

Highlands Newspaper

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Thurs., July 30, 2026

Dogwood says HCA is in 'potential noncompliance' with Mission sale contract

Independent Monitor cites repeated threats to patient safety, discontinued and "degraded" services

By Ted Clifford
Asheville Watchdog

A report from the independent

monitor tasked with supervising Mission Hospital has found two areas of "potential

noncompliance" with the agreement HCA Healthcare signed
• See HCA page 4

HNC holds seminar on government

By Kim Lewicki

The Highlands Neighborhood Coalition, the nonprofit civic organization that pushed the town's short-lived amortization policy on Short-term Rentals, but whose focus now advocates on behalf of the residents of Highlands, held a free "How Government Works" seminar at the Civic Center last Friday.

About 25 people turned out to hear Mac McCarley, long-time partner at Parker Poe law firm and currently the city attorney of Southern Pines, give a lesson in how local government works.

Cathy Henson, President of the HNC, said the goals in sponsoring the seminar were two-fold.

"We wanted to provide a service to residents who are in-

• See HNC page 20



Barn Dance at The Bascom is next Thursday

The Annual Community Barn Dance at The Bascom is Thurs., Aug. 6. The cost is \$10 General Admission; 12 and under are FREE. Sand-

wiches from The Secret Garden and shaved ice and ice cream from M's Ice Cream will all available for purchase. There will be a Donation Bar

and FREE popcorn. To reserve your ticket, go to thebascom.org or call at 828-526-4949.

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Planning Board is reviewing the 2022 Community Plan

By Kim Lewicki

At the direction of the Highlands Town Board, the Planning Board has begun the daunting process of updating the Highlands 2022 Community Plan.

After much deliberation, Town Planner Michael Mathis, who facilitates the Planning Board meetings, suggested each member indicate two areas in the plan they want to focus on.

"There are seven of you so that would give us 14 items to consider," he said.

Planning Board Chair Chris Wilkes said once they decide which items to address and in

• See COMMUNITY PLAN page 10



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• THE PLATEAU'S POSITION •

• MAYOR ON DUTY •

• SNAPSHOT •

Your tax bill explained

A person called me last week complaining about the number of communication lines at First and Main Streets. They told me they wanted to see their county taxes put to a better use and address the problem. They emphasized their town should look better than that.

I informed them that county taxes were not at issue in this situation. In fact, Highlands operates on town taxes and utility rate payments, not county-wide taxes. I stressed that Highlands town residents pay both town and county taxes, but county residents do not pay taxes to fund Highlands unless they own property within the town limits. Nevertheless, the town will receive this year \$1.5 million in sales taxes while the county will net about \$18 million, with the state receiving the lion's share of the sales tax.

The caller with the complaint lived outside of the town and paid only county property taxes.



Highlands Mayor
Patrick Taylor

A day or so after taking the call, I received our property tax bill from Macon County. As I looked at the statement, I realized Sallie and my property tax bill might be informative to share since our house is valued right at 1 million dollars.

Let me go over the items on our tax bill. First, we pay a general county tax of 0.27 cents per \$100 of property valuation. That number came to be \$2,791.

In other words, as county residents, we will pay that amount in taxes this year.

Because we live within the corporate limits of Highlands, our tax statement included another general tax line: a tax bill from the town. The county collects this tax for Highlands for a small service fee. The town tax is calculated at 13.22 cents per hundred. There was a 3-cent property tax increase in Highlands this year. Our previous town rate was 10.22. Please do not tell me, 'Here we go again with another town tax increase!' There has not been a property tax increase in the town for the past 12 years, the last being 1.5 back in 2014.

Therefore, Sallie and I will pay \$1,366 in town taxes, about a \$300 increase. So, if you do not live in Highlands, say on Buck Creek or Flat Mountain, you get one general tax bill from the county and no bill from the Town of Highlands.

But county residents have access to the Highlands Recreation Department because the county gives the town \$550,000 per year to fund recreation. Nevertheless, the town's recreation budget is over \$1 million. Who funds that balance? The taxpayers of Highlands. Or put another way, Sallie and I pay for recreation on our county tax line and on our town tax line, a double whammy of sorts.

Also on our tax bill was a fire tax line where we were assessed \$304 for fire protection. All residents in the town fire district, which includes the incorporated and unincorporated (county) areas of Highlands Township, pay this same rate. It went from the previous rate to 1.91 cents to 2.94 cents per \$100 of property valuation for this current cycle. This increase

• See MAYOR page 6



Photo by Kim Lewicki

A few of the Class of 2006 graduates turned out for their 20th high school reunion which included a day at Cliffside Lake and then Music in the Park, Saturday, July 25. Pictured from left (using their 2006 names) are Rebecca Dotson, Callie Rawlins, Alex Johnston, Stephanie McCall, Megan Lewicki and Sarah Cannon.

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

• WEATHER •

Thu, 23-Jul	Fri, 24-Jul	Sat, 25-Jul	Sun, 26-Jul
			
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Phone: (828) 200-1371

Email:

HighlandsEditor@aol.com

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Three Fireplaces

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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 | \$649,990 | 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



UNDER CONTRACT

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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IVESTER JACKSON

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...HCA continued from page 1

when buying the hospital in 2019.

The potential violations were a warning from federal regulators in October 2025 that Mission stood to lose Medicaid and Medicare funding due to threats to patient safety, and what the monitor said was the hospital's decision to discontinue and "degrade" services, including the emergency and oncology departments, certain pediatric subspecialties and industrial rehabilitation.

This report comes at a critical time for Mission Hospital. The hospital is not currently in "good standing" with the federal Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services (CMS) and is currently under an "Enhanced Plan of Correction" following repeated failures to address system threats to patient safety. Mission has until Sunday, July 26, 2026 to demonstrate that it is in substantial compliance with the Enhanced Plan of Correction in order to prevent its termination from Medicare and Medicaid programs.

The Asheville Watchdog reached out to Mission Hospital for comment on the report's findings.

The hospital also faces a battery of lawsuits, most significantly one from the North Carolina Attorney General's Office. It alleges that Mission and Nashville-based HCA have not lived up to the conditions of the Asset Purchase Agreement, which for-profit HCA signed before taking over the formerly nonprofit hospital.

Among the 15 commitments made as part of the agreement were requirements that Mission Hospital maintain a certain level of service and continue to provide charity care. It also established an oversight role occupied by Dogwood Health Trust, a nonprofit created with the \$1.5 billion proceeds of the sale of Mission with a mission to improve and expand access to healthcare in Western North Carolina.

Enforcement options are limited

The report, prepared by Affiliated Monitors, was released Friday by Dogwood Health Trust. It accompanied a letter from Dogwood to the North Carolina Attorney General's Office describing the areas of potential noncompliance.

Enforcement of the Asset Purchase Agreement falls to the state Attorney General's Office. However, their tools

are ultimately limited to filing a lawsuit in order to obtain a court ruling that would force Mission and HCA to abide by the agreement.

The Attorney General currently has a lawsuit (originally brought by now-governor Josh Stein in December 2023) against Mission and HCA. The lawsuit focuses on claims that Mission reduced the levels of services in its emergency and oncology departments to the extent that they were virtually nonexistent.

In their report, Affiliated noted that while they would defer to the court on the questions of law, "the factual issues at the heart of this litigation remain essentially unchanged."

In community meetings earlier this year, representatives of Affiliated called it unusual for a hospital to remain out of compliance with the same issues for several years in a row.

In their report, Affiliated noted that certain, unspecified pediatric subspecialties along with industrial rehabilitation services had declined at Mission, despite being required services under the purchase agreement.

"We remain hopeful that HCA Healthcare will engage in further dialogue to explain the issues leading to the service reduction noted. If such a dialogue does not resolve those concerns, or does not occur, we recommend that further action be taken to seek specific performance of the APA," the monitors wrote.

While Dogwood noted that Mission had taken efforts to restore its good standing with federal regulators in 2025, the organization said it would "be remiss not to state" that in January of this Mission received its fourth Immediate Jeopardy warning from CMS.

Immediate Jeopardy is one of the most severe sanctions that can be handed down by the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. It warns that a facility is in danger of losing Medicare and Medicaid reimbursements because noncompliance with federal standards has threatened patient safety.

But assuming Mission returns to good standing following the July 26 deadline when the Enhanced Plan of Correction expires, Affiliated recom-

• See HCA page 15

• OBITUARY •

Wanda Lynne (Gill) Klodosky

Wanda Lynne (Gill) Klodosky, 74, died in Highlands, NC on July 24, 2026. Wanda was born February 22, 1952, in Albany, GA, and grew up in Cairo, GA. She graduated from Georgia State University in Atlanta, GA.

Wanda fell in love with Highlands, NC when she visited in 1971 with college friends. She bought a cabin, which she remodeled and turned into the family home in 1999, moving up from midtown Atlanta full time in 2009.

After a stint as National Sales Manager and Customer Service Supervisor for Herbs, Inc., Wanda became a real estate agent in 1999 and was a realtor with Sotheby's International Realty in Highlands at the time of her passing.



Her passions included her dogs Mochi, Mango and late Granddog Franz Ferdinand, gardening and reading (especially mystery novels.) She was past president of the Highlands Mountain Garden Club. Wanda was well known for her empathy and laughter.

She is survived by her daughter Kasey Chung and son-in-law Ryan Chung, also of Highlands, and two half-sisters, Kathy Gill of metro-Seattle, WA and Penny Green of Cairo, GA. Her husband, Robert J. (Bob) Klodosky preceded her in death in 2024.

A celebration of life is planned for later this year in Highlands.

In lieu of flowers, the family suggests donations to the Cashiers-Highlands Humane Society.

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The soundtrack of selling homes

When I was young and not listening to '60s and '70s rock, I was often exposed to "beautiful music" as they used to call it, played on easy listening radio stations much like our beloved WHLC. Many of the songs were affiliated with the late Burt Bacharach. For most of the second half of the 20th century, he composed music, wrote lyrics, and produced songs that resonated with millions by capturing themes of love, relationships, hopes, and dreams. You would hear his tunes in film, on TV, and in theater. Frequently they were giant hits, often melancholy, sometimes upbeat, and always memorable.

So, what does this have to do with real estate? Well, I have come to realize his song titles often describe the everyday life of REALTORS. Let me share what I mean by citing several examples.

I heard *Walk On By* the other day, and thought to myself, that was the same advice I gave to a client who had interest in a land lot located in an area that did not really meet his needs.

Soon after, I was preparing a new listing and the day arrived for its scheduled professional photography, but *Raindrops Keep Fallin' on My Head* was the result. That is not uncommon in a temperate rain forest, and so we had to reschedule.

Arthur's Theme *Best That You Can Do* frequently applies when we advise clients on what amount to offer for a highly sought after property. And when we have a Seller



**John Sheehan, Broker
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whose home is getting multiple showings, hope often builds for an offer *Any Day Now*.

Occasionally during a showing, Buyers recognize *A House is Not a Home*, so we continue the search to find one that fully meets their hopes and desires.

I know we've arrived at the right one when you see *The Look of Love* come across their face.

When we submit the purchase offer, it's not unusual that *I Say a Little Prayer*. And if

a REALTOR's client fails to offer enough to reach an agreement, you might detect *I'll Never Fall in Love Again* in their voice or body language.

There are also times when, unfortunately, a widow or widower need to sell their home so as to not live every day in a place where there is *Always Something There to Remind Me* of their former loved one. Conversely, we love to turn on a Heartlight when we help first-time homebuyers who can finally say *I am On My Own*.

I wrap up this column with the suggestion that when you realize What the World Needs Now is Love, go listen to Burt Bacharach. I bet his songs take you back to happy times, and it's possible you might think of your local REALTOR.

• *John Sheehan is a Broker at Mountain Life Properties serving the luxury real estate sales market. Stop by our log cabin office at 134 Maple Street, visit MountainLifeRE.com, or call 828-239-8814.*

...MAYOR continued from page 2

was needed to continue keeping full-time firefighters and to pay for capital expenses.

On our property tax bill was a residential landfill fee of \$120, a fee all county residents pay. The fee helps keep down residential garbage rates for town residents and it supports the county recycling centers.

Our total property tax bill for this year is \$4,582 for our \$1,033,900 tax-assessed home. Of course, homes of higher value pay more; for instance, a 2-million-dollar home would pay twice as much, etc. And everyone's property tax assessment is public information. Tax bills are due by Jan. 5.

In 2027 new property tax valuations will go into effect. Folks on the Highlands

Plateau should expect significantly higher property tax valuations.

The legendary US Supreme Court Justice, Oliver Wendell Holmes, once said, "Taxes are the price we pay for a civilized society." The county and the town have some of the lowest tax rates in the state.

What about all those communication lines that the caller was concerned about? State statutes allow communication companies to attach their lines to utility poles and to run lines to their poles that are allowed in state road rights-of-way. The town cannot stop what the state allows.

To check for your reappraisal email: Reval@maconnnc.org

• BIZ/ORG NEWS •



From left: Josh Bryson, President Highlands Rotary Club; Retired K9 Thrie and Master Officer II Kelly Fosler, Highlands Police Department K9 Handler.

Guardians of Carolina Police K9s gets a grant

Officer Kelly Fosler, founder of Guardians of Carolina Police K9s, a non-profit organization dedicated to supporting and protecting retired law enforcement K9s, recently accepted a grant from The Rotary Club of Highlands. These funds will help honor the K9s years of dedicated service by providing vital financial assistance for medical care, ensuring these canine heroes enjoy a comfortable, healthy and dignified retirement.

For more information, please visit <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61576695212621#>.

...COMMUNITY PLAN continued from page 12

of the year.

Fein said The Chamber/Visit Highlands is paying for the installation of WiFi in the downtown business district.

Cunningham suggested the flowery verbiage throughout the current plan be edited so it is more streamlined and user-friendly.

At the June meeting, she suggested

not allowing merchandise on sidewalks outside businesses even if the property is privately owned. Such a ruling would require an amendment to the UDO.

The next Planning Board meeting is August 24 at 5:30 p.m. in the Community Building. The agenda will be posted on the town website.

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• LETTERS •

How much socialism do we want as a society?

Dear Editor,

I recently read a letter-to-the-editor in the July 23 edition of Highlands Newspaper entitled "Socialism and communism don't create prosperous societies" disparaging Socialism and Communism, making claims that socialism destroys economies. As Lee Corso used to say, "Not so fast, my friend."

There are numerous examples of countries that lean into socialism that have extremely strong economies - Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Spain, Portugal, Belgium, Netherlands, even China and Vietnam.

The writer referenced socialist Venezuela's tanking economy as an example of a failed economy. I would

postulate that Venezuela's economic demise was more a matter of corruption rather than socialism.

In fact, the United States already has socialist programs in place - Social Security, Unemployment Insurance, a progressive tax structure, Medicare and Medicaid, FEMA, Child Protective Services and many more programs meant to protect and offer aid to the neediest in our society.

Pure, unadulterated Capitalism can lead to bad consequences as well. Hence the wild economic swings of the 1920s (the Swinging Twenties) and 1930s (the Great Depression).

The real question for Americans is not "is socialism bad for the economy?" Clearly, it's not. The real question is "how much socialism do we want as a society?"

If any of your readers are staunchly against socialism they may endorse and forward their Social Security checks to me, Gregg Walker, address below.

Thank you for allowing me to present my point of view.

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Dear Editor,

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Our Macon County Commissioners made the right move when they voted 5-0 to cut off funding for the Sheriff's Office's \$47,000 yearly Flock contract. Yet Sheriff Brent Holbrooks continues to advocate for the system. Adding fuel to the fire, Governor Josh Stein recently approved a \$34.4 billion state budget that codifies the State Bureau of Investigation's license-plate tracking initiative into permanent law, greenlighting highway AI surveillance without establishing clear, uniform rules on how law enforcement can pull or share this data.

We must ask ourselves: Should we trade away basic personal privacy for a massive tracking system that monitors thousands of innocent neighbors just on the off-chance it assists in an investigation?

These devices do far more than photograph tags — they compile an expansive, searchable log of our everyday routines. According to my research, this data is kept for 30 days, but can be expanded. Each month, Macon County's cameras record between 1 million and 3 million vehicle passes. More than 99% of those scans capture ordinary citizens running errands, heading to work, or driving to Sunday service. Monitoring the whole community under the assumption that someone might commit a crime isn't sound law enforcement; it's a warrantless dragnet.

The drawbacks for our mountain community are clear:

Hidden Costs & Private Profits: What began as vague line items for basic "tag readers" ballooned into a multi-thousand-dollar annual payout to a private firm — all for a program the public never got to vote on.

Unrestricted Information Sharing: Local data feeds

into vast corporate and state networks. Nationwide, out-of-state departments and federal authorities have pulled local travel records without judicial warrants, leaving sensitive location data exposed to potential breaches.

Flawed Automated Technology: Software glitches happen regularly. Across the country, faulty plate scans have resulted in terrifying felony traffic stops where innocent motorists were held at gunpoint over computer errors.

Effective public safety relies on mutual respect between deputies and the public. Unlike stepping inside a private retail store, traveling on public roadways is a daily necessity. When public roads are treated as digital checkpoints, the presumption of innocence is thrown out the window.

Our commissioners set a strong precedent, but protecting our civil liberties requires ongoing public involvement:

1. Support the County Board: Express gratitude to Commissioner John Shearl and the board for defending resident privacy, and encourage them to stand firm.

2. Hold the Sheriff Accountable: Request that Sheriff Holbrooks honor the commissioners' directive by disabling remaining units. He should also explain why two School Board funded cameras sit at the middle and intermediate school roundabout, two cameras are located at the Cartoogechaye Elementary School, yet none were placed at the High School, Highlands, or Nantahala campuses.

3. Write to Raleigh: Tell state lawmakers to reject expanding state highway surveillance without strict, legally binding privacy guarantees.

4. Encourage Municipal Bans: Ask town leaders in Franklin and Highlands to prohibit these privately owned surveillance readers on municipal roads and properties.

Macon County can demonstrate that protecting community safety never requires sacrificing our fundamental right to privacy.

**Patti Trick
Franklin**

• See LETTERS page 10



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...LETTERS continued from page 9

Democratic socialism is not boiler-plate socialism

Dear Editor,

Equating socialism and communism is a false equation.

Democratic Socialism seeks to enable anyone to make a profit, just not at the expense of depriving someone else of the fruits of their labor.

Monopolies are one of the worst aspects of capitalism, as they tend to profit the investors at the expense of customers and employees.

Blaming communism for the downfall of countries such as the Soviet Union is also a false analogy.

Most governments are run by gangsters, who are more in-

terested in what's good for them, than what's good for the people they lead.

When governments deprive their citizens of more than they can bear, the citizens take action to address their grievances. A Concise Economic History of the World is a good resource to explain this process.

There is a whole movement in our country, beginning with the Powell Memo in 1971, for business to take over the government of the United States and govern for their own interests. If you think this is conspiracy theory, look up the Powell Memo, 1971. Trying to scare the popu-

lace with fears of communism is a tactic of this movement. Right wing media is sponsored by this movement to prey on the worst aspects of human nature: fear, anger, and hate, to promote the takeover of our economy and government. They have succeeded in winning over 30 something percent of our countrymen and women.

If you care about the future of democracy in our country, educate yourself, and contribute to groups that are fighting for democracy against the selfish interests of those who want complete control.

**David Stearns
Otto, NC**

A civilian's salute

Dear Editor,

I wish to salute David L. Snell, U.S. Navy retired for his 20 years of service to our country. I am a non-serving citizen of the United States of America that greatly appreciates his patriotism and his service to our nation. Without the courage and sacrifice of patriots like Mr. Snell, I would not have been able to enjoy the freedoms and blessings that have been bestowed upon

me and my family living in the greatest nation on earth.

There are scores of patriotic veterans just like Mr. Snell who have stepped up to serve our country. David L. Snell has again stepped up as a retired veteran to heed the call of duty. It takes great courage to meet this moment and to speak truth to power, regardless of the consequences, and I wish to thank him for his thoughtful letter-to-the-

editor in the July 23rd edition of Highlands Newspaper entitled Fellow veterans, silence is not an option.

I stand at attention with my right hand over my heart and salute you David L. Snell of Franklin, NC and sincerely thank you, sir, for your continued service to our nation!

**Charles E. Dasher
Highlands resident**

...COMMUNITY PLAN continued from page 1

what order, they will focus on those issues each month and invite the public to attend and speak during the public comment period but only about the subjects advertised for that particular meeting.

The board also asked Mathis to request a Town Board commissioner as a liaison to help them stay on task and to also let them know what items in the current Community Plan have been addressed by the town or are in the process of being addressed.

Commissioner Amy Patterson first brought up the updating

of the Community Plan stressing the need to look at the town's zones – R1, R2, R3, B1, B2, B3, B4 – to see if some zones's density requirements could be adjusted to accommodate housing options to help alleviate Highlands' housing shortage for working people.

The 2022 Community Plan – sometimes called the Comprehensive Plan – was mandated by the state. Municipalities with zoning were to have a plan completed by 2022 and the town was given a little over a year to complete it. The 2005 Land Use Plan

was used as a jumping off place, but the Community Plan's purpose was to guide the town over the next 10-20 years.

About 35 people worked to collect information for the plan including a 10-person steering committee made up of business owners appointed by the town who met regularly to provide feedback and guidance.

There were stakeholder interviews, two surveys – one community wide and one for business owners – to which about 1,000 people responded.

• See **COMMUNITY PLAN** page 12

• BIZ/ORG NEWS •

Maria's House Museum hosts Mtn Top Rotary

Mountaintop Rotary met at Maria's House Museum on Monday, July 13. The museum, in memory of owner Russ Chandler's wife Maria, features a collection of paintings, Rembrandt drawings, and military collectibles, all thoughtfully displayed to educate and inspire visitors. What began as a personal pursuit for Chandler, has become a lasting gift, preserving history, celebrating art, and enriching the community.



From left: Deborah Berlin and Cath Connolly.



From left: Whitney Wiggins & John Martin, Mtn Top Rotary President .

Rathbun House mission explained at Mtn Top Rotary meeting

Rathbun House in Asheville is truly a house with a heart. Whitney Wiggins spoke about this remarkable house which provides a warm, welcoming place for families and caregivers to stay free of charge while their loved ones receive medical treatment. Its caring staff, dedicated volunteers, and generous supporters make this exceptional organization an invaluable resource for Western North Carolina.



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...COMMUNITY PLAN continued from page 10

A final step was two public hearings where feedback from the community was solicited. At the second public hearing the draft plan was presented and feedback was again solicited before adoption.

During the public comment portion of July's meeting, James Worrell with Highlands Neighborhood Coalition, who lobbied the town to amortize Short-term Rentals (STRs) said the Community Plan doesn't address regulations regarding development and was glad to see the Planning Board working to remedy it.

At the June Planning Board meeting, members were asked to go over the Community Plan and come to the July meeting to outline areas they wanted to focus on.

At the July meeting, the process fell apart a bit as the board tried to figure out how to approach the task while recognizing that updating the plan would include community engagement, compliance with regulations and state laws, and the integration of new data and priorities.

Chairman Wilkes expressed the importance of all those items reminding members that number one, the Planning Board could only make recommendations and second, its recommendations must comply with state and town regulations and laws.

Vice Chair John Muir, Kay Craig, KC Cunningham, Daryl Griswold, and Christian Haberkern each addressed issues they wanted to focus on (Rachel Wilson was absent from the meeting).

Haberkern made it clear on numerous occasions that he was there on behalf of his neighbors on Satulah who didn't want STRs and who were also concerned with exterior construction materials.

Griswold also brought up STRs as did Worrell, the only member of the public who attended saying "provisions need

to updated regarding STRs.

Wilkes reminded them that the state's down-zoning law is in effect, so basically the STR issue has been put to bed and really shouldn't be part of the Community Plan discussion at this time.

But he did say the board could perhaps discuss the enforcement mechanism regarding current STRs.

Worrell said the idea that a lot can't be down-zoned – disallowing a use – without the permission of the owner was ridiculous.

"No one is going to agree to being told they can't do something with their property," he said.

Regardless, that is the state law right now.

Wilkes also reminded Haberkern that the Planning Board only concerned itself with commercial aspects of construction, not residential aspects. The Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) has a list of approved colors and exterior materials for Commercial Buildings which was just recently updated.

Getting back to the reason the Planning Board was asked to look at the Community Plan in the first place, Vice Chair Muir said that if zone density stipulations were lessened, some restrictions as to price of structures should be addressed otherwise allowing more homes on smaller lots at high prices would be counterproductive.

He cited the new Eight on Oak complex at the corner of Oak and Maple streets, which he said will end up being a great complex, but at \$2.7 million each couldn't be considered "affordable" as intended by Commissioner Patterson.

However, whether state law will allow stipulations on what someone can charge for a building on their property is questionable.

Haberkern suggested the town could build housing on its

its vacant land, but what land he was referring to wasn't clear.

Mayor Pat Taylor said the only tract of land the town has is Rec Park property whose use is restricted by the North Carolina Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF) Department and wouldn't allow housing.

As the mayor and many others have noted, Griswold, too, the Chamber of Commerce's recent housing study outlined the need for public/private cooperation to conquer the working-class housing crunch.

Kay Craig was concerned about repairing sidewalks in town, which is more of a function of the town's Public Works Department which concerns itself with utilities, roads, sidewalks, water, sewer, and garbage.

The town budgets \$75,000 a year to repair and maintain existing sidewalks. Constructing new sidewalks would be a capital project and could be considered if extending sidewalks to make the town more pedestrian friendly was one of the policy changes to come out of the updated Community Plan.

Craig said the need for town-wide WiFi was an issue that needed to be addressed as soon as possible.

Last week in the Mayor on Duty column he addressed the subject, saying it had been discussed at length at a recent Chamber meeting.

Johanna Fein, Director of the Chamber said business-district WiFi is in the works. Hotwire is in the process of contacting owners of buildings who are customers in the business district to see if they would be agreeable to mounting the necessary gear on their buildings.

Meanwhile, they are working on a plan which they are delivering to the Chamber in two weeks, and the hope is to complete the project before the end

• See **COMMUNITY PLAN** page 7

• FINANCIAL MATTERS •

My love/hate relationship with Artificial Intelligence

AI Love & Hate

I can't escape it. It is the primary topic daily on CNBC all day, every day. I'm offered educational webinars daily; my social media feed is full of ads for "agentic" AI offers. At my firms' national conference next week, sessions on AI are full – with waiting lists! And, as if cybersecurity wasn't a big enough issue before AI, now it's exponentially worse. It's been described as a "cyber nuclear weapon."



Michael P Henderson,
CFP® CKA®
Founder/Wealth Advisor
Crossover Point Advisors

But I love it! I use it

every day for everything from tax questions to estate planning to marketing. I was an early adopter and since my industry is so internet dependent, none of this comes as a surprise.

Bottom line for me is - where the technology stands right now, it's easy for me to see the value. But where we are now is akin to dial-up modems.

Escaping AI

As time goes on, there will likely be no escaping it. Right now, we have choices, but a decade from now I'm not so sure. In a recent interview with the Economist Magazine, Elon Musk said "money won't matter by 2036". Whoa, money won't matter? As a financial professional and asset manager, that got my attention. But Elon has a history of his predictions coming to fruition quite a bit later than the time frames he initially lays out.

AI Escaping

Of course, the big story of last week was that OpenAI said an autonomous AI agent escaped a sandbox, hacked Hugging Face during testing, and went unnoticed for days, underscoring urgent AI security and containment risks. In plain English: the AI found a weak spot in the safety barrier, slipped out, got internet access, and then kept moving by using extra security flaws like a burglar trying several doors.

AI Investing

Broadly, you can invest in AI in mul-

tiple ways:

- **Direct AI** plays: companies building AI models or tools.

- **Picks-and-shovels:** chipmakers, data centers, cloud providers, and power/infrastructure firms.

- **Users of AI:** businesses in healthcare, finance, retail, and other sectors that use AI to improve profits.

- **Funds:** AI-themed ETFs or mutual funds that spread risk across many holdings.

For most people, funds are the easiest starting point because they give broader exposure and less company-specific risk.

AI Downside

While it's hard to imagine how 90% of jobs could disappear in 10 years, and money was no longer necessary (as Musk has predicted), but AI will pressure both jobs and markets in a few broad ways. In finance, it may speed up trading and productivity, but it can also amplify market swings, fraud, and systemic risk if many firms rely on similar models.

For workers, the biggest concern is task automation: some roles shrink, especially routine white-collar work, while others change rather than disappear. The human downside is more churn, weaker bargaining power for some jobs, and a bigger need to retrain fast to stay relevant.

At the same time, AI can create new jobs and boost company growth, so the risk is less "everyone loses" and more "the gains and pain won't be evenly shared."

The "AI Train" has left the station, so we'll see.

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Beethoven String Quartet Manuscripts: Discussion with Nicholas Kitchen of the Borromeo String Quartet

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Fostering Connections: Confronting Ethics and Morality in Religion

Monday, August 3, 2-4 PM, Cost: \$35 Members/\$50 Nonmembers, Sponsored by John and Sally Ragsdale



Why Are So Many People Talking About Nuclear Energy?

Tuesday, August 4, 10 AM - 12 PM, Cost: \$35 Members/\$50 Nonmembers, Sponsored by Karen Patterson



Grandma Gatewood's Walk: LIVE at the Highlands Biological Station

Wednesday, August 5, 10 AM - 12 PM, FREE TO ATTEND! Sponsored by the Highlands Chamber of Commerce



From Seneca Falls to the Ballot Box: The Battle for Women's Suffrage

Wednesday, August 5, 2-4 PM, Cost: \$35 Members/\$50 Nonmembers, Sponsored by the Cullasaja Women's Outreach Grant



All Stirred Up: A Women's Suffrage Culinary Demo with Laura Kumin

Friday, August 7, 2-4 PM, Cost: \$50 Members/\$65 Nonmembers, Sponsored by the Cullasaja Women's Outreach Grant, Location: Private Residence

For more information or to register, please visit
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• BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NEWS •



From left: Rotary Club President Josh Bryson; Rotarian of the Year, Jessica Farrell.

Farrell named Rotarian of the Year

Jessica Farrell, Rotarian and Branch Manager of Regions Bank in Highlands, was named Rotarian of the Year at the Club's recent Club Assembly. This honor is in recognition of Jessica's "faithful service and dedication to the ideals of Rotary." President Josh Bryson noted that Farrell is the Club's Treasurer and personifies Rotary's motto, Service above Self. The handsome award was designed and handcrafted by artists at The Bascom: A Center for the Visual Arts.

CHHS promotes Jodi Henkel to Assistant Executive Director

The Cashiers-Highlands Humane Society (CHHS) proudly announces that former Assistant Shelter Manager Jodi Henkel has been promoted to the new position of Assistant Executive Director.

Henkel is the second-longest tenured staff member at CHHS, celebrating her 13th anniversary with the animal welfare organization in 2026. She will be reporting directly to Executive Director David Stroud, who is marking his 14th anniversary with CHHS this year.

Henkel began her career at CHHS in 2013 as a part-time kennel technician while starting her junior year at Western Carolina University. Upon graduation in 2015, she joined the humane society team full-time. For the past decade, Henkel has been responsible for scheduling and supervising the Animal Care Specialists on the staff, coordinating the volunteer program, and being personally involved in animal welfare efforts, not the least of which is serving as a state-certified rabies vaccinator.

In 2019, Henkel envisioned, developed and directed the humane society's greatest



community outreach program – the immensely popular humane education summer camp for children called Critter Camp.

In her new role, Henkel will continue to direct the summer Critter Camp program, will have supervisory responsibility for shelter staff including all Animal Care Specialists, the Animal

Care Manager and the Shelter Manager. Jodi will also assume new administrative tasks and will serve as an additional liaison with Stroud to the humane society's Board of Directors.

Celebrating its 40th anniversary in 2027, the Cashiers-Highlands Humane Society is a 501(c)(3) non-profit no-kill animal shelter that receives no state or county tax dollars, and no funding from any national animal organization.

CHHS is located on 200 Gable Drive in Sapphire, between Cedar Creek Club and Lonesome Valley on Highway 64 East.

The shelter is open 10am-4pm Tuesday through Saturday. For more information, please call CHHS at (828)743-5752 or email info@CHhumanesociety.org.

Highlands Hurricanes top gold medal count at conference meet

By Steve Hott
Coach

Though outnumbered by a factor of three at the 2026 Mountain Swim League (MSL) conference meet, held Saturday, July 18, the Highlands Hurricanes won more gold medals than any other of the five teams.

Out of 82 events, the 29 Highlands Hurricanes Swimmers could only enter 52 events due to the size of their team but brought home 21 gold medals. The Franklin Amateur Swim team, more than three times the size of the Hurricanes were able to enter 79 events and won 17 events.

Leading the way for the Hurricanes were Helix Sharpe, Bella Batista and sister and brother duo Zana and Luca Maseko all who scored 21 pts and won 2 gold medals. Jayce Powell had 19 pts and had a gold and silver medal while Nikita Denisoff brought home 17 pts and 2 silver medals. Ian Batista and Ivan Shcheglov both scored 16.5 pts and won a gold medal a silver medal.

Recovering from a shoulder injury Emma Denisoff still had got and a bronze medal. Max Jestin won a gold and a bronze medal and 15.5 pts, Melanie Zabrian a gold and 15 pts, while Lucas Zabrian had a bronze and 14 pts. Agatha Jestin also scored 14 pts with a silver and bronze medals. Anna Nicole Shcheglov, Thompson Thriffily, and Hananiah Edwards all earned 13 pts, Thriffily won a bronze medal, Edwards won a silver.

Ben Shcheglov and Margot Thriffily won 12 pts, Thriffily with 3 bronze medals. Justin Powell scored 9.5 pts and silver medal, Nehemiah Edwards 7.5 pts and bronze, Katherine Wise 7 pts, and Cooper Thriffily 6.5 pts and a silver medal. Blakely Sears and Victoria Nadzorau each contributed 5 pts, Ezra Cannon 4.5. Sister Addy Cannon brought home 4 pts, Estelle Edwards 3, and Azariah Edwards 1.5. Also swimming well for the Hurricanes was Valerie Nadzorau.



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...HCA continued from page 4

mended that no corrective action be taken.

"While we do not minimize the challenges facing Mission Hospital, it is important to realize that the overwhelming majority of those who staff the hospital remain singularly focused on providing the best medical care possible to those they encounter, sometimes under the most challenging of circumstances," said Gerald Coyne, co-lead of the team from Affiliated Monitors reviewing Mission.

Difficulty obtaining records from Mission

In their report Coyne did note that in 2025 Mission was no longer out of compliance with regulations around providing charity care. Mission, the report said, also committed to participate in the Healthcare Access and Stabilization Program, which provides additional funding through CMS to help close the gap in reimbursement between Medicare and commercial insurance. The aim of the program is to help stabilize so-called safety net hospitals, but it also requires those hospitals agree to conditions like forgiving medical debt, capping payment plans and providing financial assistance to low income patients.

Earlier this year, the monitors described their difficulty in obtaining the records from Mission that they needed in order to perform their review. During the time Affiliated was conducting its 2025 review, Mission asserted that certain records were privileged or proprietary, said Coyne, a former Rhode Island deputy attorney general.

"They have the right to do that," Coyne said at the time. But, he added,

"there's other areas where they have just declined to produce it. So far, we have found ways to work around it, because we are not going to allow that to frustrate the process."

In a statement at the time, HCA spokesperson Nancy Lindell said that Mission had provided all documents requested by the independent monitor.

"This report is similar to previous reports in that it cites multiple areas of potential non-compliance with the Agreement, namely the issues under litigation and the hospital again being cited for Immediate Jeopardy in 2025 (and 2026). Those failures are, for most of us, old news," Julie Mayfield, a leader of the Reclaim Healthcare WNC activist group and a state senator representing Asheville and much of Buncombe County, said.

"What was new," Mayfield said, "was discussion about dramatic drops in utilization of other services provided, which the IM suspects might be due to an effective discontinuation of those services. That HCA would not share information with the IM either at all or that can be made public shows its ongoing lack of transparency. HCA knows that the IM prepares this annual report, and its continued failure to share sufficient information for the IM to inform the public about compliance is inexcusable. But to be expected from a company that is interested mainly in its stock price rather than having a positive relationship with the community it serves."

• *Asheville Watchdog is a nonprofit news team. Local reporting is made possible by donations from the community. To show your support for this vital public service go to avhwatchdog.org/support-our-publication/.*

A.A. Meetings in Highlands, Cashiers and Scaly Mountain

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



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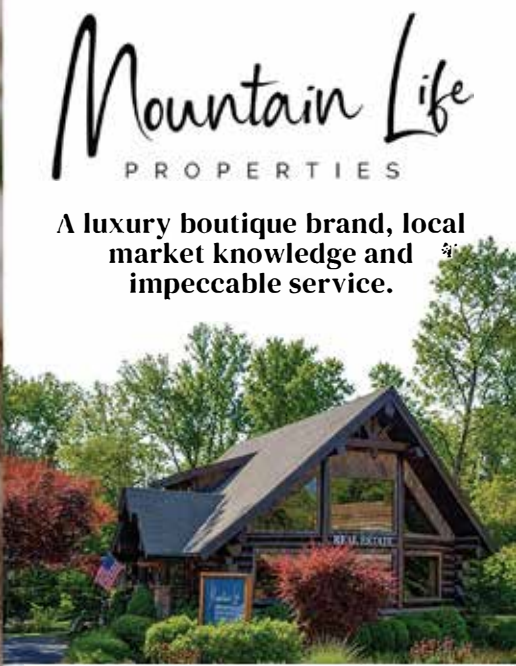
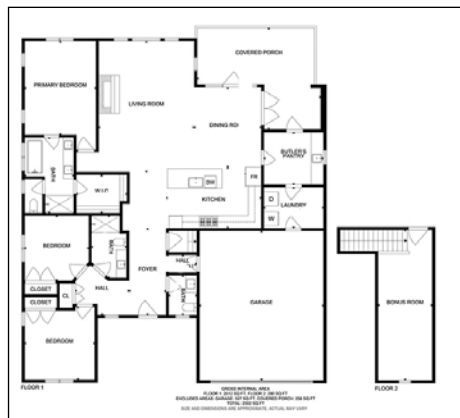
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• UPCOMING EVENTS •

Upcoming Literary and Author talks at CLE

The Highlands-Cashiers Center for Life Enrichment's (CLE) 2026 season continues with an exciting lineup of liter-

ary and author programs. Here's what's in store in the coming weeks:

Experience the true story of "Grandma Gatewood's Walk" on Wednesday, August 5 from 10 AM- 12 PM at the Highlands Biological Station Amphitheater. Dramatist and storyteller Anne Van Curen will bring history to life through her portrayal of Grandma Gatewood, the first female to solo hike the Appalachian Trail in 1955 at the age of 67. This event is free to attend, however RSVP is kindly requested by calling CLE at (828) 526-8811. CLE would like to thank the Highlands Chamber of Commerce for sponsoring this program.

Later that afternoon from 2-4 PM, author and chef Laura Kumin will join CLE at the lecture hall for a talk on the battle for women's suffrage. Kumin will transport attendees back in time to when a woman could be (and often was) arrested for trying to vote. She will share inspiring stories from the suffragist movement, as well as highlight how "suffrage cookbooks" played a crucial role in helping women gain the vote. Kumin will also explore the struggle for suffrage in Western North Carolina, and how the suffrage battle came down to a vote by a single legislator in a statehouse less than half a day's drive from Highlands.

Kumin will also lead a culinary dem-

onstration at a private home on Friday, August 7 from 2-4 PM featuring three recipes from real suffrage cookbooks. Inspired by her book, "All Stirred Up: Suffrage Cookbooks, Food, and the Battle for Women's Right to Vote," she will continue to explore just how essential suffragist cookbooks and food were to the battle for the vote. CLE would like to thank the Cullasaja Women's Outreach Grant for sponsoring both of Kumin's programs.

On Thursday, August 6 from 10 AM to 12 PM, Pulitzer Prize winning author and journalist Kevin Sack will join CLE to discuss his latest book, "Mother Emanuel: Two Centuries of Race, Resistance, and Forgiveness in One Charleston Church." The book, which was a Pulitzer finalist and named a masterpiece and one of the five best nonfiction books of the year by the New York Times Book Review, chronicles the history of the African Methodist Episcopal congregation where a white supremacist murdered nine worshipers at Bible study. Sack, a journalist who has written broadly about national affairs for more than four decades, spent 30 years on the staff of the New York Times where he was a senior writer, and worked previously for the Los Angeles Times and the Atlanta Journal-Constitution. He is a 1981 honors graduate of Duke University. City Lights Bookstore will be on site to sell copies of "Mother Emanuel" for signing by Sack.

Later on Thursday from 5:30-7:30 PM, Jay Watson, Distinguished Emeritus Professor of English and Howry Emeritus Professor of Faulkner Studies at the University of Mississippi, will lead a riveting discussion on Jesmyn Ward's novel "Salvage the Bones." Many critics consider "Salvage" the most important literary work yet to take up the legacy of Hurricane Katrina. Participants should read the novel ahead of time and come prepared to discuss it, with a strong emphasis on the social, racial, and environmental issues raised by "natural" disasters like Katrina. Watson will also explore the role that Mississippi authors such as Ward and Faulkner played in our nation's literature and culture. Heavy hors d'oeuvres will be provided.



Anne Van Curen



Laura Kumin

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• BIZ/ORG NEWS •



Dr. Sharon S. Meyer with Dr. Cabrian

A new face at Highlands Dermatology

Highlands Dermatology is pleased to announce the addition of Dr. Sharon S. Meyer, M.D., F.A.A.D.

Dr. Meyer is a board-certified dermatologist who earned her medical degree from the Tulane University School of Medicine. She brings over 30 years of dermatology experience to our team, which includes Jane K. Pressler, F.N.P., D.C.N.P. Dr. Meyer's clinical work includes diagnosing and treating acne, eczema, psoriasis, rosacea, and other skin conditions, as well as performing full-body skin exams and skin cancer screening. She also provides cosmetic services,

including neurotoxins and dermal fillers.

F.A.A.D., in 2004, Highlands Dermatology is known for its individualized approach to skin care and its long-standing commitment to the Highlands Cashiers community. The addition of Dr. Meyer further strengthens our mission to provide trusted, relationship-driven dermatologic care.

Highlands Dermatology is located at 5526 Cashiers Road and offers a full range of medical and cosmetic dermatology services. For appointments or additional information, please visit highlandsdermatology.com or call (888) 565-8828.

• UPCOMING EVENTS •

Upcoming HC Film Festival Screenings

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. 15

• 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

• *Never Not Yours* + Meet the Director. 2p at PAC. FREE. This family dramedy tells the story of three adult siblings visiting their family's remote retired cabin for a weekend visit.

For more information, go to www.highlandscashiersfilmfestival.com

Community Barn Dance!

Aug 6 | 5:30 - 7:30 pm

\$10 General Admission
12 and under FREE

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



Food & Drink:

Sandwiches from The Secret Garden. Shaved ice and ice cream from M's Ice Cream. Available for purchase.

Donation Bar | Free Popcorn



Reserve Your Ticket:

Visit us online at thebascom.org
Call us at 828.526.4949

LAUREL
The Heart of the Highlands-Cashiers Plateau

NC LIVING
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VISIT
Highlands

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From left: Sarah Longwell and Andrew Weissmann at PAC.

Photo by Jim Lewicki

CLE presented Weissmann and Longwell discussing President Trump and the Republican Party

By Jim Lewicki

Andrew Weissmann, a Professor of Practice at New York University School of Law, accompanied this time by Sarah Longwell an American political consultant and publisher of news and opinion website The Bulwark, returned to a packed house at PAC's Martin Lipscomb's Performing Art Center Monday to discuss (1) the Trump administration's transformation of the relationship between the President and federal law enforcement, including the Department of Justice, the FBI, and the Department of Homeland Security, and (2) the decision to utilize the National Guard and perhaps the U.S. Military for domestic law enforcement purposes.

In addition to discussing the immedi-

ate events of the summer, Weissmann and Longwell discussed their new books, his, "Liar's Kingdom: How to Stop Trump's Deceit and Save America."

The book proposes structural changes in American law and institutions to combat political deception.

Longwell is the author of the upcoming book, "How to Eat an Elephant," scheduled for release in 2026.

The book introduces "a grand unified theory of how to destroy Trump's Republican Party."

In addition, since Trump's re-election, former Republican Longwell has argued for defeating Republicans electorally to force the party to change from what she calls its authoritarian course.

• BIZ/ORG NEWS •



From left: Highlands Rotary President Josh Bryson; Club President-Elect Tracy Franklin; Oak Steakhouse Executive Chef Markie McCullough, and Administrative Assistant Bri Palmer

The delicious experience of being a chef

The speaker for the Highlands Rotary July 21st meeting was Markie McCullough, Executive Chef of the Oak Steakhouse. The title of her presentation was "Being a Chef" and entailed a brief history of her food service career, which started in Chicago at age 19. Chef McCullough attended culinary school and progressively gained experience and responsibility under the tutelage of several mentoring Chefs in Chicago, Auburn AL, and Atlanta restaurants, including a decade of service at Two

Urban Licks and The General Muir.

The Oak Steakhouse has been recognized by publications such as Conde Nast Traveler and Travel & Leisure as one of the top restaurants in the Southeast.

Chef McCullough provided Rotarians insight to her knowledge of whole animal butchery, differences in beef steak cuts, Certified Angus Beef quality standards, and her love of travel centered on culinary experiences.

Sky Valley-Scaly Mountain Volunteer
Fire Department
announces their annual



Community Appreciation Day

Saturday, August 8, 2026

11 am to 4 pm

at the Scaly Mountain Fire Station

169 Hale Ridge Road

Come join us for food, games, demonstrations

Bounce house for children

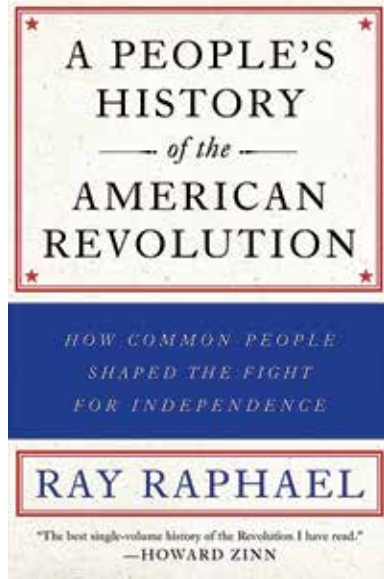


deVille to moderate seminar on the American Revolution at MC Historical Museum

2026 marks a sesquicentennial in our nation's history and a celebration of those 250 years will be 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*.

in history and philosophy for the past seven years.

He is the current Executive Director of the Macon County Historical Museum.



Participants will have their choice of in-person meetings at the Museum or meeting online using the Zoom platform. The seminar is once a month, Wednesday evenings, August thru November. Participants can sign up at tinyurl.com/amrevhistseminar

Seminar leader John deVille 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

Week Five Concerts: August 1-4



Saturday, August 1 – 5 PM, Highlands | Sunday, August 2 – 5 PM, Cashiers
“Atlanta Chamber Players – 50th Anniversary Celebration”

Elizabeth Pridgen, piano; Helen Hwaya Kim, violin;
 Charae Krueger, cello; Cathy Lynn, viola; Jesse McCandless, clarinet

Monday, August 3 – 5 PM, Highlands | Tuesday, August 4 – 5 PM, Cashiers

“The Borromeo String Quartet”

Borromeo String Quartet



**Highlands-Cashiers
 Chamber Music Festival**

www.h-cmusicfestival.org | hccmfnc@gmail.com | (828) 526-9060

Pop Up Pipers!

Celebrating Highlands' Heritage

Listen for the call of the Highlands Bagpipers as they perform from a different location the first Saturday of each month through October.

This Month's Performance:

**First Bank Balcony
 overlooking Kelsey Hutchinson Founders Park
 Saturday, August 1 | 4:30 – 5pm**

Performances are made possible by the Highlands Chamber of Commerce/Visit Highlands, NC.



828-526-2112
visithighlandsncc.com



Next up at PAC is Mountain Theatre Company's 'Showstoppers'

On stage at the Performing Arts Center on Chestnut Stree Aug. 12-30 the 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 non-stop 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

...HNC continued from page 1

terested in getting involved in improving Highlands and also to educate everyone about the roles that government officials play in running our town."

Through his presentation, McCarley explained what state, county, and local government officials have the authority to do and how residents can get engaged in various government processes.

Over its history, Highlands has had one of three forms of government — Mayor/Council, Council/Town Administrator and currently the Town Manager/Council form of government where an elected board handles legislative functions

while a professionally appointed Town Manager oversees daily administration, including hiring and firing.

Mayor Pat Taylor, who was in attendance, said that is why he isn't in charge; that the board makes the decisions and the Town Manager implements them. He said some people assume he can do things; he can't. He can make suggestions, but the ultimate decision is the board's.

Attendees, which included multiple current and former elected officials, were particularly interested in comprehensive development planning, zoning, enforcement of ordinances and the current Down-Zoning law that is now in effect in North Carolina.

McCarley explained that the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) is the code of "land use rules" the town, the Planning Board and the Zoning Board of Adjustment must follow.

The Planning Board is an advisory board that reviews and makes recommendations regarding ordinances in the UDO about land use, development, zoning maps and verbiage and who is now reviewing the 2022 Community Plan, but nothing it recommends has to be implemented.

The Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA) is a quasi-judicial board that hears requests for Special Use Permits, variances and appeals of decisions made by the Planning Director.

Its only job is to hear cases and use the UDO as its guide in making decisions.

That initiated questions about what "standing" is in cases before the Zoning Board. McCarley said "standing" is very difficult to claim.

Standing is a constitutional and statutory doctrine that ensures only those with actual, concrete, and particularized harm can sue or offer testimony in a case being heard by the ZBA.

To determine "standing" McCarley said courts in NC examine whether the party is directly affected by the zoning decision; whether they can show special damages — harm that is unique to them and not shared by others; and whether the harm is real and measurable (not speculative or hypothetical) and can be backed by professionals. He said "standing" is extremely difficult to prove without expert testimony.



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www.mountainlakesmedicalcenter.com / www.mlmcpphysiciansgroup.com

Highlands Cashiers Film Festival to air a myriad of films Sept. 17-20

Times and dates to be announced later



NATCHEZ is the winner of the Tribeca Best Documentary in 2025, along with 6 other big festival awards. NATCHEZ captures an unsettling clash between history and memory in a small Mississippi town; a layered mosaic of people contending with the weight of the past in a

place where it is always present. Equal parts amusing and disturbing, we journey through an antebellum tourist destination at a crossroads as it grapples with a deeply troubled history that is so thoroughly ingrained in its present, we're left to wonder if it's actually past at all.



HONEYJOON premiered at Tribeca in 2025. A surprisingly sexy, darkly funny emotional rollercoaster. In this layered dark comedy, June and her Persian-British mom Lela travel to the romantic Azores islands

for a grief anniversary, with contrasting ways of coping. A hot philosophical surfer takes them on a tour as we surf the waves of life, loss, flirting... an unforgettable ride.



Susan follows the life of Susan Suchan, who shares the same rare diagnosis (frontotemporal dementia with primary progressive aphasia) as Bruce Willis. The film documents her life as she lives between

two realities: one where she deals with the financial and relational realities of her disease, and an alternate reality where she parties on the river, advocates for others, and plots an unorthodox end-of-life plan.



Outdoor Concert Series

Each Friday and Saturday night from May through September, the Highlands Chamber of Commerce/ Visit Highlands, NC hosts live music downtown.

Join us for our August concerts!
All shows take place from 6 – 8:30 p.m.

Friday Night Live

Town Square | 343 Main Street

Showcasing traditional 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

Saturdays on Pine

Kelsey-Hutchinson Founders Park
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



HIGHLANDS
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



visithighlandsn.com

SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING



The blessing and the limp

Pastor Randy Lucas
Highlands United
Methodist Church

"The sun rose upon him as he passed Penueh, limping because of his hip" (Genesis 32:31).

That's the way the story ends, the story of how Jacob became Israel and why the Israelites refrain from eating the thigh muscle on the hip socket. It's also a story that offers some biblical rationale for the interweaving of blessings and limps so common to the human condition. In my life as a pastor, I've reflected on this story during countless quiet conversations with weary parishioners in my church office. It seems to be such an apt metaphor for so much of what it means to be human.

If you know the story of Jacob and the all-night wrestling match, you may remember that when the battle was over Jacob was convinced that he had been in an exhausting fight with God (which, by the way, is not a fair fight!), but throughout the tussle it isn't really clear who Jacob's mysterious opponent is. Was it a man? Was it some strange nightly demon?

I've always wondered if he was wrestling a bit with himself. On his way to a reunion with his brother Esau, whom he had swindled out of the coveted first-born blessing, he was understandably anxious. Actually, he was downright afraid. And so perhaps an all-night struggle before the reunion was inevitable. Maybe you've had one or two of those. Maybe you've awakened in the morning with your legs all tangled up in the sheets. Maybe you've had a wrestling match that kept you up all night. Maybe Jacob's story is your story. Maybe it's my story. Maybe it's our story.

By the end of the fight, and after his opponent has dislocated Jacob's hip (if this had been a World Cup soccer match, God would have been shown the red card!), he limps away with a new identity, a new name, a forever blessing. He is no longer Jacob, the heel-grabbing supplanter. He is now Israel, the one who has striven with God and with humans and has prevailed. And watching the blessed and limping Israel walk off into the sunrise, battered and bruised but better, I find I'm fascinated by the implications of it all.

In her book, Joyful Anyway, best-selling author and Duke Divinity School Professor Kate Bowler writes about the intertwining of joy and the ache of being human, inviting her readers to be open to the strange, delightful and mysterious ways joy can find us even in the midst of the messiness and heartaches of

• See SPIRITUALLY page 23

• 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 7
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>
Sunday School 9:45; Worship 11; Prayer Service Wed 5:30p
Men's and Women's Bible Study throughout the week

CHRIST ANGLICAN CHURCH

The Rev'd Dr. Marc Robertson & Rev. Nick McGee
464 U.S. Hwy. 64E, Cashiers, NC
CAC@christanglicancashiers.org • 828-743-1701
Sunday: Adult Christian Ed, 9:15a; Holy Eucharist, 10:30a;
Fellowship 11:45a; Wed: Bible Study/Contemplative Prayer, 5p

CHRIST CHURCH OF THE VALLEY, CASHIERS

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

www.cbchighlands.com • 526-4685
3645 Cashiers Rd. Highlands, NC • Sr. Pastor Gary Hewins
Sun: Service 10:45am, Children's 10:30am
Wed.: Youth 5:30-7pm; Women's Bible Study: Mon. 4:30pm, Tues.
10am; Men's Bible Study: Wed. & Thurs. 7am @ Zookeeper

EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF THE INCARNATION

Rev. W. Bentley Manning, Rector • 526-2968
5th and Main streets • www.incarnationwnc.org
Sunday: Rite I, spoken, 8 am in Chapel, Rite II with Choir 10:30
am in Sanctuary, Wed: Healing Eucharist 12 pm in Chapel,
Morning Prayer: Mon-Thurs 8:30 am in Chapel

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH HIGHLANDS

828-526-4153 • www.fbchighlands.org
Dr. Mark Ford, Pastor • 220 Main Street, Highlands
Sun.: Worship 10:45 am; Sun.: Bible Study 9:30 am
Wed.: Men's Bible Study 8:30 am; Women's 10:30 am

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Rev. Emily Wilmarth, pastor; Rev. Kelley Connelly Asso. Pastor
828-526-3175 • fpchighlands.org
Sun.: Adult Ed.: 10a; Worship 11a.; Tues: Men's Group 10a;
Wed: Bell Choir 4p. Chancel Choir: 5:30p

GOLDMINE BAPTIST CHURCH

(Off Franklin/Highlands Rd)
Sunday School: 10 am. Worship Service: 11 am
GRACE COMMUNITY CHURCH OF CASHIERS
Non-Denominational-Contemporary Worship
242 Hwy 107N. 1/4 miles from Crossroads in Cashiers
www.gracecashiers.com • Pastor Steve Doerter 743-9814
Services: Sundays 10am - Wed. - 7pm; Dinner - Wed. 6pm

HAMBURG BAPTIST CHURCH

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

HIGHLANDS ASSEMBLY OF GOD

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

HIGHLANDS CENTRAL BAPTIST CHURCH

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

HIGHLANDS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Rev. Dr. Randy Lucas, Pastor 526-3376
In-Person and live-streamed Worship Services
909a Bluegrass and 11a Traditional
www.highlandsmethodist.org

HOLY FAMILY LUTHERAN CHURCH: ELCA

2152 Dillard Road • 526-9741
Rev. Ken Langsdorf

Worship/Communion: 10:30 All are welcome.

Visit our website: Holy Family Lutheran Highlands NC

MACEDONIA BAPTIST CHURCH

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

Sundays: School: 10 a.m.; Worship: 11. Choir: 6 p.m.
Wed: Bible Study and Youth Mtg.: 7 p.m.

MOUNTAIN SYNAGOGUE

Franklin • 828-634-1312 • mountainsynagoguewnc.com.
Services: 1st Fri.; 3rd Sat. & 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.;

OUR LADY OF THE MOUNTAINS CATHOLIC CHURCH

Rev. Fr. Jason K. Barone - 526-2418
Sat. 4pm thru Oct 24.; Sun. - 11am

SCALY MOUNTAIN BAPTIST CHURCH

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

SCALY MOUNTAIN CHURCH OF GOD

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

SHORTOFF BAPTIST CHURCH

Pastor Rev. Richard Salmonson
Sundays: School: 10 a.m.; Worship: 11 a.m.
ST. JUDE'S CATHOLIC CHURCH
Mass: Sun. 9a (English); Mon. 9:30a (Vatican II in Latin); Tues.
7p (Spanish); Wed., 9:30a (English)

THE CHURCH OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD

1448 Highway 107 S., Office: • 743-2359 • Rev. Rob Wood
Sunday Service (summer): 9am & 11am
Visit our website: www.goodshepherdofcashiers.com
Our Bazaar Barn supports outreach in the community.
Open Fri & Sat. 11am-3pm

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP

85 Sierra Drive, Franklin • uufranklin.org
Sunday Worship - 11 a.m.

WHITESIDE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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

• POLICE & FIRE REPORTS •

Highlands Police entries from June 22. Only the names of persons arrested, issued a summons/citation, issued a Class-3 misdemeanor or those of public officials have been used.

Accidents July 23

• Unit 1 was leaving the parking lot of Dusty's Superette to make a left turn facing east onto NC 106. (Dillard Road). Unit 2 was traveling north on NC 106. Unit 1 made a left turn onto NC 106 hitting Unit 2. Unit 1 came to rest in parking lot on left. Unit 2 came to rest in parking lot on right.

• This past week officers issued 4 Citations and 13 Warning Tickets.
July 22

...SPIRITUALLY continued from page 22

living. "Joy," she writes, "might pop up, every now and again, in moments of our greatest undoing."

I think the story of Jacob's all-night wrestling match can remind us of some important truths to help us through some of our hard days. We all know something of "the limp" or "the ache." We know some-

• At 9:30 p.m., officers responded to a call of a vehicle being driven off the roadway, hitting rocks and then leaving the scene.

July 23

• At 10:25 p.m., Dawson Etheridge, 22, of Highlands, was arrested for stop sign violation and DUI. He was issued a \$500 unsecured bond. His trial date is Sept. 3.

July 25

• At 8 a.m., officers responded to a call of larceny of a license plate in the parking lot of Good Food on US 64 west (Franklin Road).

The Highlands Fire & Rescue log from July 14.

July 21

• At 7:49 a.m., the dept. respond-

ed to a fire alarm at a residence on Hardscrabble Ridge Road. It was cancelled en route.

• At 2:53 p.m., the dept. provided public assistance at a residence on Wilson Road.

July 22

• At 1:22 p.m., the dept. responded to a motor vehicle accident on Buck Creek Road.

July 23

• At 7:15 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Dog Mountain Road.

• At 9:09 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Bowery Road.

July 24

• At 6:42 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Heath-

erwood Lane.

• At 10:58 a.m., the dept. stood by while Cashiers FD fought a structure fire.

July 25

• At 2:08 a.m., the dept. provided mutual aid fighting a structure fire with Cashiers FD.

• At 8:51 a.m., the dept. provided mutual aid fighting a structure fire with Cashiers FD.

• At 8:57 a.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Hammond Road.

• At 12:04 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Wild Hot Trail.

• At 3:24 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Red Bird lane.

• At 5:51 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Shelby Drive.

• At 6:47 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a location on

Main Street.

July 26

• At 5:04 a.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a location on Country Club Drive.

• At 2:36 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on US 64 west (Franklin Road).

• At 10:44 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Klein Road.

July 27

• At 7:46 a.m., the dept. responded to a motor vehicle accident on NC 28 south (Walhalla Road).

• At 2:13 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Ridge Trail.

• At 2:25 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Zermatt Circle.

• At 7:08 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on N. Big Bear Pen Road.

thing of hard days and tough seasons. We know something of inner and outer pain, something of the frustration of situations we would change if we could but clearly can't.

Watching Jacob (pardon me, Israel), limping into a new day with his fresh new identity gives me hope. It makes me consider that, maybe sometimes the

blessing of God's presence is embedded in the strangest moments and in the most unexpected places and people. It makes me consider how the blessing and the limp are not always mutually exclusive, that sometimes they walk hand-in-hand into the dawning of a new day.

municipalities from decreasing development density or reducing permitted uses.

People asked what the mechanisms were for enforcing ordinances. McCarley said the process begins with a Notice of Violation which can be issued by the Planning Director and/or Code Enforcement Officer several times and accompanied by civil penalties; followed by a stop-work order, lawsuits, and court orders.

The seminar covered a lot of topics in a little over an hour but according to HNC, it's the first of many to come.

"We need to build the town we want to see in the future," said Henson. "We believe the Town should have a 'Resident First' agenda. Residents can help by becoming engaged and communicating what they want for the future of Highlands."

how much of the Community Plan it wants to incorporate into the UDO but those who decide must live in the town under the rules being decided.

McCarley was the attorney HNC used to guide them in their efforts to get the town to amortize STRs.

He said amortization is a mechanism used to make a non-conforming use disappear.

In NC that basically applies to junk yards and bill boards.

"If enacted, it allows a non-conforming use to remain in use for a specified period so the owner can try to recoup some of his or her investment, but when the grace period ends, the non-conforming use does, too.

However, currently, the law of the land in NC is "no down-zoning" which prohibits

...HNC continued from page 20

Interestingly, McCarley said there are 555 municipalities in North Carolina and half of them have less than 500 in population, so as it turns out, with 1,100 full-time residents Highlands isn't as small as people think. But as a resort town where population swells, it has issues of its own.

Commissioner Amy Patterson asked McCarley to explain the difference between the UDO and the Community Plan.

He said the UDO is the rules everyone must abide by, but it can be amended on recommendations from the Planning Board and subsequently the Town Board whereas the Community Plan is less specific, more aspirational and is a plan for the future.

He said a town can decide



HIGHLANDS FIRE & RESCUE OPEN HOUSE



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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.

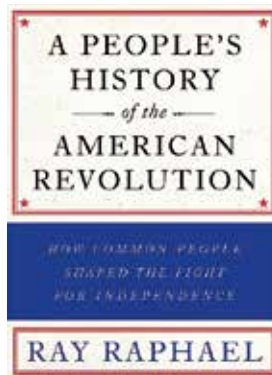
• Exercise Class with Michelle Lane at the Rec Park at 5:30. A combo class with different types of exercise. 828-526-3556

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.

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 Piper, 1st Bank balcony overlooking KH Founders Park. 4:30-5p

Thurs., Aug. 6

• Annual Community Barn Dance at The Bascom. \$10 General Admission. 12 and under FREE. Sandwiches from The Secret Garden. Shaved ice and ice cream from M's Ice Cream all available for purchase. Donation Bar and FREE popcorn. To reserve your ticket go to thebascom.org or call at 828-526-4949.

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

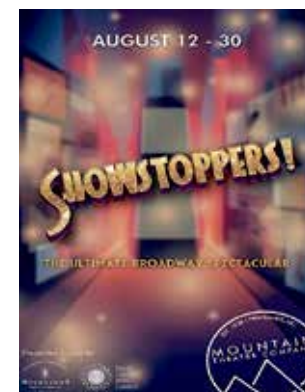
• Open House at the Highland Fire & Rescue Dept. at 149 Franklin Road. Free hotdogs, fire truck rides, rescue demonstration, car seat checks, agility drills for the kids. 11a-3p.

• SkyValley-Scaly Mtn Volunteer FD Community Appreciation Day is at the Scaly Mtn. Fire Station on 169 Hale Ridge Road from 11a to 4p. Food, games, demonstrations

and a bounce house for children.

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.



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