic time spending the day with our community, from showcasing our rescue demonstrations to giving fire truck rides and sharing what we do with the people we proudly serve. We hope everyone who joined us had just as much fun as we did! Thank you for making this year's Open House such a great success. We truly appreciate the continued support of our community!

"It was one of the busiest Open House celebrations I have seen in a long time," said Fire Chief Ryan Gearhart.



SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING



A Morning Prayer

Pastor Sam Forrester
Whiteside Presbyterian
Church, Cashiers

Father God, we come humbly before you this morning, thanking you, glorifying you, and magnifying your holy name. We come fully aware of our condition and of your holiness. For you and you alone created all things and set all things in motion. You and you alone are without beginning or end. Your will and your will alone is done. You are the thrice holy God. Perfect in all ways and before whom, all sin is an abomination.

Woe unto us, for we are the creature. Born in iniquity, raised in iniquity, and whose highest effort is but filthy rags before you. We are sinners by nature and by choice - sinners whose every thought, word, and deed reveals our very nature. Sinners without hope apart from your grace and mercy.

We bring nothing to offer in our stead, nothing to appease your just wrath and punishment. For we have nothing of value. You and you alone are capable of redeeming us.

And to our everlasting joy, O LORD, you entered your own creation and provided the means in heaven or on earth by which we can be saved. Through the life, ministry, death, and resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, we are now free from our debt of sin and death, and because of his precious blood, which he shed for us, we can now know eternal fellowship with you. Our redemption is absolute and our debt fully paid. Not by our hands, but by you, Father. We thank you and praise your name!

Father, it is with humble hearts we lift up our request to you. Our once great nation - now 250 years old - has fallen into moral and spiritual decay and daily it seems as though the forces of darkness are winning. Light the hearts of your people on fire that they may burn through the darkness. Bring about a great revival to this nation. Restore us to you. Rip the reigns and levers of power from those who seek to use them for evil or personal gain. Silence the voice of those who speak evil. Turn over the institutions, apparatuses, and engines of the wicked, and cut loose the supports which underpin their spread. Call to repentance the churches who take your name in vain, pollute your truth, and teach a distorted gospel. Let the wicked know you are here...and that your righteousness and justice is absolute.

And Father, we lift one another up to you. Each of us struggles daily with the frailties of the human condition be it spiritually, physically, or otherwise. Only you know our frailties, our worries, and our fears. Help us, Father. Help us to remember that you set nothing before us that is too great, and let us not forget that you are always there. Comfort us and sustain us, for only you can. Walk with

• See SPIRITUALLY page 19

• PLACES TO WORSHIP •

BLUE VALLEY BAPTIST CHURCH

Rev. Oliver Rice. Pastor 706-782-3965
Sundays: School: 10 a.m., Worship: 11
Sunday night services every 2nd & 4th Sunday at 7p
5th Sunday Singing featuring Georgia Mountain Trio;
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

Senior Pastor: Rev. Amy Spivey
Assoc. Pastor: Rev. Wonyeong Lee 828-743-5298
Sundays: School at 9:30; Worship & Kids Worship 10:30
GRACE CHAPEL ON HIGH HOLLY
9615 Dillard Rd Scaly Mountain, N.C.

Pastor Steve Kerhoulas. <http://www.graceonhighholly.com>
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Men's and Women's Bible Study throughout the week

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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

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.

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

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3645 Cashiers Rd. Highlands. NC • Sr. Pastor Gary Hewins
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Wed.: Youth 5:30-7pm; Women's Bible Study: Mon. 4:30pm, Tues.

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

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Morning Prayer: Mon-Thurs 8:30 am in Chapel

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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

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Sun.: Adult Ed.: 10a; Worship 11a.; Tues: Men's Group 10a;
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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
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sharing the facilities of the Shortoff Baptist Church.
Sunday Worship is at 9a. & 6p. Wednesday Worship is 6p

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Pastor Zane Talley

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

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

MOUNTAIN SYNAGOGUE

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Rabbi led service 3rd Saturday AM, 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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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.

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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.
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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. 4. Only the names of persons arrested, issued a summons/citation, issued a Class-3 misdemeanor or those of public officials have been used.

Accidents responded to: Aug. 7

• Vehicle 1 was traveling north and attempting to turn left into Highlands Plaza. Vehicle 2 was traveling south in Highlands Plaza. Vehicle 1 struck vehicle 2 while making a left turn.

Aug. 9

• Vehicle 1 and vehicle 2 were traveling east on Mirror Lake Road. Vehicle 2 was slowing to a stop. Vehicle 1 hit vehicle 2 in the rear.

• Over the week, 19 Citations and 54 warning tickets were issued.

Aug. 4

• Officers were called about a shoplifting incident at Potpourri on

Main Street where a card holder and pill box with a total value of \$34 was taken.

Aug. 6

• At 11:32 p.m., officers were called about a driver backing into a light pole valued at \$1,000 at First Bank on Carolina Way.

• Silviano Hernandez Trejo, 27, of Blue Island, IL, was arrested for possessing cocaine, methamphetamine and drug paraphernalia when he was stopped on NC 106 (Dillard Road). He was issued a \$10,000 secured bond. His trial date is Aug. 18.

Aug. 7

• Jeffrey C. Hudgens, 64, of San Francisco, CA, was arrested for DUI and in possession of marijuana when he was stopped on Oak Street. He was issued a \$2,000 unsecured bond. His trial date is Nov. 19.

Aug. 8

• A little past midnight, officers

were called about a simple assault of a male who was struck with a closed fist at High Dive on Carolina Way.

The Highlands Fire & Rescue log from Aug. 4.

Aug. 4

• At 8:58 a.m., the dept. provided mutual aid to the Cashiers FD.

• At 2:42 p.m., the dept. responded to a Co2 alarm at a residence on NC 106 (Dillard Road).

• At 8:26 p.m., the dept. provided a lift assist at a residence at Highlands Mountain Club.

• At 9:14 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Hickory Hill Road.

Aug. 5

• At 5:28 p.m., the dept. provided public assistance at a location on US 64 west (Franklin Road).

• At 7:57 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Bear Mor Ridge.

Aug. 6

• At 2:37 a.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a location on Half Mile Drive.

• At 10:48 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on S. 5th Street.

• At 11:38 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Hickory Hill Road.

• At 9:14 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Maple Way.

Aug. 7

• At 10:09 a.m., the dept. responded to a call of a possible gas leak at a location on Main Street.

• At 1:17 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Arnold Road.

• At 1:54 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Arnold Road.

• At 3:30 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a location on Main Street.

• At 6:20 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a location on S. 4th Street.

• At 10:59 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on NC 28 south (Walhalla Road).

Aug. 8

• At 6:51 a.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Bowery Road.

• At 2:52 p.m., the dept. responded to a motor vehicle accident on Buck Creek Road.

• At 9:23 p.m., the dept. responded to a motor vehicle accident on US 64 east (Cashiers Road).

Aug. 9

• At 10:15 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Buckberry Road.

• At 11:30 a.m., the dept. responded to a motor vehicle accident on Cullasaja Drive.

• At 5:05 p.m., the dept. responded to a call of a vehicle fire on Arnold Road.

Aug. 10

• At 6:42 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Arnold Road.

• At 7:35 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Shelby Drive.

Aug. 11

• At 4:27 a.m., the dept. responded to a call of a tree on a power line on N. 6th Street.

...SPIRITUALLY continued from page 18

us as we carry out every aspect of our day. Make your presence known in times of struggle...and in times of peace help us to reflect upon your goodness, kindness, and gentleness. Grant us the strength we need each day, O Lord, that we might be able to Carry out with a glad heart what you have appointed for us.

Father, we lift the sick and the struggling among us. Only you know the depth and breadth of their needs. Please provide for them and let them feel your presence that they may know the gentleness and kindness of their LORD.

Father, we thank you that despite the chaos and wickedness around us, you have provided each of us a congregation filled with our brothers and sisters in Christ. As we look around this morning we should be joyful and filled with thanksgiving, not only for the opportunity to worship you as we choose, but to worship you alongside other true believers. In times when so many absurd things divide people, we gather here together of one mind and of one heart to worship you. Thank you, Father, that weekly we hear your Word and it alone. Thank you that this congregation

stands on a solid rock. Thank you for the fellowship we experience with one another and most of all, with you.

Be with us now, Father, as we receive your instruction. Open our

hearts and minds to hear. For it is in Christ's wonderful name we pray. Amen.

• *This prayer was prayed on July 26, 2026. It's by Chad Hearn a member of Whiteside Presbyterian.*

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HELP WANTED

IN SEARCH OF PART-TIME CHOIR DIRECTOR Highlands United Methodist Church is seeking a chancel choir director for their weekly Sunday traditional worship services at 11am. Choir rehearsals are Wednesdays at 4pm. Inquiries may be addressed to Rev. Dr. Randy Lucas, HUMC Senior Pastor, at randyhumc@icloud.com. (8/13)

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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. 11a-7pm, Saturday 11am-6pm and Sunday 1-6pm

PICKLE BALL

• At the Recreation Dept. there are three indoor Pickle Ball courts and six outdoor courts. Pickle Ball can be played every Mon, Tues, Wed, Thurs. and Friday 10am-6pm outdoors for the summer

MTN FINDINGS

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

FIBBER MAGEES

• Fibber Magee's Thrift Store on Laurel Street Hours. Wed. & Fri. - 10a too 4p. Sat. - 10a to 2p.

FARMERS MARKET

• The "market" is open every Saturday 8a to 12:30p in KH Founders Park on Pine Street.

ALL WEEK

• Scaly Mountain/ 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 at Scaly Mountain @ Grace Chapel, 9915 Dillard Rd., Scaly Mountain each Tues & Sat at 5:30 pm and at Highlands @ the 1st Presbyterian Church, 471 Main St., on Monday at 5:30 p.m. and on Wednesday & Fridays @ 12:00 noon. Open in person meetings are also held in Cashiers @ the Albert Carlton Cashiers Community Library, 249 Frank Allen Rd. on Sunday at 5:00 pm, on Tuesday @ 7:00 pm, on Friday at 5:30 pm and on Saturday at 9:00 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 Vivian Brewer. 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.

2nd 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

4th Mondays

• Highlands Planning Board meeting 5:30 p.m., in the Community Building.

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 budandlyn@me.com

Tuesdays

• Strength Training at the Rec Park 8:15-9:15 am.

• At Wayfarers Chapel, Workshop for Writers – from 5-6:30 PM

• ESL classes at The Literacy & Learning Center, 6-7 p.m. 675 S 4th St.

Tuesdays & Thurs.

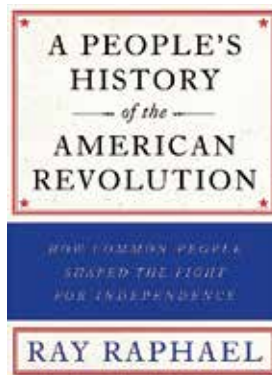
• Exercise Class with Michelle Lane at the Rec Park at 5:30. A combo class with different types of exercise. 828-526-3556

Wednesdays

• The Literacy & Learning Center offers a FREE weekly Citizenship Class led by Faviola Olvera from 5:30 to 7 pm at 675 S 4th St in Highlands, this program is designed to help students navigate the complexities of the U.S. naturalization exam.

• 2026 marks a sesquicentennial in our nation's history and we will be celebrating those 250 years at the Macon County Historical Museum with a free Fall seminar on

the American Revolution, reading and discussing Ray Raphael's The People's History of the American Revolution: How Common People Shaped the Fight for Independence. Participants will have their choice of in-person meetings at the Museum or meeting online using the Zoom platform. We will be meeting once a month, Wednesday evenings, from August thru November. Participants can sign up at tinyurl.com/amrevhistseminar Seminar leader John deVillie holds a BA in Philosophy from UNC-Chapel Hill and a BS Ed from Western Carolina University. He has taught American History and philosophy for 30 years in a public high school and has led adult seminars in history and philosophy for the past seven years. He is the current Executive Director of the Macon County Historical Museum.



• Digital Navigators will be at the Hudson Library from 10a-noon PM, digital navigators will host a Tech Time drop-in time at Hudson Library with the goal to assist attendees with basic smartphone, laptop, iPad and tablet skills. For more information, call the Library at 828-526-3031. This program is free and open to the public.

2nd Wednesdays

• Highlands Zoning Board of Adjustment meeting at 5:30 in the Community Building

Thursdays

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

3rd Thursdays

• Highlands Town Board

meeting 7 p.m., in the Community Building.

3rd Saturdays

• The American Legion Post 370 meets at the First Methodist Church at 315 Main St. in their community room/909 chapel. Breakfast is at 9a; meeting is at 10a. Email ncpost370@gmail.com or just join us at 9am.

Aug. 12-30

• Mountain Theatre Company presents "Showstoppers" a high-energy, 90-minute multimedia spectacular that races through Broadway and Hollywood's most unforgettable musicals, from West Side Story and Dreamgirls to Singin' in the Rain, Chicago, Mamma Mia!, and more. Featuring dazzling costumes, cinematic visuals, and a world-class professional cast, this fast-paced celebration brings iconic movie-musical moments to life with thrilling vocals, dynamic choreography, and nonstop excitement. It's pure, exhilarating entertainment for the whole family — the ultimate musical celebration. For tickets call 828.526.2695 or go to boxoffice@mountaintheatre.com



Sat., Aug. 15

• Highlands Annual 5K at KH Founders Park. 6-7pm. 5K Run/Walk and 5K Stroller Race. All proceeds will go to the Gordon Center for Child Development. Contact Bill at 706-202-3033 for questions or to sponsor.

• As a prelude to the HC Film Festival, the viewing of "The Gardener + Walk in the Garden Soiree. Viewing is a 4p at PAC. Soiree to follow. Soiree is SOLD OUT. Tickets available for the movie.

Sun., Aug. 16

• Highlands Historical Society

invites you to travel through time for the 1920s Gala from 5-7pm. Tickets can be purchased from the Highlands Historical Society website.

• Highlands-Cashiers Film Festival Summer Screening: Never Not Yours + Meet the Directors at the Village Green in Cashiers. FREE. This family dramedy tells the story of three adult siblings visiting their family's remote retired cabin for a weekend visit.



Thurs., Aug. 18

• At First Baptist Church Highlands, "The Debt is Paid - Freedom Through Forgiveness" with Cherry Witham, 9:30a-3p. RSVP if coming or would like to purchase a book for \$20. 612-859-2984 or 828-526-5858.

Sat. & Sun., Aug. 29-30

• Highlands Arts & Craft Show in KH-Founders Park on Pine Street 10a to 5p Sat. and 10a to 4p on Sunday. 120 vendors. Food available for purchase from Highlands Smokehouse, 11a-2:30p both days. Sip & Stroll Saturday. Tickets available at Sip & Stroll tent in front of the stage. Kid Zone, too.

Sept. 1

• Pop Up Pipers

Wed.-Sat Sept. 16-19

• 2nd Annual Highlands Cashiers Film Festival held at the Highlands Performing Arts Center on Chestnut Street. For lineup and tickets go to www.highlandscashiersfilmfestival.com

Sat.-Sun., Sept. 19-20

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