

Highlands Newspaper

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Thurs., Oct. 1, 2026

Planning Board to first tackle land use & housing in Community Plan

By Kim Lewicki

Monday night the Highlands Planning Board began the task of reviewing the Com-

munity Plan as directed by the Town Board at the Town Work-session/Planning Board meeting held prior to September's Town

Board meeting.

Since the task of updating the Community Plan is daunt-

• See **PLANNING BOARD** page 8

HS field condition moves match to Franklin

By Kristin Fox

Another Highlands School soccer season is underway, and once again, weather has negatively affected the soccer program. Like most prior seasons, the high amount of rainfall has made the school's field unplayable, resulting in home games being canceled or moved to an alternative field.

High school and middle school boys' soccer is played in the fall, but due to the high levels of rainfall Highlands gets combined with the characteristics of the field, each season 5-10 home games usually are postponed, delayed, or canceled.

Recently, the HS varsity

• See **MATCH** page 15



The Boys & Girls Club of the Plateau will be erecting a banner at the entrance of the Rec Park with a QR code to make fundraising for it's \$8.5 million campaign easier for people.

Town OK's fundraising banner at Rec Park

By Kim Lewicki

At the September Highlands Town Board meeting, representatives of the Boys & Girls Club of the Plateau, were granted permission to erect a banner sign at the entrance of the Highlands Rec Park property to

advertise and promote the Boys & Girls Club facility that is being built on Rec Park property.

Fundraising for the \$8.5 million facility is well underway and is expected to end December 2027.

"We have strong momen-

tum, said CEO Carmen Waite, "but we still have a little ways to go with 'naming' opportunities still available."

In October of 2025, BGCP signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the

• See **BANNER** page 4

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5 referendums are on the Nov. ballot

By Kristin Fox

When voters go to the polls this November, they will decide on five referendums that are on the 2026 general election ballot. The ballot includes three Macon County referendums and three state constitutional amendments.

The three Macon County referendums include a one-quarter percent (0.25%) – ¼ of a penny – sales and use tax increase, a malt beverage question, and an unfortified wine question.

All North Carolina voters will decide on three constitutional amendments in the November 2026 general election — a photo ID voting referendum, a state income tax cap, and limiting local property tax increases.

Macon County Referendums
One-quarter percent (0.25%) – ¼ Penny – Sales

• See **REFERENDUMS** page 12



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• THE PLATEAU'S POSITION •

• MAYOR ON DUTY •

Weather, water and trout fishing

I recently spoke with Chris Wilkes of the Highland Hiker about one of my favorite subjects: trout fishing. Since the Hiker folks outfit trout anglers and schedule them with guides, I knew Chris would have inside information on how fishing has been going this summer.



Highlands Mayor
Patrick Taylor

Chris reiterated that mid-summer is always a slow time for posting big trout numbers, but he said it had been extremely difficult for their professional guides this summer. They have had to contend with dry spells where water levels were extremely low. Also, the region has had periods of higher-than-normal temperatures; put these two factors together and the trout go into a dormancy survival mode. They go into a hibernation mode like what bears do in the winter.

I knew conditions were bad when I drove by the Tuckasegee and Cullasaja Rivers and noticed you could walk across them in places by stepping on exposed rocks and never getting wet feet. In normal conditions, these rocky areas have flowing ripples of water or even rapids.

My concerns were confirmed when I read the Asheville Citizen-Times Monday morning. A main article announced that the NC Department of Wildlife Resources have postponed the traditional delayed harvest October stocking program to sometime in November.

Several factors drove the decision to delay the stocking program, from habitat problems created by Helene to elevated temperatures and low water levels. Also, the state had closed one of the two hatcheries that supply Western North Carolina for renovation. It also had sustained damage from Helene.

But the major problem was that even at the functioning hatchery, the water temperature had reached around 70 degrees. That caused the fingerling trout to become stressed, and about 70% died. As a result, the hatchery system has a shortage of stock.

This delay is unwelcome news for our multibillion-dollar trout fishing industry. Many hospitality workers depend on a vibrant trout stocking program.

The trout are like canaries in the coal mine for Western Carolina; they warn us of dangerous change.

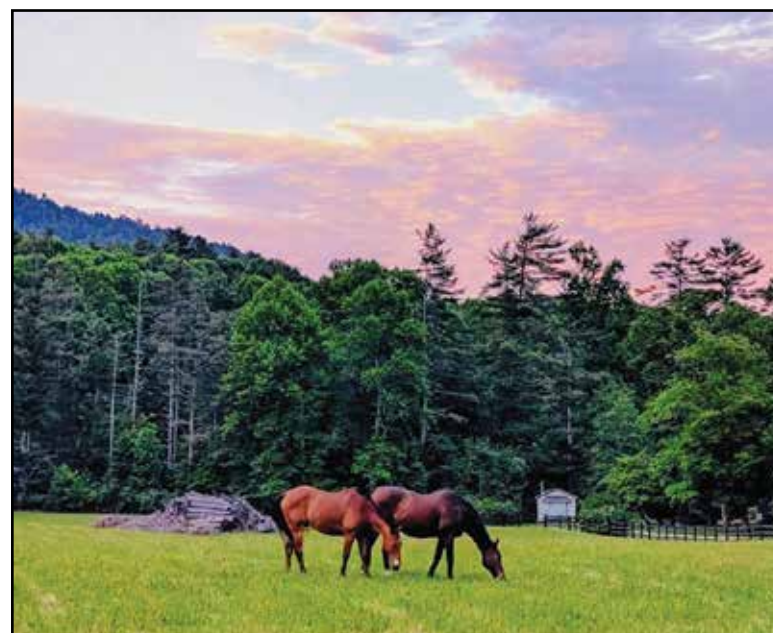
Most people know that, in the past, canaries were very prevalent in coal mines as a warning system. Canaries have a very high metabolism and breathe much faster than humans, meaning they process toxic air more quickly; a canary would show signs of distress, pass out, or die well before a human felt any symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning, giving miners time to escape.

The trout are extremely sensitive to water temperature changes because they

• See MAYOR page 9

• SNAPSHOTS •

Grazing in their namesake



Idyllic
Horse
Cove

Photo by
Cynthia Strain

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• WEATHER •

Thu, 1-Oct	Fri, 2-Oct	Sat, 3-Oct	Sun, 4-Oct
			
74°F 55°F	74°F 57°F	71°F 62°F	64°F 58°F
Partly sunny and pleasant	A stray afternoon t-storm	Showers and a heavier t-storm	Periods of rain and a t-storm
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High 78° Low 56°	High 75° Low: 60°	High 72° Low 61°	High 66° Low 57°

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...BANNER continued from page 1

Town of Highlands. Parks and Recreation Trust Fund PARTF approved the MOU on February 3, 2026. The purpose of this MOU is to establish the framework for collaboration between BGCP and the Town to construct a new Boys & Girls Club facility ("the Building") on Town-owned property located at 600 North 4th Street, Highlands, NC 28741 (the Houston House lot). BGCP has the associated land lease and is reviewing it before seeking board approval to sign.

BGCP will provide the building design and engineering plans and lead the development of project cost estimates while co-leading fundraising for the facility's design and construction. BGCP will oversee design, permitting, and construction, provide monthly progress and financial updates to the Town, and transfer ownership of the completed facility to the

Town upon completion.

BGCP will then lease the facility from the Town for \$10 per year for an initial 25-year term, with an option to renew for an additional 25 years. The organization will maintain the interior and furnishings and operate the facility to provide free out-of-school programming for youth in grades K-12 who live in or whose parents or guardians work in the Highlands area of Macon County.

The grounds and outdoor pavilion will be open to the community during non-programming hours. Examples of activities include sports leagues, concerts, and festivals. The building interior will also be made available for scheduled community activities during non-programming hours. Examples include community meetings, events, or educational programming.

...INVESTING continued from page 7

The homes of Highlands are part of what this place is — part of why people drive up the switchbacks and breathe differently when they arrive. They were built by people who came here and decided to stay, who built not for a market but for a life. Our work now, as stewards of these

houses and of this mountain community, is to restore what time has softened and reimagine what the decades have made obsolete — not to erase the history, but to carry it forward in a form that can be lived in again.

The lantern still sits on my table. I do not use it every day, but I know where it is, and on the right kind of evening, nothing else produces the same warmth, the same charm.

Some things are worth keeping. Some things need to be replaced. And some things just need someone who knows the difference.

The author Denise Boothby a licensed real estate professional, with Mountain Life Properties, serving buyers and sellers in the Highlands and the surrounding plateau communities.

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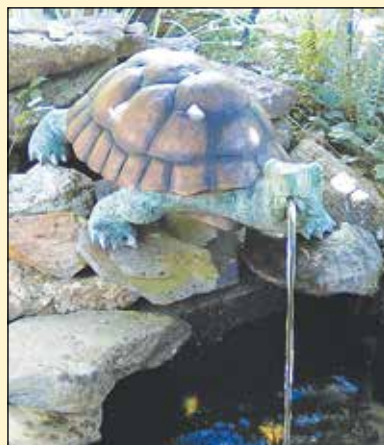
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• INVESTING AT 4,118 Ft •

A reflection on what we inherit, what we steward, and what we owe the homes of Highlands

Ten months ago, I sat by the light of an old kerosene lantern, while the mountain held its breath as it awed the beauty of the fresh falling snow.

The snow came quietly, the way mountain weather often does — glistening in the moonlight, settling into a soft blanket across the forest floor. It was breathtaking and required a moment of silence. We decided to turn off the lights and enjoy the moonlight glowing on the fresh fallen snow, we lit candles and an oil lantern which created a soft inviting warmth, along with the wood burning fire, an ideal ambiance was created offering the perfect wintertime experience in Highlands.

As the flames flickered and the snow fell onto our deck, I thought, some things do not need to be replaced. This is a moment to celebrate the simplicity of the past. Highlands and the homes of the past — and that they don't always need to be replaced. They need to be understood, remembered, and celebrated.

Now summer has passed, with its deep green fullness that surprises people who have only seen it in photographs — layered, dimensional, the forest pressing right up to the edge of our lives. Mornings arrive cool and unhurried as fog lifts above the peaks; by afternoon we wait for the spectacular sunsets only this elevation can give. Today, we anxiously anticipate the beauty and fragrance that Autumn is ushering in.

People come here for this. They always have. The earliest families built welcoming porches and chose wood with the grain still visible, stone cut from the mountain rock. They were not decorating — they were building the conditions for a life. That sensibility — honest materials, rooms designed around how people actually gather — never disappeared. It simply evolved. Most homes standing in Highlands today were built in the late 20th century, each shaped by whoever claimed a particular hillside or ridgeline as their own. Nothing here is cookie-cutter. Around every curve is something different. For a buyer or seller willing to look at what a home actually holds — with the right guidance to see past what time has layered over it — that individuality is not a complication. It is the gift.

Highlands contains more than 2,000 homes, with only a fraction occupied year-round. We are considered one of the most desirable places to own a home in the United States. The majority of our single-family homes carry with them the fingerprints of another era's vision and dreams. This is not a flaw. This is an inheritance.

The question is what we do with it.



Denise Boothby
828-482-2434

Mountain Life Properties

I have watched buyers walk through good, honest homes — homes with the kind of craftsmanship and character that time have made increasingly rare — and then hesitate over a previous owner's design choices, missing out on a wonderful home in the process.

Before pricing a home as “dated,” it is worth considering what a few well-chosen modifications might accomplish. A handful of thoughtful decisions, well executed, can restore a home's warmth and distinction, bringing its best qualities back into focus.

A house, like a woman, does not always need a new wardrobe. She may simply need help updating her accessories.

The right pieces, chosen with intention, do not change her — they reveal her. They bring the structure into focus. They remind everyone in the room what was always there.

Buyers in Highlands today want something specific: outdoor living that actually functions — a covered porch where you can sit and enjoy the fragrance and sounds of a summer rain, a fireplace usable year-round, a kitchen that opens toward the view instead of turning its back on it. They want closets that hold a life, bathrooms that feel considered rather than checked off, floors that feel the same underfoot whether barefoot in the morning or hosting a gathering in the evening.

Inventory across the plateau is in demand as our resale supply is limited in many of our desirable neighborhoods. This market moves on a longer timeline than urban ones, but that patience cuts both ways — it gives buyers more room to be thoughtful, and it lets sellers who have done the work stand apart from those who have not.

What the market cannot absorb is a home priced at its potential but presented in its current condition. The gap between those two things is where opportunity lives — for buyers willing to look past surface imperfection, and for sellers willing to invest before they list.

Perhaps you will be fortunate enough to find a home with the old knotty pine still on the walls. Run your hand along it. Feel the knots, the grain, the warmth no painted surface can replicate. That wood was milled locally, or near here, by someone who understood a wall was never just a wall. It was what you looked at over breakfast for thirty years. It was what your grandchildren touched on the way to bed. It holds light differently at different hours — honeycolored in summer mornings, deeper by evening.

That is not dated. That is irreplaceable.

• See INVESTING page 4







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...PLANNING BOARD continued from page 1

ing, the commissioners told the Planning Board to take a 30,000-foot view and not to concern themselves with the “how” or the “funding” of any of their ideas, just to indicate what items in the Community Plan they would like to see come to fruition or be massaged and considered.

At the time, Mayor Pat Taylor said he had gone through the plan again and was pleased at how many items in the plan the town had addressed.

He said broadband had been achieved with free, town-wide Wi-Fi set to be added before the end of the year; sidewalks, crosswalks and handicap access continue to be expanded; EV charging stations have been installed; the town's electric grid has been expanded into a 4-circuit system; a new playground is underway at the Rec Park; the STR ordinance has been dealt with; a recycling depot is now at the Rec Park; parking has been expanded; and being addressed and discussed is density and zoning along the corridors; and higher density housing options.

“We are now asking the Planning Board to look at the big issues in the plan,” he said.

At September's Planning Board meeting, Member Rachel Wilson jumped in first suggesting the board tackle Action Items listed in the plan section by section and to share ideas between board members via email.

But, member KC Cunningham got more specific.

Citing projects on Carolina Way, she said she would like the timeline regarding remodels and construction tighten so projects are not allowed to linger untouched for extended periods of time.

“Do something so we don't have these blights on our community,” she said.

Town Planner Michael Mathis explained the permit versus inspection timeline and how the timeline can be “reset” once an aspect of a project is inspected – whether by the town or the county – which is what has happened on Carolina Way.

Board Chair Chris Wilkes said one of the board's ideas could be for the town to do what it can to tighten remodel/construction timelines taking into consideration state and county guidelines.

Cunningham then requested the town to disallow the use of stucco on

public buildings so stipulations match the required stucco percentage on the books for commercial buildings.

When on the Planning Board, Highlands Commissioner Jeff Weller pushed for public and government buildings to be required to adhere to the same construction standards as commercial buildings and the Town Board voted unanimously to follow through, but state regulations have halted the move.

Under Senate Bill 382, which is the Hurricane Helene Relief Bill, the law stops local governments from downzoning or creating nonconformities unless every impacted property owner gives written consent.

This restriction halts major zoning rewrites, limits design and building standards, and blocks new regulations for commercial areas across the state.

So currently, there is no local fix. Cities and towns have no independent power to bypass the law. Change requires a new vote in the State Legislature to restore local downzoning authority which doesn't appear to be happening any time soon, as it would also apply to limiting Short-term rentals.

Cunningham got the most reaction when she asked the town to consider hiring a local, affordable lobbyist who would represent Highlands in Macon County.

“We don't have anybody down there right now,” she said. “Can't we get somebody who would focus on us?”

After laughter calmed down, Wilkes said, “It's election time and people need to make the “hard” choice at the polls.”

Commissioner John Shearl is running for reelection for Highlands District 1 against first-timer Russ Lund.

Meanwhile, Muir said currently Highlands has the best non-lawyer lobbyist in Town Board Commissioner Jim Tate and the town has The League of Municipalities at the state level which works for Highlands and all towns in the state.

Muir then focused the group on the land use and housing section of the Community Plan, which is what Commissioner Amy Patterson asked the Planning Board to focus on some months ago.

To offer more housing opportunities, Muir suggested changing the town's current zoning map to allow more Pocket Communities and loosening Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) stipulations.

• See **PLANNING BOARD** page 21

...MAYOR continued from page 2

are cold-blooded animals whose metabolism and oxygen needs are controlled by their environment. When water temperatures reach or exceed 68°F, trout experience severe stress, become lethargic, and stop feeding.

The canaries in the coal mines of Western Carolina and the trout in our stream show how Mother Nature warns us of trouble. If the trout are struggling for survival, our environment is struggling and has problems, too.

This gives us even more reason and motivation to protect our watershed and wilderness areas. Cool, clean waters are essential for trout and, for that matter, residents to thrive. Projects like dredging Mirror Lake are a part of the equation for a robust watershed. Dredging will return lake levels to anywhere from 4 to 10 feet in some areas. Those depths will help keep millions of gallons of water cold.

The lake now has many areas where the water is two feet or less. With high summer temperatures and abundant sunshine, a Petri dish effect develops

where algae and weeds flourish, as seen this past summer.

One letter writer mused in the newspapers last week as to whether the town and McGill Engineering have bitten off more than they can chew by doing this project. My response is two-fold. Yes, there are challenges, and completing the project will not be a one-and-done event when it comes to improving our watershed, but it is a welcome step toward improving our water environment. Also, the Town of Highlands has done extremely complicated public works projects in the past, like building a water and sewer system. Working with professional engineers like McGill, we can do this project, too.

Let me end on a positive note about trout fishing. The state hatchery will make up the shortfall in stock. Late fall and winter are great times to fish the streams and rivers in the area. The cool waters make trout highly active and hungry. Bundle up in warm attire and contact your local outfitters for a guided fishing trip. The guides will appreciate the business, and you will have an enjoyable time catching trout.



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• LETTERS •

What am I missing?

Dear Editor,

On this Sunday, my heart turns to the suffering and turmoil around us, and I have a question: What am I missing?

How do we reconcile the suffering in Gaza, the United States' support for Israel, the war in Ukraine, and the U.S. military conflict with Iran with Jesus' teachings about loving our neighbors, caring for the vulnerable, and seeking peace? The U.N. Commission of Inquiry has concluded that Israel committed genocide in Gaza; Israel rejects that conclusion. Whatever one's view of that finding, the civilian suffering is real.

How do we reconcile the fatal shootings of Renée Good and Alex Pretti by federal immigration officers,

and the questions surrounding those incidents, with our commitment to human life and due process?

How do we reconcile immigration enforcement that has resulted in U.S. citizens being mistakenly detained, along with reports of inadequate care for pregnant women and minors in detention, with Jesus' teaching about welcoming strangers and protecting the vulnerable?

Then there is the enormous concentration of wealth and power in technology and artificial intelligence, while regulation struggles to keep pace.

There are also serious questions about presidential power and personal wealth. Donald Trump reported more than \$2.2 billion in income in 2025, including more than \$1.4 billion from cryptocurrency ventures. Forbes estimates his net worth at about \$7 billion. I am not saying these earnings have necessarily been found illegal. But legality is not the only question. Constitutional emoluments provisions, ethics concerns, potential conflicts of interest, and moral questions remain when public office and rapidly growing personal wealth intersect.

Then there are the January 6 pardons, questions about institutional independence, attacks on the credibility of news organizations, political fundraising based on fear and outrage, and the constant flood of claims that makes it difficult for citizens to know what is true.

There are tariffs. Americans paid higher prices while many tariffs were in effect, and some tariffs were later

struck down. About \$100 billion in refunds had been paid to businesses by July, while most consumers received no comparable refunds. Other tariffs remain in effect, so the issue has not disappeared.

And then there is USAID. A Lancet study estimated that USAID-supported programs were associated with preventing about 91.8 million deaths from 2001 to 2021 and projected more than 14 million additional deaths by 2030 if funding cuts continued. Those future deaths are projections, not a count of deaths already caused. However, The Associated Press has documented deaths following the disruption of U.S.-funded programs.

Finally, there is Epstein. I want transparency and facts, whoever those facts implicate.

I do not want another meme or partisan talking point.

I want to know:

How do we reconcile all of this with Jesus?

Not the Jesus of a political party, but the Jesus who said, "Whatever you did for one of the least of these ... you did for me."

Tell me what I am missing. Tell me what facts I have wrong. Tell me what I do not understand. Please, talk to me about Jesus.

Because I am asking,

**Terri Kennedy
Highlands**

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Beware of those who tell you how to vote, pray and think

Dear Editor,

In the September 10 issue under the Spiritually Speaking column, a divisive preacher man with a persecution complex (not mentioning his name since it might boost his ego) railed upon the ideological big tent of the left. Specific to his list was anti-fascism and Muslims with his comment that he would not want to be there.

If he refuses to be among the people who are anti-fascist, does that make him pro-fascist? Perhaps all the veterans buried at Arlington should remind him of those who fought and shot against fascists and Nazis. And when a professed man of God has to trash another religion, he has by nature already lost the superiority of his own. Buddy, we are glad we are not under your tyranny either! This type of Christian nationalist mentality makes a very, very poor policy maker, because to such a mind, compromise is sin. His opponent is someone to be condemned and smeared.

In the September 17 Letters section, we have an alleged US marine who wants to ban the free speech of another letter writer who wrote about USAF major Jason Watson regarding his conscience and oath that prompted him to hold up a sign that said, IMPEACH,

CONVICT and REMOVE the felon potus.

Apparently, this marine, his name is not worthy of mention, who supposedly pledged an oath to the constitution of the United States for free speech, now wants another person banned.

How about we ask Desmond Doss about his right to his conscience? How about we ask Colonel Douglas McGregor about his conscience? How about we ask Colonel Lawrence Wilkerson about his conscience? BTW MARINE, how is that war against a country that didn't attack us going? How about those 15 bases in the Middle East that are destroyed and rendered worthless? How about following orders without a conscience like the Nazi soldiers did during World War II?

When it comes to politicians, they represent the lobbyists who pay them, not you. After, they manipulate your own values to vote against your best interest.

In conclusion, beware the preacher man that tells you how to vote. Beware the politician that tells you how to pray. Beware the veteran that tells you how to think.

**Herb Shelton
Highlands**

• See LETTERS page 15

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...REFERENDUMS from page 1

and Use Tax Increase

For the third time, Macon County will vote on the Macon County Local Sales and Use Tax -- "Voters will vote for or against the local sales and use tax at the rate of one-quarter (0.25%) in addition to all other state and local sales and use taxes," reads the question.

Both times it was on the ballot, in 2022 and 2024, the referendum failed. However, each time the margin in favor of the referendum has increased.

In November 2024, the referendum was decided by a very narrow margin, with 51.22% (10,213 votes) voting against the measure and 48.78% (9,726 votes) voting for the measure. The referendum failed by only 2.44 percentage points compared to a 10-point gap in the 2022 election, with 55% voting against and 45% voting for the referendum.

If approved, the tax will raise the county's sales tax from 6.75% to 7% and would apply to anyone purchasing goods in Macon County. Unlike raising property taxes, the sales tax increase would apply to both residents and visitors.

The sales tax increase would not apply to the purchase of groceries, prescription drugs, motor vehicles, electricity and natural gas, manufactured/modular homes, boats or aircraft.

If the referendum passes, the slight tax increase would generate approximately \$2.3 million annually for the county. This money could help fund education, law enforcement, fire & rescue, and EMS. In addition, the money generated from the sales tax increase could be used for capital improvements and addressing the many space needs in the county, such as a justice center, senior services,

• See **REFERENDUMS** page 14

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...REFERENDUMS continued from page 12

veteran services, and board of elections.

Currently, Macon County is the only county in western North Carolina that doesn't have a 7% sales tax. All others – Buncombe, Cherokee, Clay, Graham, Haywood, Jackson, Madison and Swain – have 7% sales tax. Neighboring Rabun County, GA has an 8% sales tax, and Pigeon Forge and Gatlinburg, TN have a 9.75% sales tax.

Malt Beverage and Unfortified Wine Questions

The two remaining Macon County referendums include the Macon County Malt Beverage Election and Unfortified Wine Election. If passed, both referendums would permit the “on-premises” and “off-premises” sale of malt beverages and unfortified wine for establishments in the county.

If passed, the two referendums would allow the sale of malt beverages and unfortified wine in the remaining “dry” areas of the county. Currently in Macon County, the sale of alcohol is only permitted in the Highlands and Franklin town limits and extra-territorial jurisdiction (ETJ).

Alcohol sales are prohibited in the Scaly Mountain area and on the Georgia Road from Tractor Supply to the state

line. Many businesses, especially restaurants, located in this “dry” section of the county have been struggling because they are prohibited from selling alcohol.

Statistics show that economic development in the county hasn't grown, while businesses in the city limits of Highlands and Franklin have prospered and increased because of alcohol sales.

Both referendums would have significant economic benefits for the county, helping existing businesses to increase sales as well as attracting new businesses to the county.

NC Constitutional Amendments

Photo ID voting referendum

North Carolina voters will vote on the “constitutional amendment to require all voters, not just those voting in person, to present photo identification before voting.”

This amendment expands the current in-person requirement of providing a voter ID to vote to also include those voting by mail.

Supporters of the amendment have expressed that the expanded ID requirement would help election security, especially with the increase in mail-in voting.

• See **REFERENDUMS** page 19

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...LETTERS continued from page 11

It's time to pull out all the stops

Dear Editor,

Our democracy in the United States of America and freedom in the entire world is under threat by forces more evil and powerful than ever before in human history. Call them authoritarians.

For many of us, despite the news being reported, life is going on as normal. Prices are high at the grocery and the pump, but we suck it up and carry on. We still have sports and entertainment on tv, so there is a facade of normalcy. Maybe in our hearts we know something is wrong, but we don't want to face it. Many people worldwide do not have access to decent healthcare, yet the ultra-rich own multiple mansions and yachts. And they are making their money off the fruits of labor of

other people.

We have a chance, our best chance, maybe our last chance, to save democracy in the United States from going down the drain, by voting in the upcoming mid-term elections. There are people with vast resources of money and power, who are investing enormous amounts of energy and money into electing candidates who will do their bidding. These candidates are literally selling their souls for a quick buck.

The most powerful tool these authoritarians have is the right-wing media. They use brainwashing 101 to repeat lies and distortions so often that they become the truth for their victims. Some 30% of our countrymen and women have suc-

cumbed to their siren song. Beliefs are more influential than facts (Allegory of the Cave, Plato).

Project 2025 lays out the aims of the authoritarians in black and white. Reliable information on the Heritage Foundation and Project 2025 is available on the internet and from people such as Robert Reich or Marc Elias. The movement behind Project 2025 began with the Powell Memo in 1971. You can look that up, too. When Newt Gingrich was Speaker of the House of Representatives, he began the idea that the Republicans should hate the Democrats and that Democrats were bad, evil people. Anything was permissible as long as it was against the Libs. Truth, morals, legality be damned.

So, for now, we need to organize and get out the vote in such massive numbers that there can be no doubt about the will of the people. If the authoritarians decide to contest such a turnout, I expect the torches and pitchforks to follow.

When we take back our government

and economy, and I have to believe that we will, we must have better leaders and better education. Alvin Toffler in his book, *The 3rd Wave*, said that Industrial Era schools were designed to teach students to be obedient, on time, and do rote, repetitive work. Authoritarians do not want educated citizens who think for themselves. Those interested in preserving democracy must work together on a common plan. We must be ever vigilant against those who would take away our freedom for their own selfish gain. We must set up procedures and protocols to monitor threats against democracy. We must educate our citizens so they are not susceptible to propaganda and lies. We must show them that love is the way forward, not fear, hate, and anger.

Anyone with a pulpit must speak out and urge people to vote for freedom, not slavery. Think Nazi Germany in the 1930s. We are there.

David Stearns
Otto

...MATCH continued from page 1

soccer team was given the opportunity to host their home game in the new Franklin High School stadium, enjoying play on a turf field under the lights, a significant change from playing on a muddy, slippery field. With the recent heavy rainfall, the HS's field was again deemed unsafe to play.

Despite losing its home-field advantage playing in Franklin, the boy's soccer team easily beat Swain with a score of 6-0.

"This season, our athletic department has canceled soccer games at the last minute or moved to an alternative location on multiple occasions," said Highlands' School Board Member Hilary Wilkes. "While we are grateful to Franklin High School for hosting us recently, it is unfortunate that our state-ranked team had to give up their critical home-field advantage in an important match-up."

Wilkes said Highlands has thriving boys' and girls' soccer programs at the school. "Uncertainty about the state of play on our field has been an issue for years. It is long overdue for the county to address it," she said.

Highlands Athletic Director Brett Lamb and Highlands Principal Sarah Holbrooks were quick to thank Franklin HS.

"I would like to thank the Franklin High School athletic director and administration for working with us to make it possible for our Highlands School varsity team to play at FHS," said HS Principal

Sarah Holbrooks. "Due to the rain and unplayable conditions on our home field, we had already been forced to cancel two home games."

Holbrooks said the extra time and effort everyone put in to help them get the game played on the turf against Swain was appreciated.

"Our boys were especially excited to play under the lights," she said.

For more than four years, the discussion to fix, replace or relocate the HS soccer field has been the center of much-debated discussion at school board and county commissioner meetings. Several times it appears a solution had been determined or a new field was within reach, only to be postponed again due to lack of funding and support from the county.

In 2018, field conditions began to seriously affect the ability to play on the field. The field was built in 2009 and competition began in 2010.

Although there seemed to be renewed interest in fixing the HS soccer field among county and school officials recently, the funding to fix the field did not make the final cut in the school system's capital outlay request from the county for the 2026-2027 budget.

After many years of meetings among local citizens and government boards, the project is once again at a standstill, with little to no progress made toward a decision to fix the soccer field.

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• HS ATHLETES ROUND UP •

Highlanders battle weather, secure big wins across busy week

It was an action-packed week for Highlands Athletics, filled with state recognition, rain delays, high-stakes thrillers, and hard-fought action across middle school and high school sports.

Leadership Recognized at NCHSAA Meeting

The week kicked off on Tuesday in Asheville, where Coach Lamb and Mrs. DeBois represented Highlands School at the NCHSAA Region 8 annual meeting. The gathering was highlighted by a special tribute honoring retiring Commissioner Que Tucker for her 39 years of dedicated service to the NCHSAA, alongside a warm welcome to incoming Commissioner Brad Alford.

Adding to the program's pride, Highlands was officially recognized as one of the elite schools in Region 8 to remain completely ejection-free throughout the 2025-26 sports year—a testament to the student-athletes' and coaches' sportsmanship and discipline.

High School Boys Soccer Moves to Turf, Blasts Swain 6-0

Mother Nature caused havoc on Wednesday as torrential rainfall rendered the Highlands natural grass field unsafe and unplayable, forcing the postponement of the middle school soccer match against The Cata-mountain School. However, thanks to a gracious gesture from nearby Franklin High School, the varsity boys soccer match against Swain County was saved and relocated to Franklin's newly installed turf facility.

Despite multiple 30-minute weather delays caused by persistent lightning early in the opening half, the Highlanders refused to lose focus. Leading 1-0 after the initial delays, Highlands erupted out of the break with



Brett Lamb
Athletic Director

high energy, striking four quick times to take a commanding 5-0 lead into a shortened halftime.

The second half was capped by a memorable milestone: Francisco Gooch netted the first goal of his career to seal a dominant 6-0 victory. Other Highlander goals were contributed by Rowen Carnes (2), Stephen Pierson (2), and Todd Vilardo (1). Highlands School extends a massive thank you to Franklin High School for providing their turf facility and making the match possible.

Middle School Teams Host Summit

On Thursday, the middle school soccer and volleyball programs welcomed Summit Charter School for conference clashes.

On the pitch, the Middle School boys put together a complete performance, claiming a 2-0 victory with clinical goals from Darwin Frias-Ovando and Porter Bowers. On the court, the middle school volleyball team fought through an intense, nail-biting match before ultimately falling to Summit 2-1 (16-25, 27-25, 7-15).

Meanwhile, the High School volleyball teams traveled to Summit for a road conference tilt. The JV squad dropped a tight opening set before falling 0-2 (24-26, 10-25). Varsity also struggled to find momentum, dropping their conference match 0-3 (23-25, 10-25, 15-25).

Road Trip Struggles and a Top-10 Defensive Stand

Monday saw teams back on the road. The middle school squads headed to Rabun Gap, where volleyball kicked off the action in a tightly contested match, narrowly falling in straight sets (dropping the first set 26-28 and the second 25-19).

Middle school soccer sought revenge for an earlier loss against Rabun Gap in a back-and-forth thriller. Despite a strong performance, Rabun Gap edged out a 2-1 win. The lone goal for Highlands came off a calm, collected penalty kick by Brian Munoz.

The highlight of the evening took place at Summit, where the High School varsity boys soccer teams both — ranked among the top 10 1A teams in the state—faced off against their rivals in a heavy-weight battle. The contest fully lived up to expectations.

After 80 physical minutes of regulation ended in a 0-0 deadlock, two 10-minute overtime periods still couldn't separate the side. Goalkeeper Chase Kenter delivered a sensational performance, making multiple game-saving stops, while defenders Blaine Dendy, Matthew Morales, Alex Lopez, Elmer Hernandez, and Charlie Wilkes anchored a relentless backline to secure the 0-0 clean sheet. The high-stakes rematch set for October 28 promises to be a thriller.

Looking Ahead: Pink Out and Youth Night this Thursday

Highlands High School Volleyball returns home this Thursday to host Murphy High School for a huge night of events. The program will host Youth Volleyball Night to celebrate Highlands Rec teams, alongside their annual Pink Out Night in support of breast cancer awareness.

Highlands Historical Society's Walk in the Park

Saturday, October 3rd, 1:00 - 3:00

Sunday, October 4th, 2:00

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SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING



The only constant is change, and change is in the air

Rev. Kirkland "Skully" Knight
The Episcopal Church of the incarnation

Hebrews 13:8 Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and for ever.

Matthew 4:17 From that time Jesus began to proclaim, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near."

Fall in Highlands is absolutely beautiful, magical, some might say-at least at times-it's perfect. I don't disagree. Since coming to live here, fall might be my favorite of the seasons. But as the air grows cooler and the leaves start to turn, we are also reminded that fall means change is coming. Everything that "greened up" and flowered in the spring and summer, that was so beautiful in its own right, is about to fall to the ground as the cycles of nature, of our world, of our lives continue to move forward.

Now don't get me wrong, there is nothing wrong with living in the present-enjoying what seems to be a perfect day, a perfect moment-no matter what the season. But if we find ourselves mourning or becoming angered by the end of that perfect moment, that's going to be a difficult way to go through life. Enjoying and celebrating the joyous moments of life is part of being alive, part of being a human being. Living with gratitude is essential. But when we don't allow for, and expect change to happen in our lives, we are setting ourselves up for some real problems.

The verse from Hebrews above, "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and for ever," is, in a way, reminding us that change is the only constant. If we believe that Jesus is the Incarnation of God, the Word made flesh, then we believe Jesus is God, and presumably that God is "the same yesterday and today and for ever." God is constant. But we're not God. And one thing that seems to remain constant for us, is the need for us (to be open) to change.

Instead of going back through the turbulent history of God and the people of Israel in the Old Testament, let's just pick up with the New Testament. John the Baptist, the one who comes to proclaim the coming of Jesus and to prepare the way, calls people to "Repent!" And we hear the same thing from Jesus in the verse from Matthew listed above, "From that time Jesus began to proclaim, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.'" If you are a "church person" you may have any number of reactions to that word, "repent." And for most of us, it's not a great reaction. It conjures up images of wagging fingers, and bibles being shaken from pulpits. It brings up feel-

• See SPIRITUALLY page 21

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

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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. VV. 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 • mountainsynagoguenc.com.

Rabbi led service 3rd Saturday AM, Rosh Hashanah & Yom

Kippur.

MOUNTAIN BIBLE CHURCH

743-2583 • Independent Bible Church

Sun: 10:30 a.m. at Big Ridge Baptist Church. 4224 Big Ridge

(4.5 miles from NC 107)

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

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

Bazaar Barn outreach is 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 Sept. 21. Only the names of persons arrested, issued a summons/citation, issued a Class-3 misdemeanor or those of public officials have been used.

Sept. 21

• At 10 a.m., police instructed a person to move out of the road multiple times, specifically 210 N. 5th Street.

• At 11 a.m., Hannah Joe Webb, 24, of Franklin, was arrested for standing in the street, specifically 210 N. 5th Street. She was issued a \$500 unsecured bond. Her trial date is Oct. 22.

Sept. 22

• At 1:30 a.m., Mackenzie Loren Gordon, 31, of Franklin, was arrested for DUI on NC 28. She was issued a \$600 secured bond.

Accidents responded to: Sept. 22

• Vehicle 1 was travelling north on Hudson Road toward NC 106 (Dillard Road). The driver pulled off the road to use a port-a-john and got stuck in the wet grass and mud, causing damages to the landscaping. The vehicle was pulled out by Ridgecrest Towing and left the scene under its own power.

• The driver of vehicle 1 was attempting to back a trailer beside vehicle 2 which was parked in front of the maintenance building on the Highlands Biological Station's private road. The trailer of vehicle 1 collided with vehicle 2. Vehicle 2 remained stationary and the driver of vehicle 1 relocated the trailer then parked beside vehicle 2.

• During the week officers issued 6 Citations and 28 Warning Tickets.

The Highlands Fire & Rescue log from Sept. 23

Sept. 23

• At 7:40 a.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on W. Kelsey Court. It was cancelled en route.

Sept. 24

• At 12:49 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a location on Church Street.

• At 1:41 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a location on Cullasaja Drive.

Sept. 25

• At 1 p.m. the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Ridge lake Circle.

Sept. 27

• At 11:41 a.m. the dept. was first-responders to a location on Main Street.

• At 12:29 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a location on Country Club Drive.

• At 2:31 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at Skyline Lodge.

Digital vehicle registration goes into effect today, Thurs., Oct. 1

Guide to Digital Vehicle RegistrationAs a result of recent legislation, effective October 1, 2026, the N.C. Division of Motor Vehicles is moving to an all-electronic registration system, eliminating the requirement for license plate stickers and printed registration cards.

What does this mean for me?

Residents with vehicle(s) registered in North Carolina will no longer receive physical license plate stickers or printed registration cards when you register your vehicle for the first time or renew the registration. Your vehicle registration will continue to be valid as long as you have paid your registration fees and vehicle property taxes on time.

Do I need a printed registration card?

No. There is no longer any

need for a physical registration card. Police officers have electronic verification systems that let them know the status of a vehicle's registration and inspection stations will be able to use your registration renewal notice to look up your vehicle.

Why was this change made?

Effective October 1, 2026, the N.C. General Assembly has eliminated the requirement for printed vehicle registration cards and license plate stickers. Police officers in North Carolina already use electronic verification systems to confirm vehicle registration status in real-time. License plate stickers and printed registration cards have become redundant. Eliminating them will generate significant cost savings for the state and help reduce instances of fraud and counterfeit stickers.

...REFERENDUMS continued from page 14

But opponents fear the amendment could create barriers to voting, especially for minorities.

Cap State Income Tax at 3.5%

Voters will also vote on the "constitutional amendment to keep the state income tax rate from being raised higher than three and one-half percent (3.5%)."

The amendment would lower the maximum individual income tax rate allowed by the NC Constitution from 7% to 3.5%. Within the current law, the cap is already below 3.5%, but the amendment would lock it in the state constitution.

Supporters of the amendment say the amendment would

limit future tax hikes and protect taxpayers. Those against the amendment have expressed their concern that the amendment unnecessarily restricts lawmakers' ability to respond to economic needs and would not lower current taxes. If passed, the referendum could reduce revenue that helps fund the state budget.

Limit Local Property Tax Increases

The final state constitutional amendment voters will decide on is the "constitutional amendment requiring limits on property tax increases by local governments."

If voters pass this amendment, the General Assembly will be required to pass laws cap-

ping increases in local property tax levies. Currently, state law doesn't have a requirement for a cap, with limits set by future legislation.

Supporters of the amendment believe it prevents excessive local tax burdens on citizens. Opponents are concerned that local governments would lose revenue, especially extra funds for emergencies and to help fund education. In addition, this amendment could potentially affect revenue used to fund the state budget.

A simple majority vote by North Carolinians is required for each amendment to pass into law.

Time to register for the Christmas Parade!

Registration is now open for the Highlands Christmas Parade, taking place at 10am Saturday, December 5, 2026.

The annual parade brings the holiday spirit to Main Street with festive floats, community

organizations, local businesses and plenty of Christmas cheer. Participants are encouraged to get creative, gather their groups and begin planning their entries for this year's celebration.

Businesses, organizations,

families and other groups interested in participating are encouraged to register early and begin planning their entries.

Parade registration is available at www.highlandschamber.org/chamber/christmas-parade.

FIRE SALE!

CALL FOR DETAILS



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- Casual
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We're proud to be a family-owned company with 43 years in the business, and even prouder to now serve the Highlands community.
~ Bob Saladna, Owner

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- Same-day service for most maintenance and routine repairs.
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CLASSIFIEDS

ESTATE SALE

OCT 1-3 – 96 Pinecrest Road, Highlands. Exceptional lifetime collection of fine antiques, jewelry, chandeliers, art, cut glass, linens, and baskets. Quality furnishings, and collectibles throughout. Serious collectors and antique lovers won't want to miss this sale. Bring money!

FOR SALE

COTTAGE ON LAKE BURTON

\$129,500 - North Georgia Mountains. 1br/1ba. 1 year old with modern design, all appliances and furniture. Beautiful gated community. www.sugarmillcreek.com Tel: 912-222-2448



NEW MIELE SS 30" WARM-

ING DR., New Allen & Roth gas log set, New 49" ceramic double sink top, Used Gaggenau 24" wall oven & steam oven, EGO line trimmer, New Cutter-Hammer 400amp. circuit breaker, and two 200amp.

Main breaker, Antler chandelier, new moving pads. new Kenmore 3-burner gas grill 305-401-0568. (10/8)

17FT ALUMINUM LAKE CANOE, excellent condition with paddles \$600. 828-421-0124 (st. 7/9)

1.06 AC LOT ON 8900 Buck Creek Rd. \$79,900. 828-421-0124 (st. 7/9)

FOR RENT

NEW 2BD, 2BA, FURNISHED APARTMENT within a half mile of downtown. \$1,200 a month. Call 404-234-2516. (st. 7/2)

2BD/2BATH SINGLE WIDE \$1,100 per month internet included. First and last security. Mark 828-200-0765. (st. 5/29)

SERVICES

MOBILE CARWASH/DETAILING - THE DETAIL GUYS WNC (828) 745-3500 text . Thedetailguyswnc on facebook Full Service. We Come To You

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PLATEAU PAINTERS – Interior and exterior painting, pressure washing, decks, and sanding and staining wood floors. Division of Chatlos Construction. Fully insured. Free estimates. Call Mike at

828-200-4071. (6/25)

HIGHLANDS-CASHIERS HANDYMAN – Chatlos Construction – Remodels, Additions, Framing, Siding, Roofing, Decks, Painting. References. Insured. 828-200-4071. (6/25)

JUNK REMOVAL – We take anything. Call 828-200-0492

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NEED FURNITURE MOVED OR ANYTHING HAULED AWAY? Call or text James of Going Gone at 828-421-2655. (7/30)

...SPIRITUALLY continued from page 18

ings of guilt and shame. And the word has multiple meanings—turn around, turn back, change your mind, change your thinking—but one thing it does imply is some sort of change.

And just as we can't hold onto a perfect day, or a perfect moment, we also can't hold onto the idea that we are perfect. John the Baptist and Jesus aren't call us awful, horrible people. Jesus isn't telling parables to make us feel bad about ourselves. Jesus loves us and when we love someone, sometimes we have to "admonish" them. If we can think of God as a loving parent, wouldn't we expect that parent—because they love us—to tell us when we need to be better, when we need to turn around and go a different way, when we need to change? I sure hope so.

I don't think many of us, if asked, would admit that we think we're perfect. But we might have a hard time accepting suggestions about how we might change. And an issue with this is, that it makes it hard to learn anything new. So much of the problem in our public (and private)

discourse is that we don't listen. At all. We might not yell and scream, and we might think that's ok, but more often than not, we're just being quiet, polite, allowing someone else their turn to speak, but we're not really listening. Because to listen, really listen, would mean that what we already think is the only way. That is the kind of challenge that Jesus faced and it's not that different now. What if we listened to each other? Heard each other? What if we listened like we have might have something to learn from someone who is saying something we might not agree with? What if we allowed for the possibility that we could change our minds, if only in some small way?

Jesus calls us to repentance, to change. No matter who we are, or what we think. To live with humility and patience, instead of fear and arrogance, opens us to what might be possible. It opens us to learn from those around us—something new, something unexpected. Every day is a new day, and whether we like it or not, change is coming. Thanks be to God.

...PLANNING BOARD continued from page 8

"We could create more housing units with zoning changes regarding Pocket Neighborhoods and ADU regulations," he said.

Currently, in Highlands ADUs must be attached to a house. Muir suggested changing that so they could be on the same property but not attached, which may prompt property owners to build them and rent them as long-term rentals to alleviate the lack of workforce housing options in Highlands.

The Community Plan suggests Performance-based criteria for permitting new ADUs with living quarters by including a minimum parcel size, maximum building footprint and other design criteria.

Technically, a Pocket Neighborhood is a planned, high-density housing community where a small cluster of smaller homes faces a shared central green space, courtyard, or pedestrian walkway rather than a street.

Homes are built close together around a communal commons similar to Highlands first cluster development – Shelby Place – where ¼-acre lots were allowed in the R1 zone.

Muir's suggestion to focus on the land use and housing section of the Community Plan gave the board a task which will be discussed at the Oct. 26 meeting at the Community Building at 5:30 pm with the public always welcomed to participate.

CHURCH OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD — CASHIERS, NORTH CAROLINA

Bazaar Barn Sales Manager

25–30 hours per week • \$27–30 per hour • Based on experience

ABOUT THE POSITION

The Bazaar Barn of the Church of the Good Shepherd, Cashiers, North Carolina, is hiring a Sales Manager to help coordinate donation intake, arrangement and pricing of merchandise, and sales.

The Sales Manager will work 3–4 days a week (on a flex schedule) with other managers, dedicated volunteers, and other staff to coordinate our dynamic, non-profit retail operation that benefits nearly 50 local non-profits.

POSITION DETAILS

25-30 hrs / week

\$27-30 / hr DOE

Flex Schedule

Part-time



Learn More & Apply Online

Scan the QR code to visit our online posting and submit an interest form. Full job description available upon request.

• HIGHLANDS AREA EVENTS •

POOL SCHEDULE

• Lap Swim: Mon.-Fri. 6am-9:45am, and Saturday 10am-11pm - 6 lanes. Water Aerobics: 18 y+ Mon.-Fri. 10-11am with Karen Chambers. Adult Swim: 18y+ only. Weekend public swim: Sat., 11am-6pm and Sun., 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-pm outdoors for the summer

MTN FINDINGS

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

FIBBER MAGEES

• Fibber Magee's Thrift Store on Laurel Street Hours. Wed. & Fri. - 10a to 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 at Grace Chapel, 9915 Dillard Rd., Scaly Mountain each Tues & Sat at 5:30 pm;

• In Highlands at the 1st Presbyterian Church, 471 Main St., on Mondays at 5:30 p.m. and a NEW WOMEN'S GROUP Tuesdays at 5:30 pm; and on Wednesdays & Fridays at 12:00 noon.

• Open in-person meetings are also held in Cashiers at the Albert Carlton Cashiers Community Library, 249 Frank Allen Rd. on Sundays at 5 pm, on Tuesdays at 7 pm, on Friday at 5:30 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

Monday & Friday

• Karate: Build confidence, focus, and fitness with Karate! Rick Yinger will be offering classes Monday and Friday at 5:15pm. Call 828-421-3119 for more information.

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 budandlynn@me.com

Tuesdays

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

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

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

Tuesdays & Thurs.

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

Wednesdays

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

• 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. 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 npost370@gmail.com or just join us at 9am.

Thurs., Oct. 1

• The Southern Jackson County Democrats, Cashiers/ Glenville precinct, will host a candidate forum and meet & greet on Thursday, from 5:30-7:45 p.m. at the Cashiers Community Center on Frank Allen Road, located behind the Cashiers Fire Department.

Fri., Oct. 2

• At the Highlands Biological Center, Spooky Species

BioBlitz 10a – noon at the Sto Pavilion, 111 Lower Lake Rd. FREE. No registration required.

Sat. & Sun. Oct. 3-4

• "Walk in the Park" at Highlands Memorial Park cemetery. Sat., 1-3p and Sun., 2-4p. Saturday's is at the park, Sunday's is in the Community Building. Shuttle service is from the Community Building parking lot. Tickets are \$25 for adults and children under 12 are free. To purchase tickets and reserve times go to highlandshistory.com.

Sat., Oct 3

• Screening of "Riverkeeper" at PAC at 2 p.m. The award-winning documentary follows 2024 Champion of Conservation Dr. Jackie Echols in her efforts to restore Atlanta's South River. Q&A follows the screening. FREE

• A BBQ fundraiser for the Cullasaja Corge Fire & Rescue Dept. 4-8p. Adults, \$12, Children, \$6. Gospel and Bluegrass music by Done Gone Boys from Walhalla, SC. Chopped pork BBQ, baked beans, cole slaw, roll, dessert and Drink. Also, people can pre-order Boston Butts for \$40 by Sept. 28. Call 828-369-5010.

• Pop Up Pipers final performance for 2026 from 4:30-5p at the First Presbyterian Church on Main Street.

Sun., Oct. 4

• At Blue Valley Baptist Church, a homecoming service with singing by High Mountain Harmony.

Thurs., Oct. 8

• OBAGI Open House at Highlands Mercantile on Main from 10a to 3p. 20% off all OBAGI products.

• Highlands Wreaths Across America Bingo night 6:30-8:30 pm at the Highlands Community Building 869 N 4th St (next to the ballfield)

• OBAGI Open House at Highlands Mercantile on Main from 10a to 3p. 20% off all OBAGI products.

Fri., Oct. 9

• At the Highlands Biological Center, Crafting Wild Crea-

tures, 11a -1p at Cook Pavilion, 888 Horse Cove Rd. FREE. No registration required.

Sat., Oct 10

• At the Highlands Biological Center, Amazing Moths, 10a to noon. Cook Pavilion, 888 Horse Cove Rd. FREE. Registration Required.

• Tailgate with the Candidates. Free food and refreshments, college football, no speeches. Where your favorite team colors. 4:30-8p. Carpenter Community Center on Georgia Road.

Mon. Oct 12

• A Town Hall with Caleb Brown for NC House District 120. Macon County Public Library on Siler road, 6-8 p.m. Ask questions. He is ready to answer.

Wed., Oct. 14

• Book signing of "All the Hidden Pieces" with Dana Ride-nour, award-winning author and retired FBI special agent at the Albert Carlton-Cashiers Community Library from 2p-4p.

• At the Highlands Biological Center, Science & S'mores: What Do Insects Have to Do With Climate? 6-7p. Valentine Meadow + Cook Pavilion, 888 Horse Cove Rd. FREE. No registration required.

Fridays, Oct. 16 & 23

• At the Highlands Biological Center, Leaves of Change, 9-10a, at 111 Lower Lake Rd. FREE. No registration required.

Sat., Oct. 24

• At the Highlands Biological Center, Pressing Matters, 10a to noon at Cook Pavilion, 888 Horse Cove Rd. FREE. Registration required.

Tues., Oct. 27

• At the Highlands Biological Center, The Enchanted Forest, 5-6:30p. Meet at Valentine Meadow + Cook Pavilion, 888 Horse Cove Rd. FREE. No registration required.

Sat., Oct. 30

• At the Highlands Biological Center, Creepy Critter Crawl, 9-10a. Meet at 111 Lower Lake Rd. FREE. No registration.

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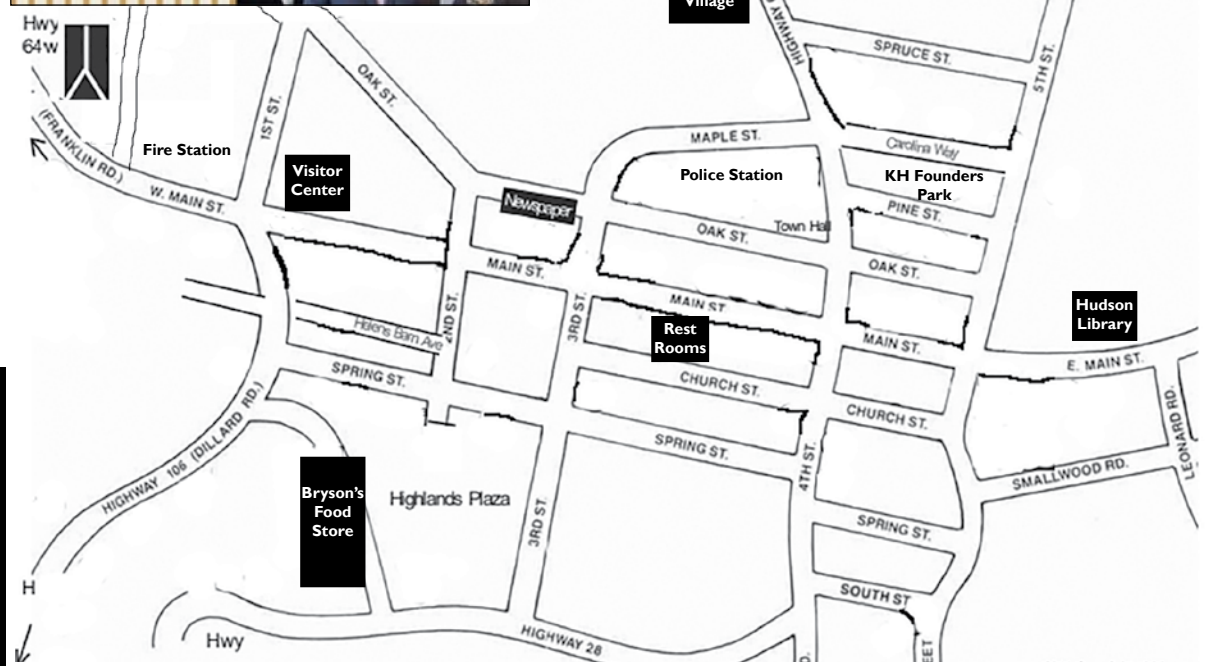
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