Highlands Newspaper

FREE Every Thursday

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Town is considering a fire tax increase

Public is invited to an information session, Tues., March 31 in Community Building

By Kim Lewicki

Two rates will likely be increasing for FY '26-'27 – the fire tax and water/sewer rates. How much the increase will be is yet to be determined.

Auditors suggest a 5% water/sewer rate increase for the upcoming budget year and then a 4% increase annually to keep up with inflation and to keep the

• See FIRE TAX page 10

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Distemper is on the rise in WNC and Highlands

HPD explains the signs

By Lt. Tim Broughton

The Highlands Police Department continues to respond to calls regarding foxes and raccoons displaying symptoms consistent with Canine Distemper Virus. According to wildlife experts, distemper is currently prevalent throughout Western North Carolina. Several animals in the area have been tested; all were positive for distemper and negative for rabies.

Community members are asked to report any wild animal that appears sick or is behaving erratically. Signs of distemper infection can include loss of vision or total blindness, coughing or wheezing, vomiting, and

• See DISTEMPER page 13

Applicant Bill Grubb, the first of the five picked through a lottery to audition for the vacated seat on the Town Board, ended up winning the seat with a 3-1 vote. – Photo by Kim Lewicki

Grubb to fill the seat vacated by Dotson

By Kim Lewicki

The Town Board seat vacated by Commissioner John Dotson effective Dec. 31, 2025, was filled Thursday, March 12 during a Special Called Meeting.

In January, commissioners solicited citizens to apply for the seat through an application process. Five people applied – Daryl Griswold, Bill Grubb, Marc Hehn, Jan Pittman, and Margot Teed.

The only stipulation to being a bona fide applicant was full-time residency within the town limits of Highlands and a registered voter in Macon County.

Bill Grubb, currently chair-

• See SEAT page 4

No plan to redistrict for now

County commissioners vote 'no' with 4-1 vote

By Kristin Fox

Once again, the discussion on how to "fix" the way Macon County elects its county commissioners was a hot topic at the March regular meeting of the board. Although commissioners expressed a need to make changes to the process the county has used for nearly 50 years to elect its county commissioners, they just aren't ready to move forward to make any changes at this time.

Commissioner John Shearl made a motion to adopt a resolution to change the commissioner voting process to three districts with two, at-large seats. The proposal would divide the county into three geographic districts with a candidate for commissioner required to live in

• See REDISTRICTING page 11

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• The Plateau's Position •

• Mayor on Duty •

Items on worksession/Town Board agendas

Highlands Mayor Patrick Taylor

At last week's town retreat, the discussions tended to stress conservative spending. With so many unknown variables at the national, state, and county levels, staff and board members were cautious about large expenditures, except for essential projects.

One big positive was the recent securing of state grants to replace aging waterlines and upgrades to the water plant. These projects will continue through the year and into the next budget cycle.

The board reviewed the critical need to replace aging fire trucks purchased in 2004 and 2006. Also, there is a need to continue to keep and, if possible, increase the full-time staffing at the fire station.

A result of the fire department's needs and upgrades, there was a proposal to increase the fire tax for the coming budget year. This increase will have to be approved by both the town and county boards of commissioners. Before the boards' final budget review, there will be a public information meeting on Tuesday, March 31, from 5:30 to 6:30. It will take place at the Highlands Community Building next to the ball field.

The fire chief and county and town officials will be at the meeting to discuss with residents in the fire district the need for the fire tax increase. The meeting will be a drop-in session where folks can come at any time between 5:30 and 6:30 pm. Resident input will be noted by the leadership present.

This Thursday, March 19, the Town Board will meet at the Highlands Community Building for both a workshop and a board meeting. Both sessions can be accessed remotely via the town website's YouTube link.

The workshop will begin at 6pm with two items. First, the police chief wants to review enforcement issues related to certain provisions of the current noise ordinance. Second, the chief and Captain McCall want to address the issue of vehicles parked in the roadways at construction sites, especially in residential areas. Many times, it becomes problematic for traffic to pass safely.

The first item on the board meeting agenda at 7pm will be a public hearing concerning the rezoning of a property on NC 106. The property in question is next to Dusty's Superette.

The board will also review several contracts and applications for events on town property. In addition, the county board recently approved the inter-local agreement for improvements to the Macon County old landfill off NC 28 on Rich Gap Road. These improvements will allow the dredging materials from Mirror Lake to be deposited at that location. The Town Board will now have to approve the agreement, which requires the town to provide grant funds for the project.

After the inter-local agreement is approved, the McGill engineers will contin-

• See MAYOR page 6

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Obituary Policy
Obituaries are $8 per column inch.
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• MileStone •

Haley comes home as Dr. Hawkins

After eight years of schooling, Haley Hawkins has returned home to Highlands with a doctorate in Veterinary Science.
She is working with Dr. Brad Smith at Animal Wellness Hospital of Highlands, which is now the only vet hospital in Highlands. She is the daughter of Billy and Sabrina Hawkins. Haley is seen here with 4-month old Daisy Lewicki.

Photo by Jim Lewicki

• Weather •

Thu, 19-Mar	Fri, 20-Mar	Sat, 21-Mar	Sun, 22-Mar
55°F / 33°F	61°F / 44°F	69°F / 47°F	75°F / 50°F
Partly sunny	Partly sunny	Partly sunny	Sunny and very warm
RealFeel® High: 61° Low: 30°	RealFeel® High: 65° Low: 38°	RealFeel® High: 71° Low: 42°	RealFeel® High: 76° Low: 46°

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Lot 6 Highlands Point Road is within the exclusive Highlands Point subdivision, a small gated community with 11 homesites. This 2.46 acre lot has potential for stunning mountain views. Approximately two miles from Main Street in Highlands. MLS# 1002684 | $139,000
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This +/-.98 acre parcel is ideally positioned on Dillard Road, adjacent to the Freeman Center. Historically used for commercial equipment storage and staging, including masonry boulders and materials, the property is well-suited for an equipment yard, contractor use, and more. MLS# 1002573 | $150,000
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This .98 acre lot is within the exclusive Highlands Point subdivision, a small gated community. This gently-rolling, wooded setting offers great mountain view potential when cleared. Approximately two miles from Main Street in Highlands, this lot provides an easy building site. MLS# 1002761 | $75,000
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...SEAT continued from page 1

man of the Planning Board, was selected with a 3-1 vote. Commissioners Eric Pierson, Jim Tate and Jeff Weller voted for him; commissioner Amy Patterson voted for Margot Teed.

Each applicant was called to speak to the Town Board, first with an opening statement if desired and then through a 10-minute question and answer session posed by the commissioners.

Griswold, Grubb and Pittman began with opening statements; the others requested questions from the start which commissioners and the mayor posed mostly based on the Q&As that previously ran in Highlands Newspaper and The Highlander newspaper.

Through a lottery system, where each applicant's name was pulled from a pile, Grubb was the first to speak. In his opening statement he called himself a centrist and said he was one of those people who seeks to serve.

He said through his job, he is used to planning for the long-term. While answering questions, he stressed the importance of a multi-generational strategy when thinking about the future of Highlands, saying a viable town needs a multi-generational strategy.

"We have business owners with employees with children, we have retirees, mid-packers and young people who call Highlands home. We want people to raise families and to have affordable homes, and we want businesses to grow and prosper. Clamping down too, much, hurts that multi-generational plan," he said. "People want to call Highlands home but in Highlands it's a hard balancing act, but a multi-generational plan means being able to include families who want to raise their children here and afford a home."

As a member of the Planning Board, which voted unanimously to allow the hotel on the Bank of America parcel to proceed, he said the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) needs to be tweaked, not completely redone, but tweaked, he said.

"We have design elements in the UDO, so we have something that is guiding us, but when you see the application of those elements going up around town, maybe you see things that you want to tweak. For instance, the hotel met all the elements in UDO, but upon application it is perceived differently. So maybe some tweaking needs to be done," he said.

Regarding Highlands' economy he said Highlands has a vibrant tourist and seasonal economy and suggested changing the Chamber's tag line of "Height of Happiness" to something that might help the businesses.

"How about something that helps the business owners and front-of-the-house people in the restaurants – 'Relax Your in Highlands.' Slow down on the streets, don' be impatient for your food, and be nice to your server," he said.

When asked about progress and growth in context of Highlands long-range plan he said "it was important to preserve the area's natural beauty, keep reasonable density, and continue to build buildings that benefit the public and the tourist economy."

Margot Teed was next and suggested commissioners just jump in and her ask questions.

"You know who I am, I have been in town for a long time, I've been on the Zoning Board for seven years. Just ask me questions to know who I am and where I think the town should go," she said.

When asked what sustainable means for Highlands she said sustainable means something that both the residents and the businesses can support.

"If it's not sustainable to the residents and the part-time homeowners, then the businesses wont' find it sustainable," she said. "When you have too much growth, you outgrow a town. We do have natural barriers to prevent that, but do we want Highlands to become extremely dense or do we want to try to preserve the neighborhoods and balance it with progress and business and all the things we need to handle all the visitors we have invited here?"

Regarding the UDO, potential zoning district changes that commissioners may be considering and how the advisory Planning Board and quazi-judicial Zoning Board differences would fit in that scenario, she suggested combining the two boards.

"Some towns combine the planning board and the zoning board, so the planning board just melts in with the zoning board. They have two functions but with the advisory capacity of the Planning Board … I guess I wish it had more teeth," she said.

She said with the Zoning Board, there are so many consequences to its

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decisions.

"We have to base our decisions on very different things than the planning board does. So, I don't think it's a bad idea to combine them, and it would be an easy thing to do," she said.

When asked about challenges facing Highlands, she said having to raise taxes and considering where that burden falls.

"The businesses don't want to be overburdened with excess taxes and have everything fall on them. But, at the same time, the residents of this town, they don't deserve to have tax increases to make up for all the things the tourists bring to town," she said.

She said people she talks to find the relationship between the town and the businesses and the residents are "a bit one-sided."

"The residents feel like they are paying for a lot of the tourism with no say so. How we invite the tourists here and the residents don't get a say so. I think it would be nice to throw a bone to the residents," she said. "Sometimes we the residents would like to feel like we are listened to a bit more."

She said the residents could identify the problems, take them to the town with a plan and help the town with a solution.

When asked if she considered Highlands a retreat resort town or a tourist town, she said it doesn't identify as either one.

"But I'd much rather it be a resort town and I would prefer if the comp plan reflected that. I think Highlands as a tourist town -- on so many levels -- isn't a direction the residents of this town want to move in," she said.

She went on to say that the 2022 Comprehensive Plan is outdated and many things, including its design standards need to be looked at.

When it was Griswold's turn as a commercial litigator, he cited his ability to collaborate, problem solve and find creative solutions with resolutions for all parties, are some of his strong points.

As to livability in Highlands, he stressed the need for affordable housing for Highlands first-responders, teachers and healthcare workers.

"It bothers me that they can't live here, and we can't seem to find a solution to the workforce housing issue. We are a very philanthropic community which is generous with its time and money. I believe public/private collaboration is possible," he said.

He said the vision for Highlands can be fuzzy.

"But we need guidelines to be able to corroborate in areas of agreement and show people they have been heard," he said. "We don't want to be Dolly Wood. But we want viable businesses downtown. We want to be able to retain the grocery store and the hardware store. But we don't want to bring in vape shops just to fill vacancies on Main Street."

Regarding Short-term Rentals, when asked if there were changes that needed to be made he said, "Highlands shouldn't be the tip of the spear."

"We need a STR model with similar towns facing this because there is strength in numbers, but it's a true balancing act," he said. "I have four on my street and we have never had a problem. Mainly the ordinances need to be enforced. Perhaps we should form a task force to deal with this."

In her opening statement, Jan Pittman said she believes in having balance in a community.

"Highlands is at a crossroads, and you have to get information out to the community. Maybe they don't read the newspapers and maybe they aren't on the Internet. Maybe a Town Hall meeting once a quarter so people's voices can be heard. Sometimes the townspeople feel like thy aren't being heard and you aren't reaching the people who want to have a voice," she said. "You have to get more information out to the community."

When asked how she would balance community rights with personal property rights she said there have to be rules and regulations to follow and when it comes to property rights there are guidelines to be enforced and there are some ordinances that don't make sense regarding business allowances saying "there should be room for exceptions."

"But we need to protect what makes Highlands special. Perhaps put a pause on certain projects," she said. "We need to focus on taking care of what we have right now instead of continuing with expansion. We are at a crossroads. We need to take a lot of caution about what's coming. We have to be careful and people are concerned. We need to improve on some of the regulations so some of the committees have more guidelines."

The need for workforce housing was a theme throughout the meeting.

• See SEAT page 9

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...MAYOR continued from page 2

ue to finalize the design and engineering documents necessary to begin dredging. Those completed documents will be shared with the public.

Also, the board will conduct a second review of the proposed Town Board of Commissioners Rules and Procedures. Our Town Attorney developed this document to codify and clarify how town meetings are conducted. The board may approve the document or continue the review process.

Hope to see you at the workshop and board meeting, or you can tune in. online.

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• Biz/Org News •

Billy Love, Executive Director at The Bascom: A Center for the Visual Arts, in Highlands, spoke at MountainTop Rotary recently. An arts educator and non-profit leader, Billy brings more than 20 years of experience and expertise spanning organizational leadership, program development, fundraising, and strategic partnerships. His vision ensures the long-term sustainability and growth of The Bascom, allowing it to offer robust visual arts programs that support emerging artists and foster essential creative and visual literacy skills for young people and adults, all while strengthening the creative economy of Western North Carolina.

From left: Rotary President Josh Bryson, Highlands School Teacher Caleb Brown, and Rotarian Jane Jerry.

Highlands School teacher Caleb Brown reflects on teaching today's teenagers

Highlands High School teacher Caleb Brown demonstrated his teaching methods by involving enthusiastic Rotarians during his March 10 presentation. The South Carolina native moved to Highlands in 2018 and now teaches Civics, American History, World History, Economics, Personal Finance and Military History on a rotating basis. Brown's "Recipe for Content Retention" includes establishing order in the classroom, generating excitement and student investment in learning, and content delivery through project based learning.

In addition to his teaching, Brown is a parent, soccer coach, 2nd Lieutenant in the NC Army National Guard, and candidate for NC State House District 120.

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...SEAT continued from page 5

Mayor Pat Taylor said it's likely such housing would have to be outside the town limits and using town water and sewer connections would likely be necessary. He asked if that's something the town should consider allowing.

Pittman said giving town water and sewer connections shouldn't be for every project.

"You have to consider what it is and what impact it will have on the town. Look at each project on an individual basis. Everyone getting sewer and water would put too much pressure on the town," she said.

The last candidate was Marc Hehn and instead of answering questions, Hehn gave a presentation regarding his and his wife's ancestral familial ties to Highlands, his governmental background, and illustrating via a map the number of structures in town that are more than 500 feet from water hydrant access, which he said needs to be addressed.

He also stressed the importance of updating the master water plan, the town's draining system and finally stressing the need for alternate sources of revenue for the town.

He said with a good connection with the county Highlands could accomplish a lot.

"I have a good relationship with John Shearl. He picks up the phone when I call."

He stressed the need for the town to establish a list of short-, mid-, and long-term goals. "Then we rank the goals as a group and decide how we can accomplish them," he said.

Health care worker housing has always been a concern of Hehn's. He said he was working with lawyers and legislators to work on making donations for health care worker housing tax deductible.

He said donations for lower income housing and doctor housing is tax deductible but not currently for health-care worker housing.

"I have a major donor who is working on this," he said.

He brought up water and sewer connections playing a big part in making the hospital's health-care worker housing plan a reality.

He also stressed the need to enforce zoning ordinances in Highlands.

"The purpose of zoning is to prohibit uncompensated and unjustified harm to adjoining and adjacent property," he said. "And in North Carolina, if zoning isn't enforced for five years, its stipulations go away."

After interviewing applicants for about an hour, the board took the vote. Grubb won 3-1. He will be sworn in at the April 16 Town Board meeting.

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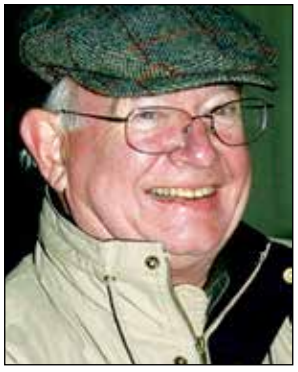
• Obituary •

Samuel Roberts Blount



Sam passed away at the age of 78 in his home in Highlands, NC surrounded by family and friends. Sam was born in Montgomery, AL on May 9, 1947. Growing up in Montgomery he was known as Bob. He attended several high schools and finally graduated from Lanier High School in Montgomery. He was a proud kilt-wearing KA at The University of the South where he remains a sophomore. He left Sewanee to join the Marine Corps, serving in Quantico for two years. He had many memorable experiences working with his father, "Red," at Blount, Inc. His time with the company took him to exotic locales from Saudi Arabia to Union Springs, AL. For several years he was a river boat guide on the Colorado River in the Grand Canyon. His time guiding and entertaining people down the river was one of his happiest. Sam owned Meadowcraft, Inc. and Spotted Horse Ranch in Jackson Hole, Wyoming where he continued his western adventures. Sam loved the Marine Corps all his life and was a founding member of the National Museum of the Marine Corps.

Sam was a force of nature as many of the condolence messages flooding in have said. People were drawn to his marvelous contagious laugh like moths to a flame. He never met a stranger as he collected friends around the world. His storytelling and jokes were legendary. No one ever heard him complain; if you got in the car with him, you never knew where you would end up; and anyone who faced him across the ping pong table has lived to regret their life choices. He was truly larger than life to his children and to others fortunate enough to grow up around him. He taught his family and friends how to have fun whether it was getting a jeep stuck in the mud, alligator egg hunting from a helicopter, climbing Mount Kilimanjaro, or taking the boat out for a sunset cruise. His five children were brought up in a variety of locations and he imparted in each of them a sense of adventure, an ability to look on the bright side, a love for the best things in life, and a deep, deep hatred of dill pickles.

He was preceded in death by his parents Winton Malcolm "Red" Blount, Jr. and Mary Katherine Archibald Blount, and by his brother Winton Malcolm Blount, III. He is survived by the love of his life, his wife of 37 years, Mary McKee Blount; by five children: Laura Kelly Blount, John Overton Blount (Caroline), Samuel Roberts Blount, Jr., Daniel Gardner Blount (Alyssa), Mildred Virginia Sullivan (Rob); seven grandchildren: India Jane Grimsley Hodge (Mason), Colin Grimsley, Walton Grimsley, Laura Blount, Wesley Blount, Delilah Blount, Beau Blount; and one great grandchild: Tallulah Jane Hodge; his siblings Thomas Archibald Blount, Katherine Blount, Joseph Wilbert Blount; and by numerous nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends who adored him.

In lieu of flowers donations in memory of Samuel R. Blount can be made to the Marine Corps Heritage Foundation online at www.marineheritage.org or mailed to Marine Corps Heritage Foundation to 1775 Semper Fidelis Way, Triangle, VA 22172. Donations may also be made in Sam's memory to The Alabama Shakespeare Festival online at asf.net/donate or by mail to 1 Festival Drive, Montgomery, AL, or to the charity of your choice.

A Celebration of Sam's life will be held on April 11, 2026 at 1:00 p.m. at the Alabama Shakespeare Festival in Montgomery, AL.

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

Bryant-Grant Funeral Home and Crematory is honored to serve the Blount family.

...FIRE TAX continued from page 1

enterprise fund in the black. That issue will be discussed during upcoming budget meetings through May, but an increase in the fire tax is on the front burner now.

At the recent retreat, Fire Chief Ryan Gearhart said the department needs a new fire engine/pumper with 1,000 gallon capacity and three more full-time firefighters so a person can be added per shift.

The current 2004 truck runs multiple times per day and with a 20-year life span, it's past time to replace it.

Gearhart's plan is to get a new truck for the in-town fire station where trucks are on the road multi-times during the day covering the Highlands Township's 69 sq. mile district and put the 2004 truck at the substation on Cherry Lane where it won't be run as often.

There are currently two, full-time firefighters per shift with three shifts. They work 48 hours on and 96 hours off. Two firefighters respond to each call, which means there is no one to man the fire station when they are on a call after 5 p.m. With three per shift, two can go out and one can stay to man the station.

According to Commissioner Eric Pierson, who is also the Fire Department's Rescue Captain, the turnout of the department's 25 volunteers isn't what it used to be.

"Volunteers just aren't available anymore. The guys that do respond are great, but volunteers just can't respond like they could in the past," he said.

But before a fire tax increase can be initiated, the county has to give the OK.

Right now, due to the Highlands Township's property valuation, the fire district's fire tax is the lowest in the county at 1.91-cents per $100 property value. Highlands Township's 2025 valuation came in at $5,945 billion with 52% of the county's tax base protected.

Franklin's fire tax is 7-cents per $100 valuation based on the 2025 valuation of $2.42 billion.

The highest fire tax in the county – 8.39-cents -- is Mountain Valley because it has the lowest 2025 property valuation.

At last week's retreat, Gearhart said under the current rate of 1.91 cents, even at the 2026 property valuation of $6,092,592,728 billion – which is up $250,295,472 from the 2025 valuation -- with the $1,225,826 fire tax collected from Macon and Jackson county, and $689,674 appropriated from the department's fund balance, the current fire tax isn't covering the full amount of the department's budget.

Gearhart presented the Town Board and staff with three scenarios based on Highlands Township's 2026 property valuation.

Option 1 is to increase the fire tax to 3.41-cents from 1.91-cents which would bring in $2,069,679. That would enable the department to keep the existing firemen and staff and continue servicing its debt of $612,000 for the building and equipment.

Option 2 would be a two-cent increase to 3.91-cents which would bring in $2,373,151 and enable the department to finance future trucks for 60-72 months at $200,000, keep the existing firemen and staff and service the existing debt.

Option 3 would be a 2.5-cent increase at 4.41-cents per $100 valuation bringing in $2,676,623 which would do all of option 2 plus enable the department to hire three more full-time firemen so there are three per shift.

Though the Town Board doesn't typically rule on issues during the retreat, since the county has to OK the request before the town and the department can budget it, commissioners voted to go for option 3 and to present that to the public and the county as soon as possible.

"If we don't get what we need this budget cycle, we will just have to ask again next year," said Gearhart.

Before going to the county, the town is holding a public information meeting about the proposed fire tax increase Tuesday, March 31 in the Community Building from 5:30-6:30 p.m.

...REDISTRICTING continued from page 1

the district he or she would be representing.

In addition, there would be two at-large seats in which potential candidates could live anywhere in the county. All Macon County residents would be given the opportunity to vote on all five commissioners' seats.

The motion failed with a vote of 4 to 1 with Shearl being the only commissioner voting to adopt the resolution.

This proposal to change the election process would require the approval of the state legislature. The county was under a time restraint and would have had to pass the proposed resolution at the March meeting of the board to make the short session of the legislature.

Commissioners did express support for Shearl's proposal; however, the consensus of the board was that they wanted more public input before making any changes to the election process.

"I am definitely in favor of changing the districts, and I don't think that the way we are doing it right now is fair," said Commissioner Barry Breeden. "We have some very viable options on the table, but I just don't know where I am at with it right now. The three districts with two at-large seats option does make sense. I also am in favor of five seats with no designated districts."

County Attorney Eric Ridenour presented four options for changing the election process:

Five electoral districts

- 5 geographical districts
- Approximately equal population
- 1 residential commissioner per district
- Seats elected by countywide vote in both primary and general elections

• See REDISTRICTING page 12

• Biz/Org News •

Team RickSteve welcomes Wes Sheppard to Highlands Luxury Real Estate Market

Wes Sheppard

Team RickSteve announces that Wes Sheppard has joined the award-winning real estate team affiliated with Howard Hanna Allen Tate Real Estate, serving the luxury real estate market in Highlands and the surrounding Plateau.

A full-time Highlands resident with nearly three decades of personal connection to the area, Wes Sheppard brings a strong blend of professional experience and deep community commitment. He earned his MBA from George Washington University and spent several years in federal consulting, managing complex projects and diverse stakeholders — experience he now applies to guiding clients through the real estate process with clarity, strategy, and confidence.

Wes previously served in the United States Army, including two deployments to Iraq, and later worked in international development. His background reflects a long-standing focus on service, accountability, and thoughtful decision-making — qualities that resonate strongly in today's competitive luxury market.

With Wes joining Team RickSteve, clients can expect knowledgeable guidance, skilled negotiation, and a trusted partner who values integrity, expertise, and a genuine connection to Highlands.

For more than 30 years, Rick Harrison and Steve Sheppard have been a trusted presence in the Highlands community, with the past 14 years recognized for expert Real Estate service, financial insight, and a reputation built on integrity, discretion, and exceptional client care.

Pat Allen Realty Group once again an independent real estate firm

Pat Allen has reestablished her independent brokerage, Pat Allen Realty Group, marking a return to locally focused, boutique real estate service on the Highlands-Cashiers Plateau.

Allen, along with her daughter and business partner Julie Osborn, brings decades of combined experience in the luxury real estate market across the Plateau. Over a 22-year career, Allen has become one of Highlands' most trusted real estate brokers, known for her deep market knowledge and long-standing client relationships.

Pat Allen Realty Group operates as a boutique firm, offering personalized service and tailored marketing strategies designed to meet the unique needs of each client and property.

Joining Allen and Osborn are REALTORS® Cy Timmons, Nicole Russell, and Greg Harrison, each bringing valuable experience and strong ties to the local community.

"I am delighted to once again offer our clients the attention and individual marketing they deserve, with decisions made locally," said Allen.

Located at 295 Dillard Road in Highlands, the firm specializes in luxury properties throughout the Highlands-Cashiers Plateau.

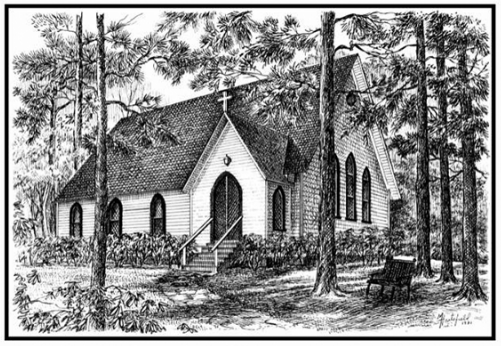
For more information, contact 828-526-8784.

THE TOWN OF HIGHLANDS

PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING FOR PROPOSED FIRE TAX INCREASE TUESDAY, MARCH 31.

There will be an information session regarding a proposed Fire Tax Increase for the Highlands Fire District held at the Highlands Community Building, 869 North Fourth Street, Highlands, NC, from **5:30pm-6:30pm** on **Tuesday, March 31.**

THE CHURCH OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD
Invites you to our Holy Week services:



MARCH 29 - PALM SUNDAY
9:00 am | 11:00 am

APRIL 2 - MAUNDY THURSDAY
5:30 pm | Service

APRL 3 - GOOD FRIDAY
Noon | Service

APRIL 5 - EASTER SUNDAY
8:00 am | 9:15 am | 11:00am
Easter Day Services

www.goodshepherdofcashiers.com | 828-743-2359
1448 Highway 107 South, Cashiers, NC 28717

...REDISTRICTING continued from page 11

Five at-large seats

• No districts

• Commissioner resides in county

• Seats elected by county-wide vote in both primary and general elections

One at-large member

• 4 geographical districts

• Approximately equal population

• 1 residential commissioner per district (4-year term)

• 1 at-large seat. Commissioner lives within the county (2-year term)

• Seats elected by county-wide vote in both primary and general elections.

Two at-large members

• Three geographical districts; approximately equal population

• 1 residential commissioner per district (staggered term)

• 2 commissioners who live within the county (staggered term) at-large seats

• Seats elected by county-wide vote in both primary and general elections. (Option proposed by Shearl in the resolution.)

"I would like to see a lot of community input," said Commissioner Chairman Joshua Young. "I would also like to see it kicked down to the planning board. I think we should have some public hearings, hear some public comments and get some feedback from the voters."

Commissioner Danny Antoine said this is a massive decision.

"I agree that it is not fair the way it is set up right now, because district two gets to enjoy something that district one and three do not get to enjoy," he said. "The three districts with the two at-large seats option seems to be the closest to being fair."

Since 1978, Macon County has selected its commissioners from three districts with one member each from District 1 (Ellijay, Sugarfork, Highlands and Flats precincts) and District 3 (Cartoogechaye, Nantahala, Burningtown and Cowee precincts). The remaining board members are selected from District 2 (Iotla, Millshoal, North Franklin, East Franklin, South Franklin, Union and Smithbridge precincts). The districts operate with staggered terms, with District 2 members filing for election every two years, while the others filing every four years.

Shearl said this is not fair to potential candidates in District 1 and three as they would only be able to run for election to the board every four years. While candidates for District 2 have the option to run every two years.

Prior to 1978, the board of commissioners was made up of three members. The change in the 1970s gave Highlands and Nantahala more representation on the board. The district lines were drawn up geographically rather than by population. Currently, both District 1 and 3 have around 6,000 citizens each.

If the board ultimately decides to change to the three district/two at-large seat option, then each of the three districts would be divided as equally as possible based on population. Both District 1 and 3 would become larger while District 2 would become smaller. The goal would be to redraw the lines so that each district has approximately 13,000 residents. The state requires that the districts be divided as equally as possible. If possible, commissioners would like to keep the precincts the same so voters can continue voting at their designated precincts on election day.

Under the proposed option presented by Shearl, potentially District 1 could encompass the East Franklin area while District 3 would then include the Cartoogechaye and Cowee areas.

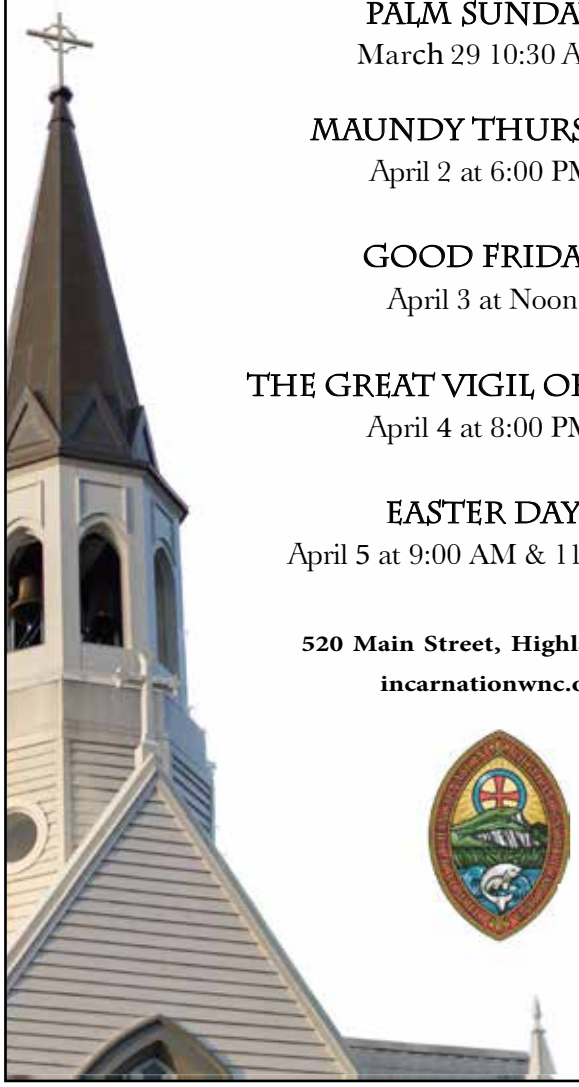
Young expressed his concern about

• See REDISTRICTING page 15

CHURCH OF THE

INCARNATION

HOLY WEEK & EASTER



PALM SUNDAY

March 29 10:30 AM

MAUNDY THURSDAY

April 2 at 6:00 PM

GOOD FRIDAY

April 3 at Noon

THE GREAT VIGIL OF EASTER

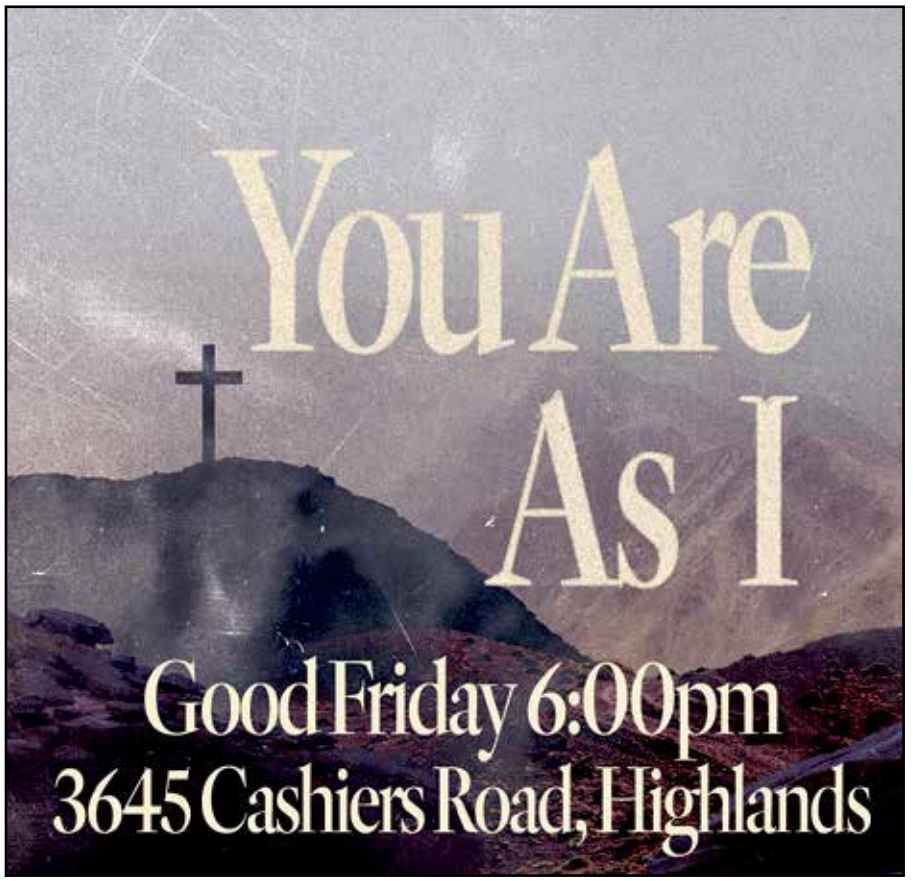
April 4 at 8:00 PM

EASTER DAY

April 5 at 9:00 AM & 11:00 AM

520 Main Street, Highlands, NC

incarnationwnc.org



• HS Sports •

All Conference athletes announced

All Conference Girls Basketball: Jordyn Borino and Hunter Conner – All Conference and Honorable Mention All District 12 from the NC Basketball Coaches Association.Charlotte Westendorf, Honorable Mention All Confeerence.

All Conference Boys Basketball: Paolo McRae and Isaiah Vilardo – All Conference and Honorable Mention All District 12 from the NC Basketball Coaches Association. Bryan Jarquin, Honorable Mention All Conference.

...DISTEMPER continued from page 1

seizures. In many cases, by the time symptoms become noticeable, infected wildlife are already in significant distress. Because there is no treatment or medication for Canine Distemper Virus, the most humane option is often euthanasia. Otherwise, left in the wild, these animals will succumb to drawn-out suffering and eventually death.

Last week Highlands PD responded to a call of a small grey fox that was foaming at the mouth in the Highlands Plaza parking lot. Officers responded and were eventually able to capture the animal.

The number of infected animals may increase as spring approaches and wildlife becomes more active. A variety of animals can contract and spread the disease, including cats, dogs, foxes, coyotes, ferrets, raccoons, skunks, and others.

Community members can help reduce the spread of the distemper virus by taking the following steps:

Vaccinate your animals. Check with your veterinarian to ensure all pets are up to date on their vaccinations. This is critical, as there is no cure for Canine Distemper Virus. Once an animal contracts the disease, treatment options are limited to supportive care or euthanasia.

Remove outdoor food and water bowls. Distemper is primarily spread through contaminated saliva, so removing shared water or food sources can help prevent transmission. Wild animals are often drawn to bowls left outside for domestic pets.

Secure trash and refuse. Ensure garbage and other waste is properly stored so as not to attract wildlife.

Do not intentionally feed wildlife. This includes putting out corn or grain or discarding food scraps in wooded areas. Because distemper spreads through contaminated saliva, shared food sources increase the risk of transmission. Artificial feeding sites often bring animals together that would not normally feed in the same area.

Anyone who observes wildlife showing signs of illness is encouraged to report the animal to Macon County Dispatch by calling 911 or 828-524-2020 (non-emergency) so the situation can be assessed and handled safely by the proper authorities. Prompt reporting of sick wildlife helps protect pets, wildlife, and the community from further spread of the disease.

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Call now
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• Deep Lymph Flushing Massage

Specializing in:
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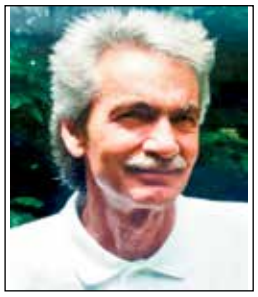
Open Year Round Mon-Sat 10-5

Spiritually Speaking



Pastor Dan Robinson
Highlands Central Baptist Church

I have two books in my library (among hundreds) which are the most marked up, underlined, highlighted and referenced more than any of the others for the same subjects.

One is by J. Dwight Pentecost titled Things To Come. Obvious already to you, it is a book on the End Times.

The other by John R.W Stott is about the Cross. It is titled appropriately, The Cross Of Christ.

I highly recommend both.

If you are reading this article on March 19, then Good Friday is only 15 days away.

Increasingly the death, burial and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ is becoming more and more obscured in our culture.

Easter Sunday will be a heart-felt, sincere and passionate day of Worship for some. They've grasped the meaning of their need for a Savior to save them from their sins. Indeed, they are convinced there is no other way to be forgiven, placed in right standing with a Holy God and have the undisturbed certainty of living forever in Heaven with the Lord and the Saints.

Does this describe you?

For others, however, it will be a day of Celebration without Confrontation. They enjoy the festivity of a special day but really want no part of being confronted by the Truth of Scripture. They have their own ideas about God.

Additionally, we may say there will be those on Easter Sunday who will be looking for titillation but not transformation. They want to feel good. They want an emotional experience. But frankly, the rigors and demands of New Testament discipleship insisted upon by the Lord Jesus Christ holds no appeal for them.

Does this describe you?

As you consider your answer to these questions I invite you to read a few excerpts from John Stott's book.

The crucial question we should ask, therefore, is a different one. It is not "why" God finds it difficult to forgive, but "how" He finds it possible to do so at all. The problem of forgiveness is constituted by the inevitable collision between Divine Perfection and human rebellion, between God as He is and us as we are (p88).

We can cry "Hallelujah" with authenticity only after we have first cried "Woe is me, for I am lost." In Dale's words, "it is partly because sin does not provoke our own wrath, that we do not believe that sin provokes the wrath of God." (p109).

The essence of sin is man substituting himself for God, while the essence of salvation is God substituting Himself for man. Man asserts himself against God and puts himself where only God deserves to be; God sacrifices Himself for man and puts Himself

• See **SPIRITUALLY** page 15

• 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
Wednesdays: Mid-week prayer meeting: 7 p.m.

BUCK CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH
828-269-3546 • Rev. Jamie Passmore. Pastor
Sundays: School:10 a.m.;Worship:11

CASHIERS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
Rev. Aryn Williams-Reubel. Pastor 828-743-5298
Sundays: School at 9:30;Worship 10:30

GRACE CHAPEL ON HIGH HOLLY
9615 Dillard Rd Scaly Mountain, N C.
Pastor Steve Kerhoulas. http://www.Graceonhighholly.com
Sunday School 9:45;Worship 11; Prayer Service Wed 5:30p
Men's and Women's Bible Study throughout the week

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

CHRIST CHURCH OF THE VALLEY. CASHIERS
Pastor Jacob Tedder • Jacob@cashiers.church • 743-5470
www.cashiers.church
Sun. 10:45a;Wed Study5:15p supper and childcare.

CLEAR CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH
Pastor Jim Kinard
Sundays: School:10 a.m.;Worship:11a.m.
1st & 3rd Sunday night Service: 7.p.m.
Wednesdays –Supper at 6 p.m.

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

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 Langsdrof
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. and 3rd Sat. and Rosh Hashanah & Yom Kippur.

MOUNTAIN BIBLE CHURCH
743-2583 • Independent Bible Church
Sun:10:30 a.m. at Big Ridge Baptist Church. 4224 Big Ridge (4.5 miles from NC 107)
Weds:Youth Group 6 p.m.; Bible Study 6:30 p.m.;

OUR LADY OF THE MOUNTAINS CATHOLIC CHURCH
Rev. Fr. Jason K. Barone – 526-2418
Sat. 4pm 5/24/25-10/25/25; Sun. - 11am

SCALY MOUNTAIN BAPTIST CHURCH
Rev. Marty Kilby
Sundays: School –10 a.m.;Worship –11 a.m. & 7
Wednesdays: Prayer Mtg.:7 p.m.

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

SHORTOFF BAPTIST CHURCH
Pastor Rev. Richard Salmonson
Sundays: School:10 a.m.;Worship:11 a.m.

ST. JUDE'S CATHOLIC CHURCH
Mass: Sun. 9a (English); Mon. 9:30a (Vatican II in Latin); Tues. 7p (Spanish);Wed.,9:30a (English)

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

March 3

• At 10:41 a.m., officers responded to a call of a "barring notice" from Mountain Findings.

March 11

• At 11:57 a.m., officers responded to a call for service regarding a man following juvenile girls on Main Street.

The Highlands Fire & Rescue log from March 10.

March 10

• At 3:29 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Joanna Lane.

March 12

• At 6:43 a.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Laurel Heights.

• At 10:25 a.m., the dept. responded to a call of a power pole on fire on Country Club Drive.

• At 12:09 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a location on Clubhouse Trail.

• At 12:11 p.m., the dept. responded to a call of a downed tree blocking US 64 east (Cashiers Road).

• At 6:28 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Ancient Way.

March 14

• At 5:09 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Cullasaja Drive.

March 15

• At 6:18 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a location on Oak Street.

• At 10:54 p.m. the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Hickory Knut Gap.

March 16

• At 6:25 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Cheney Lane.

• At 10:17 a.m., the dept. responded to a motor vehicle accident on US 64 west (Franklin Road).

...REDISTRICTING continued from page 12

how well Highlands would be represented if the process was changed to this option. Saying potentially there could be a board member elected from the East Franklin area representing District 1.

"I feel like Cartoogechaye and Cowee are on the same playing field, but someone from East Franklin would have a hard time representing Highlands well," he said.

Antoine said as county commissioners they take an oath to serve the entire county.

"So no matter where we get elected from, our job is to serve the entire county. We are not just representing one district," he said. "Anyone who does that is not following the oath that they took. Our job is to represent the entire county no matter where we are elected from."

...SPIRITUALLY continued from page 14

where only man deserves to be. Man claims prerogatives which belong to God alone; God accepts penalties which belong to man alone. (p160).

Fifteen days until Good Friday when the Son of God died on the Cross for your and my sins. As well as for the sins of the whole world.

Overwhelming.

I urge you to get to know this God personally through His Son, Jesus Christ. No one knows you better. No one loves you more.

Move toward Easter with a heart full of gratitude for what the Lord has done for you.

You may have a vital relationship with The Resurrected Lord! The tomb is empty! Jesus was raised back to life by the power of God.

It is this same Jesus who now waits and longs for you to come to Him and appropriate by faith all that He did for you on the Cross.

Nothing in my hand I bring
Simply to your Cross I cling
Naked, come to you for dress
Helpless, look to you for Grace;
Foul, I to the Fountain fly;
Wash me, Savior, or I die.

(Rock of Ages; Augustus Toplady).

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• Upcoming Events •

Highlands Cashiers Players present Agatha Christie's The Mousetrap

Highlands Cashiers Players will present The Mousetrap, a classic whodunnit by Agatha Christie, March 19 - 29 in the Martin Lipscomb Theater at the Highlands Performing Arts Center.

The play is directed by Craig Eister. Jayne Pleasants is the assistant director and Cathy Myers is the stage manager.

The Mousetrap holds the record for being the longest running play in the world. It has played continuously in London's West End since 1952. It is the story of a group of seven strangers who find themselves snowed in at a remote country guest house as news spreads of a murder in London. When a police sergeant arrives, the guests discover that there is a murderer in their midst.

The cast includes Michael Lanzilotta and Lorine Spencer as novice innkeepers Giles and Mollie Ralston. As their mysterious guests begin to arrive, we meet Christopher Wren, played by Craig Eister; Mrs.Boyle, played by Mandy Houston; Major Metcalf, played by Ron Leslie; Miss Casewell, played by April Getz; and Ms. Paravicini, played by Emily Wright. Randy Lucas plays Sergeant Trotter.

Thursday - Saturday performances are at 7pm, and Sunday matinees are at 2 pm. Tickets are available at HighlandsCashiersPlayers.com, or by calling 828-526-9047. The Highlands Performing Arts Center is located at 507 Chestnut Street, Highlands, NC

Vietnam vets to be honored Sat., March 28 at the Community Building

At the Highlands Community Center next to the ball field, Highlands American Legion Post 370 will honor all area Vietnam veterans at 10 a.m. Families invited.

National Vietnam War Veterans Day is actually March 29 because on March 29, 1973 Military Assistance Command Vietnam (MACV) was disbanded and the last U.S. combat troops departed the Republic of Vietnam. On March 29, 2012, President Obama proclaimed March 29 as Vietnam Veterans Day and called upon all Americans to observe this day with appropriate programs, ceremonies and activities that commemorate the 50-year anniversary of the Vietnam War.

Annual Easter Egg Hunt at Rec Park is Sat. April 4

The Annual Easter Egg Hunt will be **Saturday, April 4th** at 10am at the Highlands Recreation Department for ages 0-9 years old. The address is 600 North Fourth Street.

For any other information call Lester Norris or Janice Mathis at 828-526-3556.

• Highlands Area Events •

NOTE:

• Highlands Pharmacy is closed on Saturdays until May. Hours are Mon.-Fri. 9a to 5:30p.

POOL SCHEDULE

• Lap Swim: Mon.-Fri. 6am-9:45am, and Saturday 10am-11pm - 6 lanes. Water Aerobics: 18 y+ Mon.-Fri. 10-11am with Karen Chambers. Adult Swim: 18y+ Mon.-Thurs. 11am-3:30pm, Friday 11am-1:30pm. Public Swim: Mon. thru Thurs.. 3:30-7pm, Saturday 11am-6pm and Sunday 1-6pm

PICKLE BALL

• At the Recreation Dept. every Monday - Friday 10am-1pm indoors for the winter (notice the days and time has changed),

MOUNTAIN FINDINGS

• **Spring Hours:** Friday & Saturdays. Open: 10 am - 1 pm. April 3-4, 17-18; May 1-2, 8-9, 15-16; Thurs., Fri, Sat.: May 21-23, May 28-30. Spruce Street. www.mountainfindings.org

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 at 5:30 pm and 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 5pm, on Tuesday @ 7 pm, on Friday at 5 pm and on Saturday at 9 am. For more information please visit our website www.aawnc80.org or to speak with a member of A.A. 24/7 call our HELP Line 828 349-4357

Mon. Thurs.

• At First Presbyterian Church, ArtSpace is open from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The next exhibit will start in mid-August. For information contact fpchkelley@gmail.com

Mon., Tues., Wed, Fri.

• EnerChi: Connect mind, body, and breath using Tai Chi in a meditative movement practice. Call or email if interested in these classes 828-634-1404 or WellspringClasses@gmail.com. Mon. 5:30-6:30pm, Tues. 4-5pm, Wed. 6:30-7:30pm and Fri. 4-5pm and 5:30-6:30pm.

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.

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

Second Mondays

• The local chapter of PEO, an off-campus sorority founded in the 1800s that provides grants and loans to women with financial need who want to return to school or further their education meets at 10 a.m. For more info call president Paula McDonald at 706-372-3004

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.

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

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.

• Digital Navigators will be at the Hudson Library from 1-3 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.

• At First Presbyterian Church a free concert "Music for Prayer" at noon. These casual concerts are almost entirely improvised and last 30-45 minutes.

• At Hudson Library, special children's events will be on tap on Thursday afternoons at 3:30 Kids Zone programs.

3rd Saturdays

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

Sundays

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

Wed., March 18

• Free Brown Bag Lunch & Learn at the Community Center from 11:30a-1p. In partnership with Southwest CC and the Chamber of Commerce.

Fri., March 20

• Free Senior Luncheon at the Civic Center in the meeting room at noon.

Sat., March 21

• At the Bascom, Boys & Girls Club "Drawn to the Plateau" exhibit and reception at 3 p.m.

Sat. March 28

• At the Highlands Community Center next to the ball field, Highlands American Legion Post 370 will honor all area Vietnam veterans at 10 a.m. Families invited.

Sat., April 4

• Annual Easter Egg Hunt a the Rec Park at 10a.m. for ages 0-9.

Sat., April 18

• The Highlands Chamber of Commerce/Visit Highlands, annual Plateau Pickup. Volunteers will gather at 8:30am at K-H Park (Pine Street) to check in and get clean-up assignments along key corridors including U.S. 64, N.C. 28, N.C. 106, and select areas of downtown Highlands. for more info, email events@highlandschamber.org or call 828-526-5841.

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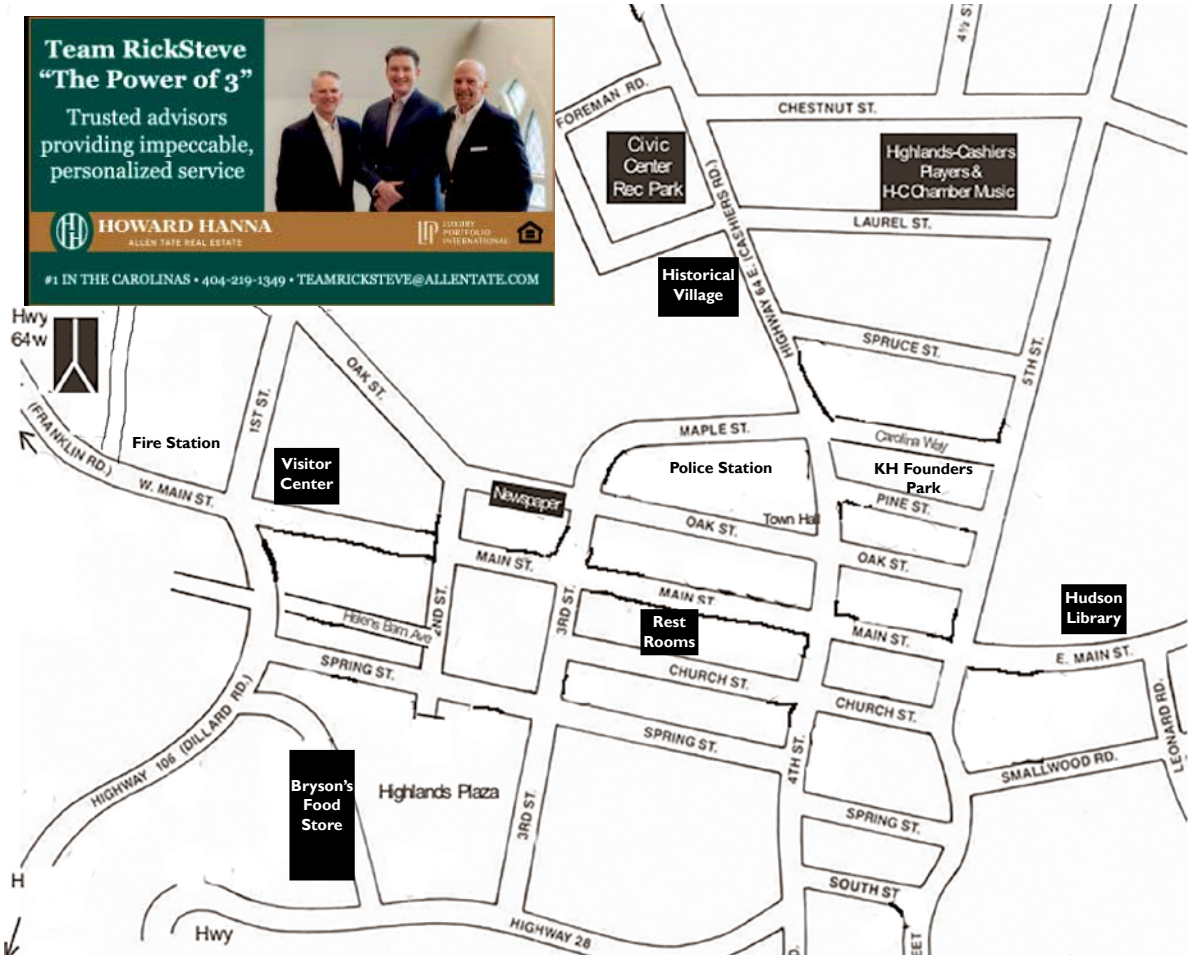

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