

Highlands Newspaper

Volume 23, Number 29

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Thurs., July 23, 2026

County tightens ordinance to deter data centers

Highlands joins Franklin to enact a moratorium - encourages county to do the same

By Kristin Fox

Macon County is taking a proactive stance against data centers being developed by

working with the Macon County Planning Board to amend its High-Impact Land Use Ordinance.

County Attorney Eric Ridenhour presented commissioners with proposed changes

• See DATA page 6

Commission discusses financials of exiting FRL

By Kristin Fox

The July 14th four-hour meeting of the Macon County Board of Commissioners concluded with a closed session followed by an announcement by County Attorney Eric Ridenhour concerning the Fontana Regional Library (FRL) Board and the distribution of surplus funds.

Ridenhour announced that commissioners formally requested that the FRL Board immediately resolve the lawsuit filed by Swain County stating that “defending a lawsuit that is of no benefit to the taxpayers of Macon County is counter-productive and that this matter should be resolved immediately.”

Swain County filed a lawsuit

• See FRL page 4



An algae bloom on Mirror Lake at 162 Cullasaja Drive emphasizes the need to dredge.

Photo by Sarah Caffery

Town Board finalizes Mirror Lake dredging plan

By Kim Lewicki

Representatives from McGill Engineering returned to the July Town Board meeting to deliver good news. They clarified the next steps for dredging Phases 2 and 3 of Mirror Lake

and how the \$5 million allocated by the state for the project will be used.

The dredging of Phase 1 – the area immediately up- and downstream of the Mirror Lake

• See MIRROR LAKE page 17

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Macon County Board of Elections and the state board explain mailing

If you are already registered to vote in Macon County, officials say to disregard the letter

By Kim Lewicki

The State Board of Elections has received complaints from county boards of elections and citizens about a recent mailing from a group attempting to register voters in North Carolina.

The group, Ready to Register Inc., sent mailings to an unknown number of citizens with an outdated voter registration application which includes four political parties that are no longer recognized in North Carolina.

As of 2026, North Carolina recognizes the Democratic, Green, Libertarian, and Republican parties. Voters can also register as unaffiliated. Voters who register with a party that is no longer recognized will be registered as unaffiliated.

The State Board has also received reports that mailings are being sent to deceased individuals and that the group may be using outdated voter data.

Additionally, the State Board has received several reports that QR codes on the mailings may cause information from other people to pre-populate on a form, which has raised privacy concerns among voters.

“Bulk voter registration mailings, when done carelessly, can do more harm than good,” said Sam Hayes, executive director of the State Board of Elections. “They can confuse voters and greatly increase the workload of county boards of elections. State Board staff are available to advise anyone who

• See MAILING page 14



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• THE PLATEAU'S POSITION •

• MAYOR ON DUTY •

Town and Chamber talk about Highlands needs' present and future

I had the opportunity to meet with the Highlands Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors last week. Although I have had differing views on TDA funds, we had a good discussion about tourism, development, and the challenges facing the town.

The chamber recently published a document titled "The Road We Build Together." It was basically a report about the financial status of the Chamber and Visit Highlands. I like the tone and concept of its title. We may all have differing views about community issues, but we all want the best outcomes for Highlands. That overarching commitment is a foundation that we can all build upon.

I opened my remarks saying I had cautious concerns about external events that may affect the economic well-being of Highlands in the immediate term, but nevertheless, I remain optimistic about



Highlands Mayor
Patrick Taylor

our long-term future.

My immediate concerns do center around what is happening at the national and international level. These events, high energy costs, and inflation could result in a decline in tourism here in Highlands and throughout Western Carolina during this current summer and fall season. Time will tell, but after talking with several business leaders, they believe July

has been a strong month for tourism. I recently read an article that said there are now different levels of tourism. That notion is not new to Highlands. Day trippers who may be deterred by high gas prices are not the foundation for our tourist economy. We are a high-end tourist venue that may be, to some extent, immune to economic ups and downs. Or at least I know our merchants hope so.

I also made the point that the Town of Highlands does not have the revenue stream and reserves it once had to meet some tourist-related needs, such as additional sidewalks and infrastructure. The Town Board is having to carefully prioritize capital expenditures. One question in the future will be how much property tax taxpayers should shoulder in tourist-related expenses versus tourist-development taxes?

In my discussion with the chamber board, I identified several areas where I think we could partner and work together. One area is to create more overflow parking venues in the town for special events. There are several properties that might become available for such purposes. These venues would allow attendees to park and be shuttled to the special events without taking up valuable parking spaces in the B1 area.

I also updated the status of the proposed NC 106 sidewalk that would provide a safe walking space for downtown residents and workers. The town attempted to garner grants for the project to no avail. NCDOT now has the sidewalks project on its STIP schedule for a

funding cost of 2.5 million dollars. To put that into perspective, \$2.5 million is well over half the town's annual property tax revenue. Given the list of town needs, the construction of the sidewalk would not be at the top of the list. If NCDOT funds the sidewalk in the coming years, Highlands will be expected to contribute 20%, or about \$500,000.

Other topics covered at the session centered around immediate and long-term needs. An immediate need is for a WI-FI network for the entire downtown area. Also, the Town Board will be reviewing

zoning issues related to business zones in the coming months.

Long-term needs that will impact the economic and social vitality of Highlands are daunting. How do we address the needs of young families who are the core of our workforce in providing more childcare options and attainable housing? These issues, as well as other issues, require us all to build roads and pathways to solutions. It will not be easy and will take time. External factors beyond local control, as is the case now, may impact future solutions to these challenges.

• SNAPSHOT •

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Email it to highlandseditor@aol.com or text it to 828-200-1371, with a brief description and a name. No anonymous photos will be accepted.

• WEATHER •

Thu, 23-Jul	Fri, 24-Jul	Sat, 25-Jul	Sun, 26-Jul
			
72°F 65°F	72°F 64°F	73°F 62°F	77°F 61°F
Showers and a heavier t-storm	Cloudy with showers	A shower and thunderstorm	A t-storm around in the p.m.
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MLS# 1002714 | \$3,100,000 | 4BR/4.5BA contemporary sophistication in 1875, Highlands' newest exclusive gated community, with quality construction and **garage apartment** for privacy. JULIE OSBORN | (828) 200-6165



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MLS# 1002768 | \$1,575,000 | 4BR/4.5BA, renovated and furnished, open floor plan, mountain elegance. **Car charger!** Two great rooms, large bunkroom, two large fireplaces, and large decks. Mountain view. GREG HARRISON | (828) 200-9307



Refined Mountain Retreat

MLS# 1003549 | \$750,000 | 2BR/2.5BA **beautifully remodeled** and furnished retreat just minutes from Cashiers, offering privacy, comfort, and refined mountain living. GREG HARRISON | (828) 200-9307



Dramatic Mountain Views

MLS# 1003473 | \$1,500,000 | 4BR/3.5BA renovated home with sweeping mountain views, spacious decks for **fabulous sunsets**, lower-level TV room, large primary suite with luxury bath, and abundant natural light. PAT ALLEN | (828) 200-9179



Whiteside Mountain View

MLS# 1003651 | \$2,500,000 | **Downtown location**, 3BR/3.5BA, remodeled with elegance, open floor plan, high ceilings, beautifully furnished, two fireplaces, two great rooms, water feature, windows, and natural light. PAT ALLEN | (828) 200-9179



Walk to Whiteside Mountain

MLS# 1003651 | \$1,550,000 | **One level** 3BR/3BA, open floor plan, fireplace and cathedral ceilings, large primary suite with library and fireplace, elegant baths, bar, garage, and master gardener grounds, streamside, and spacious covered deck. NICOLE RUSSELL | (828) 200-4660



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MLS# 1003599 | \$1,775,000 | Experience nature in this sought-after community from the large covered front porch with fireplace, open floor plan with stone fireplace, custom chef's kitchen, gleaming heart-pine floors, primary suite with office, **vacation rentals allowed**. JULIE OSBORN | (828) 200-6165





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...FRL continued from page 1

against the (FRL) over its plan to distribute \$1,350,311.38 in surplus funds to the three member counties – Macon, Jackson and Swain counties. The lawsuit was filed just ahead of Jackson's withdrawal from the system on July 1, 2026, and Macon's proposed exit on July 1, 2027.

The proposed distribution of the surplus funds was Swain County receiving \$86,213.25; Macon County, \$525,401.97; and Jackson County, \$738,696.16.

Swain County's lawsuit against the FRL Board and the temporary restraining order (TRO) and preliminary injunction Swain County was given by the court system freezes the distribution of the surplus funds which will be preserved in FRL accounts until the legal dispute is resolved.

Swain County's complaint argues that the proposed distribution violates the 2024 Interlocal Agreement which only allows surplus funds to be distributed in two cases – when a county withdraws or when FRL formally dissolves.

Prior to the closed session under old business commissioners continued discussion regarding the Macon County Public Library.

At the June meeting of the commissioners, the board voted to pull out of the Fontana Regional Library system giving the county's one year notice and starting it's one year demonstration period for the state of North Carolina.

County Manager Warren Cabe start-

ed the withdrawal process by submitting a letter to the state library, FRL Board and the other counties of Macon County's intent to withdraw from the FRL. In addition, Cabe said he notified the state library of the county's intent to apply for the aid the state gives to help support the library system.

One of the biggest concerns about Macon County leaving the FRL is what it will cost the county to keep the libraries running – Franklin, Nantahala and the Hudson.

"I've worked on some preliminary figures and while there are still some unknowns and I can't give you an exact number, tentatively I have figured it will take \$1,350,000 to cover expenses," said Cabe. "I have taken the operating budget for the Macon County Library System and discussed with County Librarian Abby Hardison what other expenses may occur. We have also taken into consideration the number of employees that are currently in the Macon County Library system (Franklin Library, the Hudson Library or the Nantahala Library) and the cost of putting them in our system. We already know that we'll probably have to assume at least one IT position which services are currently funded on the FRL side."

He said he expects it will cost the county close to a million over what is al-

• See FRL page 10

Week Four Concerts: July 25-28



Saturday, July 25 – 5 PM, Highlands | Sunday, July 26 – 5 PM, Cashiers

"Solo Stars"

Yinzi Kong, viola; Amy Schwartz Moretti, violin; Zuill Bailey, cello

Monday, July 27 – 5 PM, Highlands | Tuesday, July 28 – 5 PM, Cashiers

"Sizzling Sextets"

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Paul Neubauer & Yinzi Kong, viola; Zuill Bailey & James Kim, cello



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• OBITUARY •

John Posey Woods, Jr

John Posey Woods, Jr, 84, of Glenville NC, passed away on Sunday July 12, 2026, after an extremely short illness. He was the son of the late Martha Connally Woods and late John Posey Woods, Sr. He was also proceeded in death by his daughter, Nancy Woods Stamp.

John is survived by his wife of almost 57 years, Elizabeth Anderson Woods of Glenville, his three children and his sister Grace Woods Walden of Gainesville, GA and her three children.

He was extremely proud of his daughter Nancy, and three sons: John Posey Woods, III of Brevard, Dewitt Anderson Woods (Amy) of Sapphire, and Benjamin Connally Woods (Ericka) of Glenville and his grandchildren; Patrick, Caroline, MacKenzie, Anne-Elizabeth, Anderson, and Hank. He is also survived by his beloved sister-in-law, Joan W. Anderson of Glenville, many cousins, and Pangie Yeager.

John attended University of

Tennessee-Chattanooga earning his B.S. in Classical Civilization and was a member of Kappa Sigma. He was a partner in an Anheuser-Busch Distributor in Florence, SC, before moving to the mountains in 1996. He founded The Trash Company.

A Celebration of his life was held Saturday, July 18 at the Cashiers United Methodist Church at 2 pm. The family invites all to remember him by utilizing his philosophy of life by doing something kind for someone each and every day, and to make yourself indispensable in all you do.

Memorials may be made to the Glenville-Cashiers Rescue Squad, PO Box 919, Cashiers United Methodist Church, PO Box 162 both of Cashiers, NC 28717 or in any other manner you may choose.

Online condolences can be made at www.maconfuneralhome.com.



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Rotary Club Report from Josh Bryson, President, Rotary Club of Highlands



I wanted to take a moment to express my sincere appreciation to all of our Rotary Club members who helped make the July 4th festivities such a tremendous success. It was a wonderful way to celebrate America at 250 with our community, and your dedication truly made a difference.

- We started the day with a rocket display that would make NASA jealous.
- More than 3,000 people gathered at the ball field to join

in the celebration.

- Closing a section of Hickory Street and expand our event footprint worked incredibly well, creating a less congested and safer environment for everyone.
- We served 1,500 hot dogs in less than an hour!
- We served a record 1776 ducks for the Duck Derby and sold out by noon!
- The Duck Derby was a huge hit, with a record 1,776 ducks sold—selling out by noon. The race drew a packed crowd creekside and ended in an exciting photo finish.

I like to call July 4th "Rotary Day" for a reason. Highlands enjoys a truly unique Independence Day experience, and it simply wouldn't be possible without the hard work and commitment of the Rotary Club of Highlands and our incredible members.

Thank you for all you do for our club and our community. What a great day!

In service,

Josh
JOSH BRYSON,
PRESIDENT



UPCOMING EVENTS



Coming up in July, the Rotary Club of Highlands will feature weekly luncheon programs including:

July 21

Markie McCullough
Being a Chef – Oak Steakhouse
Host: Tracy Franklin

July 28

Danielle Hernandez
Big Brothers, Big Sisters
Host: Billy Love

...DATA continued from page 1

at the July meeting which have been forwarded to the Planning Board.

The Planning Board will consider the changes August 6 at 5 p.m. with a formal public hearing scheduled for the commissioners' meeting on August 11 at 6 p.m. The public is invited to attend the planning board meeting as well as the public hearing and commissioners' meeting.

The idea is to close any potential loopholes that would allow data centers to locate in the county as well as tightening regulations regarding noise, electrical use and zoning concerns.

To date, the county has not received any formal development proposals for data centers.

The purpose of the High-Impact Land Use 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 apply to all unincorporated areas of Macon County lying outside of the corporate limits and the extraterritorial jurisdiction

of any municipality.

The ordinance's provisions shall apply to the following high-impact uses of any land as further defined in §157.05(B) of this ordinance: Cryptocurrency Mining, Data Centers (change to ordinance) and Server-based Facilities.

The ordinance was revised to add data centers to its definitions to read: of "Cryptocurrency Mining, Data Centers and Server-based Facilities- The operation of specialized computer equipment for the operation of crypto-mining, data centers, server-based facilities and similar activities that typically consume large amounts of electricity and water or generate a constant ambient noise from computer and cooling systems."

Throughout the state many local governments have passed similar legislation to halt data centers in response to community concerns regarding the excessive noise, water usage and high energy consumption.

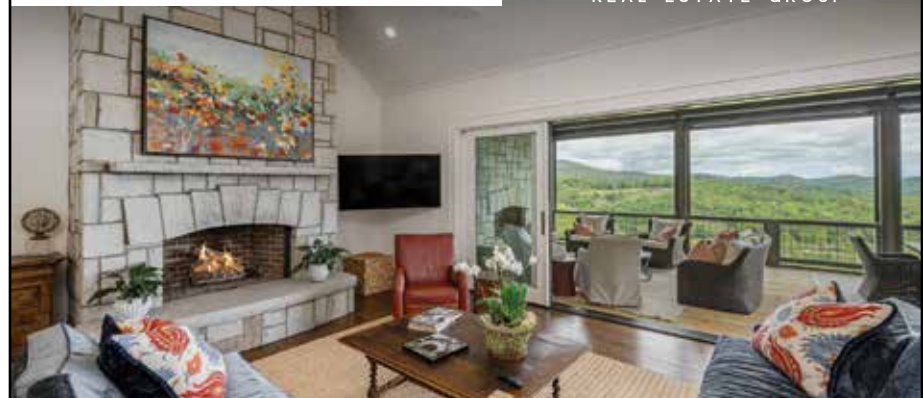
At its July meeting, the Town of Franklin approved a 12-month moratorium explicitly to address data centers and server farms.

At its July meeting, Highlands joined Franklin and asked Town Attorney Nick

• See DATA page 15

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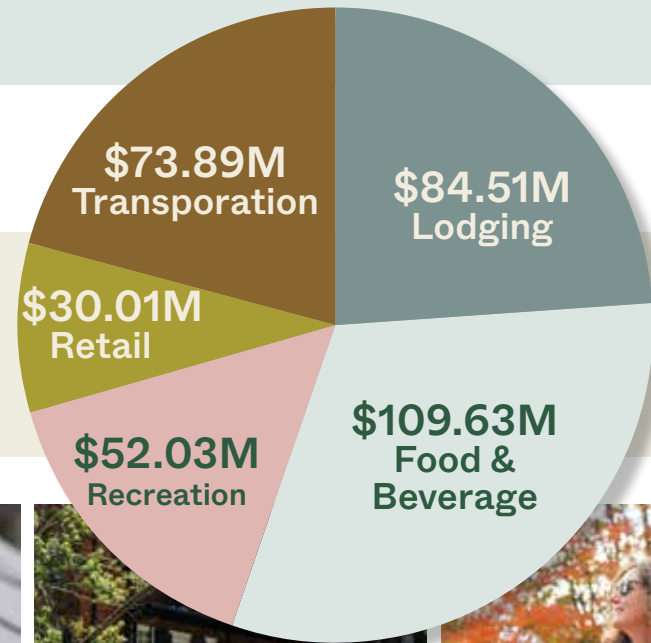
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Visitor Spending in Macon County (2024)

TOTAL: **\$347.44 million**
This is -0.8% less than 2023



Visitor spending in Macon County provided:

\$11.31 million
state tax revenues generated by tourists

1,731
jobs directly supported by tourism

\$17.93 million
local county tax revenues
generated by tourists

\$82.52 million
worker paychecks annually

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in sales tax to the Town of Highlands

\$759.55
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result of tourist spending

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• LETTERS •

County should have said 'yes' to FLOCK cameras

Dear Editor,

I was astonished when I read that Macon County Commissioners have decided to eliminate all Flock Safety Automated License Plate Readers (in other words cameras) except those at schools. Seriously? One person, Commissioner Chair Josh Young, seemed to hold sway with the entire commission in spite of hearing of a multitude of benefits over the years in having them. Everyone who is legal has a license tag in full view and who cares if a camera takes a picture of it?

Only those doing things illegally would object. At least that is what I would think.

Sheriff Holbrooks spoke to the group from vast

experience. Knowing that we do not have a large police department and that these cameras are helpful to them why would we object? I do not.

Sheriff Holbrooks said the cameras aid in recovering stolen cars, breaking and entering capturing, arresting those guilty of larceny and narcotic offenses. A case of kidnapping was solved recently by use of the cameras. In other words — the cameras are beneficial to all of us ordinary citizens and should stay.

I really worry about people actually not wanting

these cases to be solved. I would think that Commissioner Young's supporters would want this safety measure so that they would not be victims of crimes. Only the police have access to these cameras. If they help at schools there must be a reason. The cameras help us stay safe and take away those who prey on the innocent.

Surely, we can have those cameras back. There is no good reason to remove even one of them.

**Glenda Bell
Highlands**

Socialism and communism don't create prosperous societies

Dear Editor,

History has already answered the question of whether socialism and communism create prosperous, free societies. Time and again, they have failed.

The pattern is remarkably consistent. Governments promising equality and economic justice gradually centralize power, expand state control, and concentrate wealth and authority in the hands of a small political elite.

Rather than creating widespread prosperity, those in power increasingly control the nation's resources while the productive capacity of the country declines. Eventually, there is less wealth to distribute, living standards fall, and individual freedom suffers.

The 20th century provided numerous examples. The Soviet Union collapsed under the weight of its centrally planned economy. North Korea remains one of the poorest and most isolated nations in the world. Mao's China experienced decades of famine and economic stagnation before embracing significant market-oriented reforms that fueled its later growth. While China still operates under one-party communist rule, much of its economic success has come from allowing private enterprise and market competition rather than relying solely on traditional central planning.

More recent examples are equally telling. Venezuela was once among the wealthiest countries in Latin America, blessed with enormous natural resources and a growing middle class. After adopting increasingly socialist economic policies, the country suffered hyperinflation, food shortages, collapsing infrastructure, and the flight of millions of its citizens. Cuba, once one of the Caribbean's strongest economies, has struggled for decades with chronic shortages, limited opportunity, and dependence on outside assistance.

These experiences should cause Americans to think carefully before embracing policies that move our coun-

try toward greater government control of the economy. Ideas that sound compassionate in theory often produce very different results when implemented.

I know this lesson personally. As a child living in Poland during the late 1960s, I witnessed life under communist rule. Poland was controlled by a Soviet-backed government imposed after World War II. The lack of economic opportunity, shortages, and restrictions on personal freedom were impossible to ignore. The Polish people deeply resented living under a system that denied them both political liberty and economic freedom.

Everything changed with the Solidarity movement led by Lech Wałęsa and the moral leadership of Pope John Paul II. As communism fell, Poland embraced democracy, private enterprise, and market economics. Today, Poland has one of Europe's fastest-growing economies, attracts significant foreign investment, has a thriving manufacturing sector, and enjoys a standard of living unimaginable under communist rule. It stands as a powerful example of what can happen when people are free to innovate, own property, and build businesses.

America's strength has always rested on individual liberty, free enterprise, the rule of law, and the opportunity for people to succeed through hard work and innovation. Those principles have produced the greatest engine of prosperity the world has ever known.

We should certainly strive to help those in need, but history teaches that lasting prosperity is created not by concentrating power in government, but by preserving freedom, encouraging entrepreneurship, and allowing individuals — not bureaucracies — to determine their own futures.

History offers many lessons. We would be wise to learn from them rather than repeat them.

**Edward H Metzger III
Highlands NC**

Fellow veterans, silence is not an option

Dear Editor,

I'm a Life Member of the American Legion and the VFW (Department of NH), a former 1st Vice and Post Commander in those organizations, respectively. I've

also been a member of the DAV, AmVets, TREA, and NCVA, for decades.

I'm retired enlisted (Navy), 20 years active, 10 years

• See LETTERS page 12

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One case of cyclosporiasis confirmed in MC

There is currently one confirmed case of cyclosporiasis in Macon County, aligning with a broader surge across Western North Carolina and a massive nationwide outbreak. Statewide, the N.C. Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS) has reported over 561

confirmed cases since May.

The exact source of the parasite in Macon County hasn't been definitively traced to a single grower or restaurant, though multiple state and national cases have been tied to uncooked produce like lettuce, cilantro, and parsley.

Highlands Hurricanes hold their own

On Thursday, July 9 the Highlands Hurricanes traveled to Franklin to compete with FAST (Franklin Amateur Swim Team) and CCAC (Cherokee County Aquatics Club). The Hurricanes won 18 of the 53 events that they entered, and finished 2nd or 3rd in 29 others. The events had as many as 19 swimmers in each race.

Leading the way for the Hurricanes was Luca Maseko who won 4 races; and Ivan Shchelgachov, Helix Sharpe Sutton, Zana Maseko, Bella Batista, and Charlie Zborowski who all finished 1st in 3 events. Nikita Denisoff, sister and brother Anna Nicole Shchelgachova and

Ben Shchelgachov, Katherine Wise, Jayce Powell, Agatha Jestin, Melanie Zabrian, Vic Nadzorau and Blakely Sears each won 2. Emma Denisoff and Justin Powell finished 1st in 1.

Also swimming well for the Hurricanes were Ian Batista, Max Jestin, the Edwards clan (Azariah, Hananiah, Nehemiah and Estelle), Val Nadzorau, Ezra Cannon, brother and sister Cooper and Margo Thriffily, Annabelle Searles, Senna Sherrill and Addyson Cannon.

The Hurricanes next meet will be the Mountain Swim League All Star Meet in Cullowhee today, Thursday, July 23.

...FRL continued from page 4

ready budgeted.

"We anticipate state aid of \$115,000 so we are in good shape financially, but we are still working on the process, so these figures aren't exact," he said. "However, I haven't seen anything yet that's causing great concern that we can't do it financially next year."

Commissioner Barry Breeden asked if the library would potentially close. Cabe said no. He then asked if anything would change. Again, Cabe said no, saying the county plans to keep the same number of

both full-time and part-time employees.

"My number one goal is to take care of those folks to provide the same service that that they're having now or better," said Cabe. "Our intent would be to do better if we can."

Commissioner John Shearl said he felt local control is much better than regional control and local oversight for any agency in the county serves the people much better.

To that he received a smattering of applause from the gallery.



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...LETTERS continued from page 9

Fleet Reserve, subject to recall, serving under eight presidents (Eisenhower to George H.W. Bush), all Army or Naval officers, none of whom would have considered, much less attempted, an insurrection to overturn an election to retain power.

I feel betrayed by the veteran community which, by their collective silence, condones the caustic words and reckless, inhumane, and (often) illegal actions of the Commander-in-Chief. I argue, we shouldn't accept the immorality, corruption, criminality and cruelty of this President or his Administration.

Alan Dowd (Director of the Sagamore Institute Center for America's Purpose), in the July 2026 American Legion Maga-

zine, quoted President Trump: In the winter of 2021, there was a "heinous attack on the U.S. Capitol" marked by "violence, lawlessness and mayhem" that "defiled the seat of American democracy."

Dowd failed to reveal what we all know to be true, it was President Trump himself who (with clear intent and purpose) unleashed that armed mob of thousands on the Capitol, attempting to prevent the peaceful transfer of power. This ill-conceived plot to overturn the election resulted in the death or maiming of numerous defenders of our Capitol.

Instead of centering the blame for J6 and the discord, division, distrust, and chaos where it clearly belongs (on this President

and his Administration), Dowd focuses our attention on "biased bloggers, TV pundits and social media posts." I'm appalled by the veteran community's failure to discredit this fabrication for the fiction it obviously is.

Donald Trump devoted the entire Biden Administration claiming the 2020 election was "stolen" from him, that everything other than FOX was "fake news," and referring to his myriad of critics as: "deranged, demented, whacko, low IQ, crazy," even "treasonous."

When he was unbelievably reelected in 2024, the first thing he did was pardon the J6 insurrectionists, many of whom pleaded guilty to the various crimes they obviously committed.

With frequent and brazen anti-democratic methods and procedures, Trump continues to erase checks and balances, wrecks law and order and decimates leadership ranks within the military. And yet, the veteran community remains - deafeningly silent.

Trump has strengthened our adversaries while gravely weakening (if not destroying) our alliances with NATO and allies around the globe. Consider too, the far-reaching consequences and destabilizing effects Trump's policies have on the global economy.

No one describes this president better than U.S. Navy Admiral (and Seal), William McRaven. "He has embarrassed us in the eyes of our children, humiliated us on the world stage, and divided us as a nation."

The American Legion, the VFW (all veteran organizations) should join Air Force Major Jason Watson on the Capitol steps and demand Trump's impeachment, his conviction for all the crimes he has committed, and his removal from office.

**David L. Snell
Franklin, NC**



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JULY 25

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...MAILINGS continued from page 1

wishes to send voter registration mailings so that we can minimize potential issues.”

The State Board has contacted Ready to Register with the hope of reducing voter confusion and the impact on county boards with any future mailings.

Macon County Board of Elections, Deputy Director/Campaign Finance Judy Fritts said Ready to Register.org is a 3rd party group that has been sending out valid NC voter registration forms with an envelope to return to the Macon County Election office with a letter stating “you may not be registered.”

“It is unclear exactly where this organization is getting its information from, possibly outdated public voter information,” said Fritts. “Many people have received this letter and are confused because they know they are registered.”

Fritts and the state board of elections said If you receive this letter and are sure

you are registered you can throw it away or you can call the Macon County office to verify your status. The number is 828-349-2034.

Fritts said if you aren’t registered and would like to be, then complete the form and mail it in the envelope provided.

“If you have any questions please feel free to reach out to us at the office 828-349-2034,” she said.

To read the statement from the state board of elections go to <https://www.nc-sbe.gov/.../bulk-voter-registration>

For information about registering to vote in North Carolina, go to the Registering section at [ncsbe.gov](https://www.nc-sbe.gov).

The regular voter registration deadline is October 9, 2026, for the November 3, 2026, general election. If you miss this deadline, you may register and vote at the same time at any early voting site in your county during the early voting period.

2026-2027 Open House/Orientation Schedules



Macon Early College- Summer Bridge (Incoming Students)- Monday, July 20-Thursdays, July 23, 2026, 9:00-12:30 pm; Parent Orientation Night- Tuesday, July 21, 2026, 6:00 pm; Open House-Monday, August 10, 2026, 3:00-6:00 pm

Mountain View Intermediate- Tuesday, August 18, 2026, Drop In 3:30-6:30 pm

Highlands School- Thursday, August 20, 2026, 3:30-5:30 pm

Cartoogechaye Elementary- Thursday, August 20, 2026, 3:00 pm- New Student Orientation, 3:00-6:00 pm- Open House Drop In

East Franklin Elementary- Thursday, August 20, 2026- Open House Drop-In- 1st-4th grade- 2:00-6:00, Kindergarten- 1:00 or 6:00 (not Drop-In-will need to attend either time), New Family Orientation- 3:00.

Nantahala School- Thursday, August 20, 2026, 4:00-6:00 pm

South Macon Elementary- Thursday, August 20, 2026, 4:00-6:00 pm

Franklin High School- Wednesday, August 19, 2026, 9:00 am – 3:00 pm, Drop-In

Lotla Valley Elementary – Thursday, August 20, 2026, 3:00-6:00 pm

Macon Middle School- Wednesday, August 19, 2026, 5:00-7:00 pm

The Peak at FHS- Thursday, August 20, 2026, 5:30-7:30 pm

...DATA continued from page 6

Tosco to draw up a moratorium.

Tosco said he has been drawing up moratoriums across Western NC.

He said tightening the high impact ordinance may not be enough because data center entities can move forward once water rights are obtained from the state and arrangements made with electric companies before notifying towns and counties of their intent.

At last week's meeting of the Macon County Board of Commissioners, a large crowd attended to voice their opposition to data centers being developed in Macon County during the public comment period. Rob James, a lifelong resident of

Macon County, spoke to commissioner asking that the board put a moratorium on data centers.

"I have worked in the computer industry as a server tech for about 20 years, and the type of data centers I am referring to are the ones in some of our neighboring counties that span 70 acres, can draw hundreds of megawatts of power," said James. "The kind of centers that dwarf our local Walmart 10 times over, require gas turbine generators not as a backup but to operate day-to-day. The kind that drinks creeks and wells dry and replaces the water with murky chemical laden cooling system discharge."

Sunday July 26 at 6pm

A viewing of "Bonhoeffer" at
Highlands Central Baptist Church downstairs
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The true story of Dietrich Bonhoeffer. As the world teeters on the brink of annihilation, Bonhoeffer is swept into the epicenter of a deadly plot to assassinate Hitler. With his faith and fate at stake, Bonhoeffer must choose between upholding his moral convictions or risking it all to save millions of Jews from genocide. Will his shift from preaching peace to plotting murder alter the course of history or cost him everything?



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A Labor of Love: One Filmmaker's Journey to Uncover and Preserve the Story of Lake Toxaway

Join us for an exclusive, free local screening of *Rise, Ruin, and Restoration: A History Of Lake Toxaway*, a documentary film that brings to life one of western North Carolina's most captivating stories. The film, directed by Emmy Award-winning filmmaker Dan Johnson, chronicles the creation of Lake Toxaway, the dramatic collapse of its dam in 1916, and the remarkable effort to resurrect the mountain lake decades later.

Dan Johnson and John LeRoy Nichols III's deep personal roots in the region inspired them to take the interviews Nichols had begun capturing a decade earlier and create a documentary to preserve the area's rich history. The film includes the story of Nichol's grandfather, Reginald Davies Heinitsch, whose vision and determination made the lake's rebirth possible. The documentary project was expanded to include the fascinating tale of local legend Lucy Armstrong Moltz, whose Toxaway mansion would eventually become the Greystone Inn. Johnson says the opportunity to tell the story about a place he has visited since his early childhood was captivating. "I was particularly inspired by the life and legacy of Lucy Armstrong Moltz. Her generous spirit and impact endure to this day," Johnson maintained. "The love people have for Lake Toxaway is hard to describe," Nichols said, "They came down from Pennsylvania for the timber, the gold and the sapphires, but they stayed for the mountains, the water and the elevation. It was untapped country. When they rebuilt the lake in 1960, the interesting thing to me is that the same kind of successful people came right back, just like before. A lot of the people here could live anywhere in the world, and they've chosen this spot all over again."



It's a piece of history that shaped Transylvania County and the broader Southern Highlands community in ways that have long gone untold. Whether your family has called this mountain community home for generations or you're simply passionate about the history and landscapes of the Highlands-Cashiers area, this is a rare opportunity to hear a beloved regional story finally given the telling it deserves.

Watch the film for FREE + a Q&A with the filmmaker, Dan Johnson.
July 30th, 5pm at The Village Green. More details on the website!
www.HighlandsCashiersFilmFestival.com/events

WALK CASHIERS announces major expansion of the Cashiers Greenway Ramble

WALK CASHIERS, a collaborative initiative led by the Cashiers Area Chamber of Commerce, Jackson County, and Vision Cashiers, is proud to announce a significant expansion of the Cashiers

Greenway Ramble (CGR), marking another major milestone in the community's long-term vision of creating a safer, healthier, and more walkable Cashiers.

Construction is underway to com-

plete several new trail segments, including connections from U.S. Highway 64 at the Cashiers Area Chamber of Commerce to Frank Allen Road, from N.C. Highway 107 to Frank Allen Road, and along Frank Allen Road. The expansion will also include a connector from the trail near the Albert Carlton-Cashiers Community Library to the new Cashiers Lake development.

In addition to extending the trail network, the project will introduce bollards featuring downlighting and internet capabilities, enhancing both safety and accessibility for residents and visitors.

"We're excited to see bollards going in. These will 'light the way' to the CGR trails and the many rich experiences and discoveries that we'll all get to enjoy," said Irv Welling, Chairman of Vision Cashiers.

Construction of the expansion is truly a community effort. Ben Riddle of Cashiers Construction is overseeing rough pathway construction; Miguel Mireles of Mireles Landscaping Services is directing finish construction; Arielle McIntyre of Kintyre Design is leading landscape design and plantings; and Bobby Botev of Highland Mark is managing the lighting and internet infrastructure. Every contractor involved has generously agreed to perform their work at cost in support of this community-benefiting initiative.

The project has also been made possible through the cooperation of Jackson County and several private landowners, including Cashiers Lake, who have granted permission for the CGR to traverse their properties.

The expansion represents far more than additional trail mileage. It advances WALK CASHIERS' goal of creating a five-mile interconnected trail system while establishing a critical connection to the Cashiers Lake development. Future trail segments within Cashiers Lake will become part of the CGR and ultimately connect to Summit Charter School.

Once completed, these combined trail segments will provide Summit Charter School students with the opportunity to safely walk from campus to both the Albert Carlton-Cashiers Community Library and the Boys & Girls Club of the Plateau.

WALK CASHIERS extends its sincere appreciation to every contractor, landowner, public partner, donor, volunteer, and stakeholder whose generosity and collaboration continue to make the vision of a walkable Cashiers a reality.

To learn more about the project or to support future phases of the CGR, visit cashiersgreenwayramble.com.

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...MIRROR LAKE continued from page 1

bridge – which was funded by property owners for \$500,000, is finished. The more involved Phases 2 and 3 are now in the works.

Disposing of the material dredged from Mirror Lake has been an issue since efforts to dredge began 30 years ago.

The town got permission from the county to reopen a closed area of the landfill on Rich Gap Road to deposit the material – but only for the purpose of depositing the dredged material. However, in the meantime, local Roger Lee Wilson offered his property off NC 28 south near Rich Gap Road as a disposal site.

Using the Wilson site is a major win for the project because there is no need for landfill engineering (survey, design and permits) or landfill construction (improvements, site prep for Phases 2 and 3 disposal and ultimate closure) which resulted in substantial savings.

What was estimated to cost \$1.7 million has now been pared down to \$750,000 or less by disposing the material on the private land.

“This savings means we can go further – dredge more – basically get more for the money,” said Michael Hansen with McGill Associates.

Design and permitting for the Wilson site will cost \$150,000 with a \$600,000 disposal fee levied by Wilson – which McGill said could be less.

“He said he is willing to work with the town,” said McGill’s Joel Storrow.

The total sediment volume in the lake is estimated at 119,300 cubic yards.

If the landfill site is used for disposal during Phases 2 and 3 only 61,000 cubic yards could be removed to stay within the \$5 million budget.

Now, by using the Wilson property, 80,000 cubic yards can be removed which means more areas of the lake, riverine and wetlands can be dredged and opened up for recreational activities.

Hansen said Wilson is in the process of getting the required state and federal permits.

Once permits are in hand, engineering studies completed, and contractor bids awarded, the dredging of Phases 2 and 3 is expected to take over two years with seasonal and phase interruptions.

At peak operations, 8-10 trucks per day will be delivering 100-130 cubic yards of sediment to the Wilson site.

The exact cubic yard removal per

phase has increased with the new disposal site, but initial figures were as follows:

Phase 2 involves removing 60,000 cubic yards downstream of the Mirror Lake bridge – where the algae blooms are now appearing due to the shallow water and the hot weather. Referred to as Open Water Dredging, 1-6 feet of sediment will be removed to obtain 9-10 feet of water.

Phase 3 will optimize recreation by removing 13,700 cubic yards – or more -- from the upstream/riverine area between Hicks Road and Cullasaja Drive, removing 1-3 feet of sediment to obtain an av-

erage of four feet in depth. This phase ends at lot K of the Riverwalk subdivision.

Phase 3 is the Mill Creek Wetland corridors. This will also optimize recreation with two paddle boat corridors, 10-15 feet wide with a finished depth of 1 ½ to 2 feet deep.

This will involve removing 1,300 cubic yards and will require purchasing the wetlands from the state at \$70,000 to \$230,000 per acre.

The Town Board unanimously agreed to accept Wilson’s disposal site, authorize completion of design and per-

mitting, begin the contractor selection process, determine timing of the Phase 3 bid and then contractor selection.

Hansen and Storrow said it’s likely contractor bids for Phases 2 and 3 will be less if the town goes with the same contractor for both phases.

At June’s Town Board meeting, commissioners asked McGill to also come back with exact costs all the way around.

McGill’s engineering fees for Phases 2 and 3 – preliminary project scoping, design & permitting, disposal site assessment and construction administration of the dredge sites – will be \$976,500.



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SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING

And who is my neighbor?

Rev. Kirkland "Skully" Knight

The Episcopal Church of the incarnation

The recent World Cup soccer tournament hosted in the United States, Canada, and Mexico has been a unique opportunity for us to think about this question. Who is my neighbor? Over the course of the tournament, someone said that World Cup is just the United States having a giant sleepover with the cousins we never see because our parents don't like each other. It's certainly an interesting way to think about how we see people from other countries and how they see us.

One of the common themes in scripture is hospitality, and beyond hospitality, how we care for those less fortunate, namely widows and orphans. Why widows and orphans? Because at that time, in that social structure, these were two groups of people who had no one to care for them. They had no means of survival in the world in which they lived. This should be nothing new to any of us. We have heard these things over and over again if we have paid attention to scripture at all.

As we welcomed the world this summer, we opened our cities, we opened our little part of the world to any and all who would come, and they came. The Scottish, the Norwegians, the Argentinians, the English, the African nations, from all parts of the globe, all races and cultures — and it was beautiful. People here and abroad were a little unsure of how things would go here in the US as we hosted what is undeniably the largest sporting event on the planet, and we responded to the world with open hearts and open arms.

The Parable of the Good Samaritan in Luke's gospel is a response to the question, "Who is my neighbor?"

On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. "Teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

"What is written in the Law?" he replied. "How do you read it?"

He answered, "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind'[a]; and, 'Love your neighbor as yourself'[b]"

"You have answered correctly," Jesus replied. "Do this and you will live."

But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"

In reply Jesus said: "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he was attacked by robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went

• See SPIRITUALLY page 19

• PLACES TO WORSHIP •

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Assoc. Pastor: Rev. Wonyeong Lee 828-743-5298

Sundays: School at 9:30; Worship & Kids Worship 10:30

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CHRIST CHURCH OF THE VALLEY, CASHIERS

743-5470 • www.cashiers.church

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

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am in Sanctuary, Wed: Healing Eucharist 12 pm in Chapel,

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

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

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

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Sunday School: 10 am. Worship Service: 11 am

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Sunday: School 9:45a. Worship 11a & 7p. Bible Study 6p

Wed. Kidsquest 6p.; Worship 7p.

HIGHLANDS ASSEMBLY OF GOD

Randy Reed, Pastor 828-421-9172 • 165 S. Sixth Street

Wed. Bible Study: 6 p.m.; Sundays: Worship: 11

HIGHLANDS CENTRAL BAPTIST CHURCH

Pastor Dan Robinson • 11339 Buck Creek Road

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

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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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Services: 1st Fri.; 3rd Sat. & Rosh Hashanah & Yom Kippur.

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(4.5 miles from NC 107)

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

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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.

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Sunday School: 10 am. Worship Service: 11 am

• POLICE & FIRE REPORTS •

Highlands Police entries from June 13. 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: July 13

• Unit 1 was parked facing NE on US 64. Unit 2 was parked facing NE on US 64. Unit 1 was left in 3rd gear and rolled across travel lane, hitting Unit 2. Unit 1 and Unit 2 came to rest in roadway.

July 15

• Vehicle 1 was travelling north on NC 28. Vehicle 2 was legally parked in parallel parking spaces along roadside. Witness advised that Vehicle 1 tried to park in a parallel parking space behind Vehicle 2, failed, and struck Vehicle 2 while leaving the space. Vehicle 2 remained parked. Vehicle 1 then parked on Church Street and advised they did not know of the crash.

• Unit 2 was traveling south on US 64. Unit 1 was making a

right turn from Pinecrest Road onto US 64. The left front of Unit 1 hit the right back fender of Unit 2. Unit 2 went off the right side of the road down a small embankment and collided with some small trees.

July 17

• Vehicle 1 was traveling SW on Hicks Road. Vehicle 2 was traveling NE and turning right from Mirror Lake Road onto Hicks Road. Vehicle 1 made a u-turn in front of Vehicle 2. Vehicle 1 and Vehicle 2 collided. Then Vehicle 1 drove away.

Calls responded to: July 13

• At 3:30 p.m., officers received a report of a larceny of a cell phone valued at \$169 at the Texaco station on NC 106 (Dillard Road).

• At 6:04 p.m., officers responded to a call of an unattended death of a 72-year-old man at a residence on Cobb Road.

July 14

• At 11:14 p.m., officers responded to a call of an unattended death of a 69-year-old woman

at a residence on Brushy Face Road.

July 16

• At 5:30 p.m., officers received a report about someone making comments about human trafficking at a location on Main Street.

July 18

• At 2:46 p.m., officers responded to a report of shoplifting at Potpourri on Main Street where \$128 of jewelry was taken.

The Highlands Fire & Rescue log from July 14.

July 14

• At 11:21 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a location on N. 4th Street.

• At 5:22 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Dendy Orchard Road.

• At 10:14 p.m., the dept. responded to a motor vehicle accident on NC 28 south (Walhalla Road).

July 15

• A little past midnight, the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Ring Road.

• At 4:14 a.m., the dept. pro-

vided public assistance at a residence on Brushy Face Road.

• At 8:54 a.m., the dept. responded to a motor vehicle accident on NC 106 (Dillard Road).

July 16

• At 4:02 p.m., the dept. responded to a mutual aid call from Cashiers FD but it was cancelled en route.

July 17

• At 10:39 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on West View Way.

• At 12:47 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Birchwood Drive.

• At 1:17 p.m., the dept. provided traffic control at US 64 east and Cherrywood Drive.

• At 1:23 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Thornhill Drive.

• At 5:20 p.m., the dept. provided public assistance at a location on US 64 west (Franklin Road).

July 18

• At 1:33 p.m., the dept. provided public assistance at a location on US 64 west (Franklin Road).

• At 2:26 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Hickory Knut Gap Road.

• At 6:02 p.m., the dept. provided mutual aid to the Cashiers FD.

July 19

• At 11:33 a.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a location on Chestnut Hill Drive.

• At 7:54 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a location on Main Street.

July 20

• At 11:37 a.m., the dept. provided public assistance at a location on Main Street.

July 21

• At 5:07 a.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a location on Main Street.

...SPIRITUALLY from page 18

away, leaving him half dead. A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, brought him to an inn and took care of him. The next day he took out two denarii[c] and gave them to the innkeeper. 'Look after him,' he said, 'and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.'

"Which of these three do

you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?"

The expert in the law replied, "The one who had mercy on him."

Jesus told him, "Go and do likewise."

The lawyer wanted to know who he had to love — the minimum — and Jesus doesn't really answer his question. Instead of telling him who was included in the group, he asked him, "Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?" He didn't tell him the man who had been robbed was his neighbor, he told him that the Samaritan who had shown hospitality and kindness, had been a neighbor to the

man in need.

As Jesus tends to do, he doesn't answer the question in the way we might think. His answers are open, not closed. They move us to action rather than giving us a sense that we've done all we need to do. We are not necessarily called to figure out who our neighbors are, we are called to be neighbors to all of God's children. While our world leaders may not always get along, and they may try to tell us who our neighbors are and are not, it seems that the people of the world can manage get along just fine. The World Cup (or the Great American Sleepover) just reminded us all that we already know how to be neighbors, and how to love each other.



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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-pm 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

2nd Tuesdays

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

Tuesdays

• Strength Training at the Rec Park 8:15-9:15 am.
• At Wayfarers Chapel, Workshop for Writers – 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.

Wednesdays

• 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.

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 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.

Through July 25

• At The Bascom, "Connecting to Place: Blue Ridge Craft Trails Invitational 2026" in the Thompson Gallery. The exhibition brings together 20 craft artists from communities across WNC, including Franklin, Waynesville, Dillsboro, Bryson City, Cullowhee, Canton, Cherokee, Maggie Valley, and Brasstown. Admission is free.

July 22-25, Wed.-Sat.

• At CK Swan, a Capucine De Wulf Jewelry Trunk Show. Enter to win a Berry Gem Classic Hinged Bangle. 223 N. 4th Street, Highlands. 828-526-2083.

Thurs., July 23

• At Old Edwards Farm Pavilion, Highlands Cashiers Chamber Music Festival's Martinis, Mozart & More. \$125/person. Refreshments with cash bar. Call for required reservations. 828-526-9060 or order online at www.hcmusicfestival.org. 828-526-9060

Fri., July 24

• Highlands Neighborhood Coalition is sponsoring a seminar at 9:30am at the Rec Center entitled "Local Government 101 How Government Works" with a specific focus on local government and its critical importance to the quality of life of its residents. This seminar is open to the public and free. It will feature Mac McCarley, a retired partner at Parker Poe and a well-known legal expert on Local Government and Public Policy.
• The Asheville Mountain Boys Outdoor Concert at 51 Cowee School Drive, Franklin. 5p.

Sun., July 26

• A viewing of the film, "Bonhoeffer" at 6p at Highlands Central Baptist Church downstairs in

the Shortoff Baptist Church Fellowship Hall, 11339 Buck Creek Road.



Thurs., July 30

• A FREE viewing of The Return of Lake Toxaway as a prelude to HC Film Festival. 5-7p, viewing, reception, and Q&A at The Village Green of Cashiers.



Sat., Aug 1

• Pop Up Pipers

Fri.-Sun., Aug 7-9

• 48th Annual Antique Show at The Village Green Commons, 180 Frank Allen Road in Cashiers. Fri., 7:30a-5p; Sat., 9a-5p; Sun., 11a-4p. Antique hand-sewn door prize.

Sat., Aug. 8

• Open House at the Highland Fire & Rescue Dept. at 149 Franklin Road. Free hotdogs, fire truck rides, rescue demonstration, car seat checks, agility drills for the kids. 11a-3p.

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.



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. This roaring '20s themed celebration with a live jazz band.



• Highlands-Cashiers Film Festival Summer Screening. Never Not Yours + Meet the Director. 2p a PAC. FREE. This family dramedy tells the story of three adult siblings visiting their family's remote retired cabin for a weekend visit.

Sept. 1

• Pop Up Pipers

Sat.-Sun., Sept. 19-20

• The Power of a Beautiful State: a 2-Day inner journey to calm, creativity and connection. The Mountain Retreat Ctr., \$150 to \$275. Info: LindaChmar@gmail.com or 404-909-9904

Sept. 27

• Chef Dinners at OEI's The Farm. Annual Champagne Dinner featuring the 8th annual Oyster & Seafood Fest with Lowcountry Oyster Co. Tickets start at \$234. Includes dinner drinks, shuttle and gratuity. Book online.

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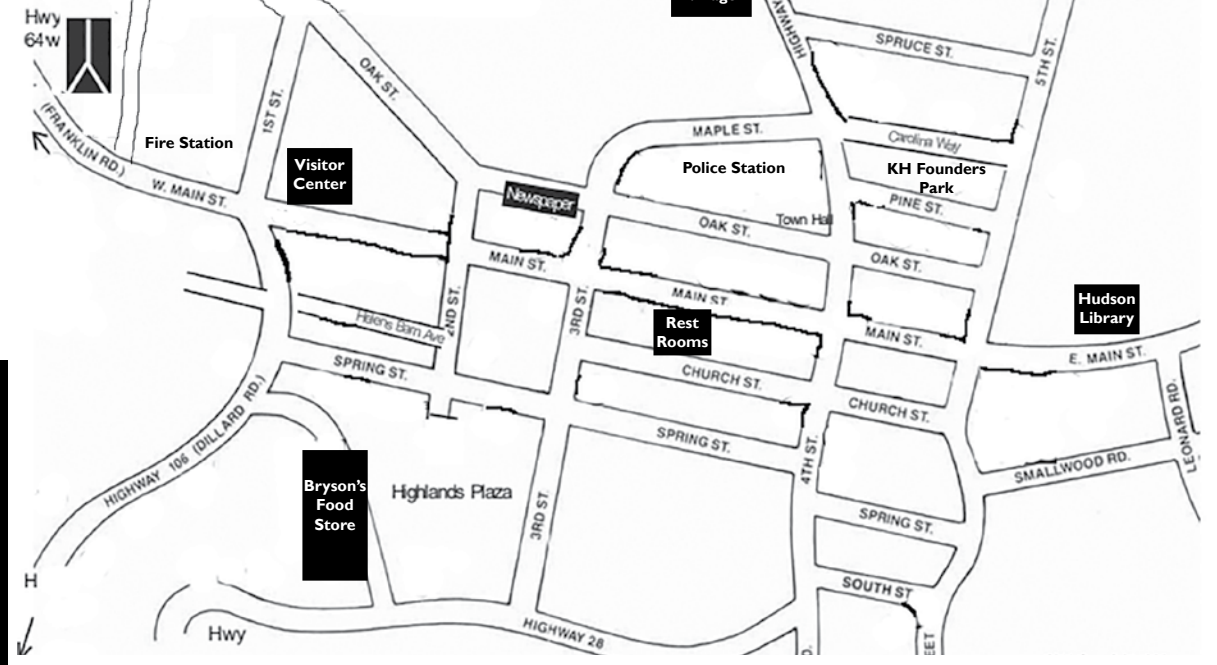
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