

Highlands Newspaper

Happy Labor Day!

Volume 23, Number 35

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Thurs., Sept. 3, 2026

Mirror Lake dredging plan solidified

By Kim Lewicki

At the August Town Board meeting, clarifications regarding the various phases of the Mirror Lake Dredging Project were discussed. The same report will

likely be presented at the Sept. 10 meeting at the Mirror Lake Bridge at 6 p.m.

Thursday night, Mike Hansen with McGill & Associates, the engineering firm retained by

the town, needed clarification on a couple items but said the project is moving forward.

First off, he said the state's Department of Environmental

• See DREDGING page 29

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So far, nonprofits' requests for county funding go unanswered

By Kristin Fox

For 20 years, the Macon County Commissioners annually allocated money in its county budget to support the Community Funding Pool. That ended in FY '25-'26 and for now continues today.

The pool was set up to help local non-profits with the work they do in the county. The Community Funding Pool used a committee of volunteers from the community to review local non-profit applications and recommend which would receive funding and how much they would receive.

Commissioners voted in June 2025 to stop allocating funds for the Community Funding Pool in the county's 2025-2026 budget. The county also did not include funds for the funding pool in the 2026-2027 budget.

Prior to that in the 2024-2025 budget, the county allocated \$75,000 to the non-profits selected by the committee.

The commissioners made further changes to the structure of the committee. In June 2025, the board voted to reduce the number of funding pool committee members from 13 to 7 and assigned a commissioner subcommittee of Barry Breeden and Danny Antoine to oversee funding pool requests.

After one year of not funding the non-profit organizations, the subject was once again brought up for discussion at the last regular meeting of the commissioners. County Manager Warren Cabe requested a discussion with commissioners about the funding pool. After several agencies have come to Cabe requesting funding, he thought it

• See NONPROFITS page 27



Trout Creek waterfall.

HC Land Trust and OSI protect nearly 1,000 acres of Trout Creek property

Highlands-Cashiers Land Trust (HCLT) and The Open Space Institute (OSI) today announced the protection of the nearly 1,000-acre Trout Creek

property in Jackson County. With the acquisition, OSI and HCLT have secured one of the largest remaining intact forested tracts in the Headwaters District — an

extraordinary southern Appalachian landscape of mountains, streams, and wildlife habitat.

This is a landmark effort

• See HCLT page 4



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• THE PLATEAU'S POSITION •

• MAYOR ON DUTY •

• SNAPSHOT •

Change can end up being a good thing

Sallie and I were participants in the Mountain Top Art Show in Founders Park this past weekend. As in the past, the Rotary volunteers put on a delightful event that helps several nonprofits in the community. The money raised for these community groups is incredibly significant, and certainly not meager pocket change.

As we enjoyed this event in our beautiful park, I thought back to how the park came into being. Reflecting on the creation of Founders Park is informative in the context of all the changes now underway in town. Some view these changes entirely negatively, while others may see them, in some ways, as community enhancements.

I remember when the park property was the site of the Highlands Post Office that faced 5th Street. The west side of



Highlands Mayor
Patrick Taylor

the current park was Zeke Sossamon's law office, and before it was a law office, I believe it was a hardware store.

When the post office moved to the current site of the Literacy Council, the vacant building on 5th remained unoccupied and fell into disrepair; the property remained vacant until it was torn down. The Sossamon law office continued to function.

Around 2004, someone had the idea of making the old post office property into a public storage facility. I was on the planning board then and led the charge not to recommend rezoning the property for a climate-controlled storage building. The Town Board rejected that request. Soon a group of citizens raised the money to buy the land for a town park.

Over several years, the property slowly developed into a venue for concerts and other events. Around 2013, Art Williams gave a sizable donation to develop the property into a park. That gift, along with many other donations, gave impetus to develop the current town park. At that time, the Sossamon property ceased to be a law office, and others such as Ms. Woodruff and again other committed community leaders helped buy the property. They bought the property to expand the park footprint.

Hank Ross designed the park as it is today. He created several design options for the community. The final design incorporated Pine Street as a part of the park's function for community events. The street would be rebuilt with pavers and closed for concerts and other community events like the car show.

At the time, it drew significant resistance from some in the business community and from some commissioners. The worry was that the design was a pretext to eventually close Pine Street and create a grass area to expand the park. The concern was that losing parking on Pine Street would negatively affect the business district.

• See MAYOR page 29



Photo by Rachel Lewicki

Smile!

A rainbow after a storm represents optimism, new beginnings, and the beauty that follows difficult times.

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

• WEATHER •

Thu, 3-Sep	Fri, 4-Sep	Sat, 5-Sep	Sun, 6-Sep
83°F 63°F	83°F 62°F	81°F 61°F	79°F 59°F
Humid with partial sunshine	Humid; a stray p.m. t-storm	A t-storm in the afternoon	Some sun with a stray t-storm
RealFeel®	RealFeel®	RealFeel®	RealFeel®
High 92° Low: 67°	High 94° Low: 69°	High 88° Low:	High 90° Low 68°

Highlands NC 4-Day Forecast By AccuWeather.com

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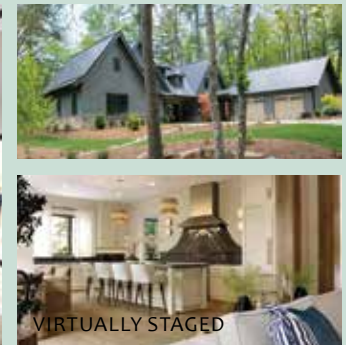
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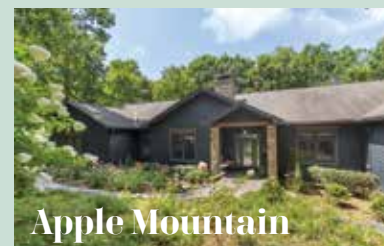
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...HCLT continued from page 1

safeguards critical headwaters and habitat in one of Jackson County's largest remaining intact forested landscapes

Purchased for \$4 million and located within one of the fastest-growing parts of western North Carolina, the sensitive natural resources on the property will now be protected and stewarded for environmental health and passive recreation. Before HCLT and OSI's intervention, the property had been slated for subdivision with initial development phases including over 170 homes, golf courses and a man-made lake.

"The southern Appalachians are one of North America's most important strongholds of biological diversity," said Maria Whitehead, Ph.D., OSI's Senior Vice President of Land. "Conservation of this property supports rare and threatened native species while creating a unique new recreational asset, which

will be planned in collaboration with the community. We were thrilled to build on our growing partnership with Highlands-Cashiers Land Trust to conserve land in this incredible region."

Lance Hardin, HCLT Executive Director said the project will forever protect wild and ecologically significant lands.

"We are immensely grateful to OSI and our remarkable community partners who have supported this acquisition. Preserving these landscapes continues a 100-year legacy of conservation across the Plateau, proving how much we can achieve when organizations and local supporters come together with a clear, ambitious goal," he said.

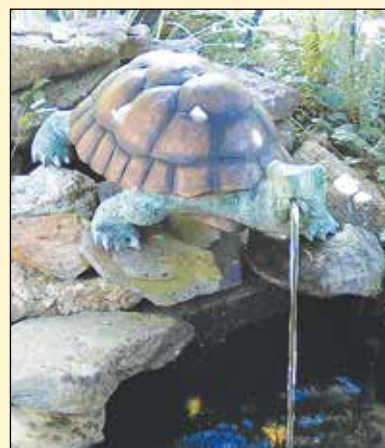
The property contains and borders more than five miles of streams and riparian corridors associated with Trout Creek, Little Trout Creek, and Bell Conley Branch. By keeping the lands around these water bodies undeveloped and unimpeded, they will maintain their natural functions—filtering and recharging cold-water headwaters flowing into the Little Tennessee River basin, upholding good water quality for downstream communities, and supporting habitat for a plethora of terrestrial and aquatic wildlife, including the southern Appalachian brook trout—the region's only true native trout species and regarded as "significantly rare" by the State of North Carolina.

Rising from roughly 2,800 to almost 4,000 feet in elevation, the property encompasses a remarkable diversity of habitats, including montane oak-hickory forests, rich cove forests, rocky cliffs, grassy open outcrops and pristine mountain streams. This broad elevation gradient offers vital connected habitat for plants and wildlife as they adapt and migrate in the face of warming temperatures, more frequent extreme weather events, and other pressures. The tract also borders and partially encompasses the High Top

• See HCLT page 13

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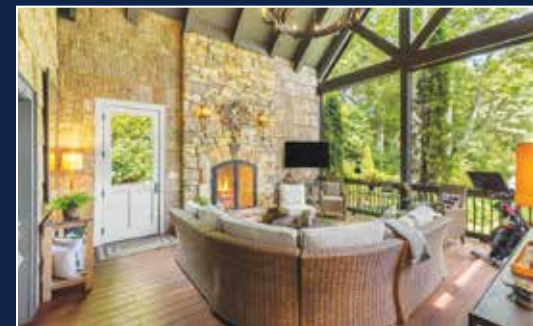
- The living room makes a statement with a chandelier forged by Sea Island Forge
- 2-car garage, golf cart garage + private golf cart path to the golf course

494 Country Club Drive, Highlands NC • \$3,875,000 • MLS# 1004017



Positioned beside the 16th green, the home embraces the beauty of its surroundings with a fairytale-like yard. A fenced area provides a safe space for pets to enjoy the outdoors, while thoughtfully landscaped grounds create a magical setting for entertaining, and enjoying the seasons.

The screened-in back porch is designed for year-round enjoyment, complete with its own fireplace and automated shades that can be lowered to keep the elements at bay while preserving the comfort and beauty of outdoor living.



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It's been a robust year for real estate but there are still excellent options for those who want to 'invest' in our Highlands lifestyle

Happy Labor Day everyone investing in Highlands!

Our year has been an excellent one and the last hot weather spell brought a fresh wave of buyers to try to escape the heat across all of the southeast.

Even with the excellent year there are still a few very nice properties that have hung around.

Some were priced to the hilt, and needed a reduction to move and some have moved and some have not.

When they sell, there are not many other properties like them, as we are pretty unique and we do not have many cookie-cutter subdivisions here.

As long as people want to come here, prices will hold and continue to appreciate.



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One of the best things about Highlands is the way of life and the people here! The small town traditions, the playhouse, the outdoor lifestyle! We need to continue to protect that to keep the desirable lifestyle that we enjoy!

We are saddened that we lost a longtime agent in the Country Club Properties' family in Ellie Hogan. She will be greatly missed as she always lifted your day, and always had a positive attitude!

Happy Labor Day to all!

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Ellie Hogan
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Located off Sassafras Gap Road, this custom-built home sits overlooking a lush glen with a trickling spring and an acre of land. It has a pleasant great room, with lots of light. It opens onto a deck, nestled in the trees. 2 bedrooms, 2 baths above, another utility room below. Great custom stonework, a garden shed and treehouse and a small travel trailer to rent or put up guests. A double carport rounds out this great package. Offered at \$699,000 mls #1003405



This Sagee Mountain home is less than two miles from town. Stunning 50-mile vista of layered hills with a natural creek and waterfall. There is a terraced backyard and rustic cabin. The house has a semi-open floor plan with everything on the main level. Stone fireplace in the Great Room. Carolina Room with stone fireplace. Offered at \$5,875,000. mls #1002591



Elevated mountain living with panoramic views in a gated community perched at an elevation of over 4,200 feet, this exquisite 3BD, 2BA condo features hardwood floors, warm oak millwork, and a newly installed wood-burning fireplace with a sleek marble facade. A fully renovated chef's kitchen Primary suite has a walk-in closet and motorized blackout shade. Additional upgrades include motorized living room shade, fully renovated bathrooms with ceiling heaters, and a laundry room with extra storage and expansive balcony. Furnishings negotiable \$686,000. mls #1003567



This adorable 3 bed, 2 bath cottage with recent upgrades include fresh paint inside and out, fireplace renovation, basement encapsulation, whole house dehumidifier. The bright, airy rooms and original details create cozy indoor living, while a beautifully landscaped outdoor space, with private patio and firepit - is perfect for entertaining and relaxing. Offered at \$950,000. mls #1003559



Beautiful 3-bedroom, 4-bathroom home offered fully furnished, situated on 2.23 acres with +/-300 feet of creek frontage and year-round flowing water. Conveniently located just 2.3 miles from Main Street. Offered at \$2,625,000. mls #1003921



Excellent location on Rocky Hill Rd. features a level yard with garden area and stone patio. Main house features vaulted ceilings in the living room with 2 bedrooms and one bath. Updated and in move-in condition. There is a covered brick patio in the back and a full efficiency guest quarters. Plenty of parking and a do not miss. Offered at \$975,000. mls #1003986



This charming 1-acre property has 3 improved structures and a stream with a small waterfall. The main cabin has 2 bedrooms, one bath plus a loft, a stone fireplace, custom kitchen/dining area propane range. A path leads to the Joe Webb cabin guesthouse with a covered porch, stone floor, and sleeping loft. There is a commercial/residential structure for a roadside business, also an old mill. Offered at \$999,000 mls #1002716



With frontage connecting to the Cullasaja River creek feeding Mirror Lake, this log cabin is tucked into the woods. It has an artsy vibe with rocking-chair porch, and cook's kitchen. Main floor primary bedroom with bath, upper level has 3 bedrooms with a hall bath, there is a full efficiency apartment for guests or long-term rental income. Offered at \$1,300,000. mls #1003414



Perched atop prestigious King Mountain, this luxury home delivers jaw-dropping views that stretch for miles, with unforgettable sunsets. In gated King Mountain Club it's being offered fully furnished. The dramatic octagonal great room features floor-to-ceiling windows and a stunning stone fireplace, a gourmet kitchen, dining area, laundry room and outdoor grilling space. There are two expansive primary suites on the main level. Downstairs there are two guest rooms, a family room, a game/gym area, an office, a garage and a wraparound deck. Community amenities include a clubhouse, pool, and tennis courts. Offered at \$2,900,000 mls #1003430



This lovely cottage is tastefully finished with wood, stone and glass. Four fireplaces, covered porch and move in condition. Updated kitchen, dining, living room, and primary with ensuite bath with shower; lower level has a sitting room, 3 guest rooms with 3 baths. Located in the city limits and has city water, garbage pickup, septic, and high-speed internet. Offered at \$1,395,000 mls #1003085



Charming starter home minutes from town. This 3BD/2.5BA home features a comfortable floor plan ideal for full-time living or a weekend getaway, with natural light throughout and ample room for guests. Offered at \$850,000 mls #1003153



Spectacular mountain view located as a part of the Wildcat cliffs Country Club (Membership Requirements), On the main level with foyer entry, there is a powder room, game table, plus dining area, a living/great room with a wall of glass, 2 story ceilings, and fireplace, additional family or TV room. Custom kitchen and a great pantry. Private primary suite. Upstairs has 3 bedrooms and 2 baths, plus an office or nursery. The 2-car garage has a full guest area with a kitchen, bedroom and bath. Offered at \$2,300,000. Furnishings are negotiable. mls #1002935



Old Orchard Blue Valley Views are the ticket with this 3-bedroom 3.5 bath located at the end of the road at Old Orchard. Move in condition with a 2-car garage and additional family/tv room in the guest level. Large, covered porch for family cookouts or entertaining. mountain feel with fireplace and wood floors and beamed ceilings. Offered at \$2,495,000 mls #1003791

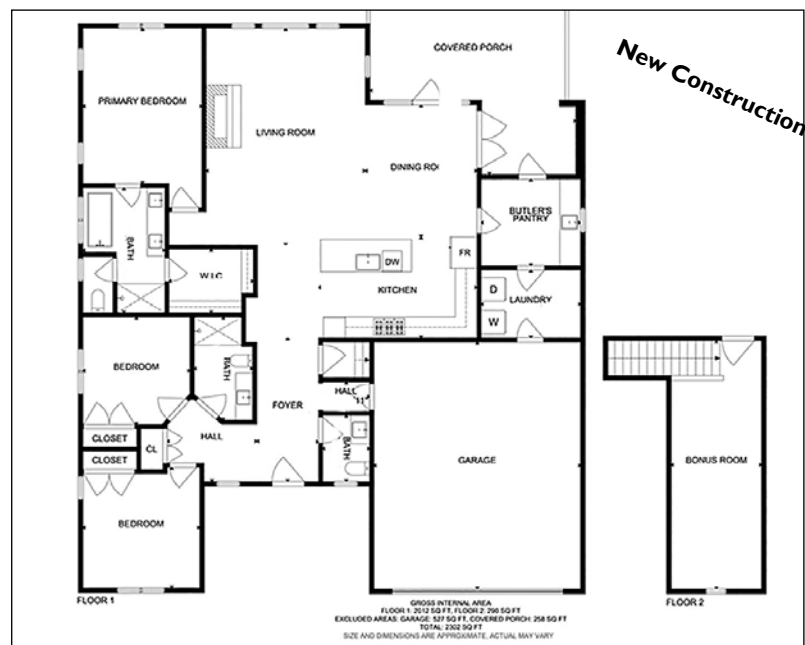


Cute cottage at the end of Pine Circle near the Skyline Lodge complex. Great bones ready to make it your own. 2 bedrooms, 1.5 baths on the main floor plus a loft that the kids will love. Nice deck. Electric appliances, dishwasher in the open galley kitchen. A great getaway or rental. Offered at \$525,000. mls #1002891

159 Stoney Creek Circle – Highlands, NC

3 Bed 2.5 Bath

\$1,445,000 • MLS#1003773



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• HERE'S THE THING •

Lots of dollars, but no common Sense

News item: For the first time in recorded history, the national debt of the United States recently surpassed 40 trillion dollars. That's \$40,000,000,000,000, my friends. And, that number grows by approximately \$5.4 million with every passing minute. There are, as we all know, 60 minutes in an hour and 24 hours in a day, etc. You can do the math.



Bud Katz

a dependable supply of food, ways to get to and from work, perhaps an elementary education, perhaps basic and emergency healthcare.

As far as our wants are concerned, let's be honest. We want everything, we want it now, and we want it either for free or for cheap.

Here's the thing. Americans are taxed at the federal, state and

local levels. Income taxes, property taxes, sales taxes, etc. Even with all that, the current tax burden placed on Americans is well below that of most other western nations.

I believe it's fair to say Americans do not love paying taxes. We want things that governments are supposed to provide – national defense, public safety, clean air and water, navigable roads, education for our children, a reliable energy grid – but we don't love paying for those wants.

So, when those wants become needs, what I refer to as “the sound and fury” crew, meaning the U.S. Congress, tells the U.S. Treasury Department to issue billions, maybe trillions of interest-bearing bonds, which in turn are purchased, in great part by foreign investors and governments. And voila! We have money! So, members of Congress look like heroes, the president holds a ceremonial signing of the deficit spending bill, we get what we think we want or need, and everyone's happy. That is, until the debt comes due.

This, my friends, is happening. The clock is ticking, and that \$40,000,000,000,000 number is relentlessly moving upward.

In addition to not borrowing any more, there are only two answers – cut spending or raise taxes. Or, and here's a radical thought, do both. But don't hold your breath. Doing either or both would demand courage from Washington, something in very short supply.

Instead, I can hear Sonny Bono's song in my head. The beat goes on ...

• Bruce F. “Bud” Katz, and his wife, Lynn, have lived year-round in Highlands since 2011. Bud is the author of four novels and a work of non-fiction. He facilitates the Highlands Writers Group and spends much of his time in front of a computer making words into sentences, sentences into paragraphs, ... etc. You can contact Bud, regarding this column or for information about the Highlands Writers Group, at brucekatzauthor@gmail.com.

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• LETTERS •

Would this be OK if Trump was a Democrat?

Dear Editor,

In a recent Wall Street Journal editorial, Peggy Noonan discussed the deeper effects of governmental corruption, referencing a Reuters/Ipsos poll headlined "Most Americans (69%) Believe Trump Has Inappropriately Profited Since Returning to Power." She noted that corruption falls into two categories — personal enrichment and the use of government to satisfy private goals — and warned that "corruption works its way into a system and changes its nature."

This reflects exactly what is happening today. To the 31% who are not concerned about our President's actions, I ask whether the following scenarios would be acceptable if a Democratic president did the same:

1. While in office, Trump and his family made over \$1.4 billion from cryptocurrency while he actively promoted the industry. Would you be comfortable with a Democratic president profiting from an industry their administration regulates?

2. Trump offered presidential access, such as private dinners, to major buyers of his cryptocurrency. Would you find it acceptable if a Democratic president sold access through a branded investment?

3. Qatar gave the U.S. a Boeing 747 worth roughly \$400 million for Trump's use, with intentions to place it in his presidential library. Even if technically legal, is it appropriate for a government to give a sitting president a \$400 million airplane, and what favors do they expect in return?

4. The government approved a national trust-bank charter for World Liberty Financial, the Trump-family-

backed crypto venture. Is it appropriate for a sitting president's family business to receive a federal financial charter while the president oversees the regulatory branch?

This is not about whether a crime was committed; it is a question of whether a president should be allowed to personally profit from those seeking access such as individuals, foreign governments, regulated industries, and businesses receiving government approvals. I have not even mentioned his use of the DOJ to go after his perceived enemies. The DOJ is now his personal law firm using our taxpayer money to appease his ego.

I would firmly oppose these actions by a Democratic president. Character must matter when we elect our leaders, before it is too late.

**Linda Arnold
Highlands**

• DINING •

Let's demand that the redistricting question be put on the ballot

Dear Editor,

The current Macon County Board has proposed redistricting the county. While it has been put on hold for the moment it addresses the problem of redistricting as a whole and how little control voters have over this issue.

The last time Macon County was redistricted was decades ago, when the current map was drawn and put into play. That map has three districts, District 1 and 2 being of relatively equal size based on population and each having one commissioner. District 3 contains the greatest number of people, representing the Franklin area, and has three commissioners. Voting is At-Large, meaning everyone in Macon County votes for all five commissioners. While popular at the time, over the last 50 years At-Large voting has become less popular and pure voting has become the preference.

Pure voting means each voter gets one vote for their candidate of choice. In our case that would mean splitting the county into five equal districts with each district electing one commissioner. Someone running in District 1 would campaign and solicit votes from District 1 residents. As it is now a candidate for commissioner in District 1 garners votes from residents throughout the county, potentially overriding the popular vote in the district they are running to represent.

At-Large voting has been used to override the black vote throughout the south, but it is also used to override the liberal vote in a mostly conservative state. As our president said, by redistricting this year, Republicans could remain in power for a 100 years. In recent decisions the Supreme Court has allowed gerrymandering for the purpose of politics; however, they have not spoken on

the fairness of At-Large voting to manipulate the political vote.

The proposal before the commission suggests keeping At-Large voting for the county elections, which would eliminate the proposal put forth by Highlands Town Board member Amy Patterson for a five district, pure voting option.

My thoughts are if you want to improve a decades-old system why choose an At-Large voting option before looking at the various other proposals offered to the Macon County Planning Board? Why not choose to put it in a referendum for public vote?

To me At-Large voting means everyone in Macon County votes for my representative even if they have no idea of the issues facing my district. It would be like the whole country electing the governors for all 50 states, or the whole state voting on all the representatives in the state. How educated could those voters be about the issues facing the people of Western North Carolina?

If you have read this far, I am asking you to attend the next county commission meeting on September 9th in Franklin and to sign up to speak on the redistricting plan. If we want to vote on this issue at the ballot box, we must speak out. The only way to change things is to attend meetings, write letters and raise a ruckus, excuse me, speak out. And by all means VOTE this November because our other chance to change the direction of the Macon County Commission is to elect new members to it.

**Margaret Pickett
Highlands**



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• FINANCIAL MATTERS •

Why interest rates will likely remain high

I wrote this in June of 2024....

It's been bothering me for well over a year. Everyday, as I listen to the talking heads on at least one financial news network, it seems like the question asked the most is "when do you think the Fed will begin lowering rates"? Repeated, almost ad-nauseum, the hosts ask this question of the guests as if they all have a crystal ball, and more annoying, why does it matter?

Fed Funds vs Real Rates

What bothers me is that the rate they're asking about - the Fed Funds Rate - doesn't really matter at this point. The Fed Funds Rate is the shortest of short-term rates and is not the most important driver of Real rates. It's defined as the target rate at which commercial banks borrow and lend their excess reserves to each other overnight. Some people even call it "the Overnight Rate".

Real rates are the ones we use every day - car loans, credit cards, mortgages, business loans, etc. They are determined by supply and demand in the U.S. Treasuries Market with the 10-year Treasury acting as the primary benchmark.

Until 2008, the Fed Funds Rate acted as a driver of real interest rates. It didn't always work perfectly, but as the Open Market Committee raised and lowered this rate, other government bonds with longer dated maturities would typically follow. However, the effectiveness of this strategy has somewhat diminished since 2008.

QE and QT

In 2008, the Federal Reserve began something known as QE or Quantitative Easing. From 2009 - 2014 they bought more than \$4 trillion worth of assets, mostly Treasuries and Mortgage-Backed Securities. By taking the supply of available Treasuries out of the market, the price of Treasuries rose - and when bond



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

prices rise, rates go down. The Fed effectively was able to lower both short and long-term rates - rather than just short-term rates as they had done historically - essentially allowing our economy and housing market to recover. With the onset of Covid they began buying again in 2020, bringing the total amount held by the Federal Reserve to approximately \$8 trillion.

Then, in 2022 they changed their strategy to begin raising rates using a process known as QT or Quantitative Tightening. Currently, they are allowing \$40 billion per month (it started at \$80 billion) to "roll off" their balance sheet back into the markets. But there's more - in addition to the increase in supply from the Federal Reserve, Congress will borrow an additional \$1.5 trillion this year, which will be financed with more Treasuries, leading to approximately \$2 trillion of NEW debt being issued this year and likely next year.

Since the Federal Reserve started this phase (QT), real rates have risen substantially, and with the massive supply of new debt instruments flooding the markets, I believe rates will remain elevated and somewhat stable for the foreseeable future. Perhaps what we're seeing is a return to interest rate normalcy, but it's difficult to make that case when you're carrying a \$34 trillion debt as a nation and the methods being used to maintain stability have never been used before.

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...HCLT continued from page 4

and Lizzie Mountain Natural Area, recognized by the state's Natural Heritage Program for its conservation value.

OSI and HCLT expect to hold the property for several years before transferring to a long-term conservation steward. During their ownership period, the land will remain closed to public access. OSI and HCLT anticipate that passive recreational activities such as hiking, camping,

and mountain biking will be permitted when the property is ultimately opened to the public.

The Trout Creek project builds on growing partnerships between OSI and local land trusts including HCLT and Mainspring Conservation Trust, which have produced the successful conservation of the 104-acre Peregrine property

• See HCLT page 16

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The Bascom invites the community to help frame the future

Local arts center launches public phase of campaign to enclose The Terrace and grow its endowment

The Bascom: A Center for the Visual Arts has entered the public phase of Framing the Future, a campaign to enclose and expand The Terrace as a year-round gathering space and to strengthen the organization's endowment for generations to come. The Bascom is inviting neighbors to take part as they close in on their overall goal of six million.

The Terrace is the setting for exhibition openings, artist talks, Community Day, and gatherings throughout the year. Its canvas walls and open-air design, however, leave it exposed to rain and unusable in the coldest months. Framing the Future will enclose The Terrace into a weather-protected, year-round space with retractable windows that preserve its mountain views. The campaign will also grow The Bascom's endowment, building long-term support for free exhibitions, education, and outreach on the Highlands-Cashiers Plateau.

"The Terrace has always been the heart of our campus, it's where exhibitions open, where families gather on

Community Day, where the community celebrates together," said Billy Love, Executive Director of The Bascom. "Enclosing and expanding it means those moments will no longer depend on the weather or the season. That's what this campaign makes possible: a gathering place as enduring as the community and region it serves."

Marianne and Mark Mahaffey are leadership donors to the campaign. Mark Mahaffey serves as Campaign Co-Chair and sees the project as both a personal and community investment.

"My wife Marianne and I have had a home in Highlands for 40 years, and I have been directly involved with The Bascom for the past five years," said Mahaffey. "We felt that the Terrace improvement project was an excellent way of giving back to the community that has meant so much to our family over these many years. The Bascom is such an important asset to the Plateau community for all ages, from children to seniors. We feel that this endeavor will enhance The Bascom's mission for many years to come."

Debi and David Bock are also leadership donors to the campaign. David Bock serves as Campaign Co-Chair alongside Mahaffey.

"We have loved calling Highlands our home for more than 25 years," said Debi and David Bock. "We have made lifelong friends here, helped families build their beautiful mountain homes here and joined the many volunteers in this special town in trying to make a difference in charitable causes by 'paying it forward.' In supporting The Bascom's future, we hope to pass on not just a love of art, but a love of this campus so our children and grandchildren can keep making memories here for generations to come."

Longtime supporters Dianne and Myron Mall, who serve on the Framing the Future steering committee, count themselves among those who have stepped forward for the campaign.

"We consider The Bascom to be the jewel of the Plateau," said Dianne and Myron Mall. "It is a key piece of the puzzle

in making this region such a desirable place to both live and visit. Since the first time we set foot on the property, it has held a special place in our lives, and that is why we have committed meaningfully of our financial resources. We believe in The Bascom."

The Bascom welcomes gifts of every size toward Framing the Future. Those interested in learning more or getting involved can visit TheBascom.org/framingthefuture or contact Jamie Raynor, Director of Development, at 828.787.2897 or development@thebascom.org.

About The Bascom

The Bascom creates visual art experiences that inspire and empower individuals and communities through seeing, thinking, and doing. Since 1985, The Bascom has served the Highlands-Cashiers Plateau as a place where people come together through the visual arts, offering free exhibitions, hands-on education, and year-round programs that welcome more than 25,000 visitors annually.

Pop Up Pipers!

Celebrating Highlands' Heritage

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

This Month's Performance:

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315 Main Street

Saturday, September 5 | 4:30 - 5pm

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





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For over forty years, The Bascom has inspired and empowered individuals and communities through seeing, thinking, and doing. As we look toward the next chapter, we are strengthening the foundation that supports our work and ensuring creative connections continue to thrive on the Plateau.

Framing the Future has two priorities.

- Transforming The Terrace, a vital gathering place for exhibitions, artist talks, and celebrations, into a year-round, all-weather space.
- Growing The Bascom's endowment to provide reliable support for free exhibitions, scholarships, residencies, and outreach.



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...HCLT continued from page 13

near Whiteside Mountain in 2025 and the 4,300-acre Snowbird Mountain Property in Cherokee and Graham Counties. Together, the organizations are protecting some of the area's most important landscapes with the goals of strengthening habitat connectivity, protecting water resources, expanding public access to nature, and ensuring that future generations can benefit from western NC's spectacular scenic beauty and natural heritage.

Philanthropic partners played a critical role in making the effort possible, including foundational funding for acquisition due diligence costs provided by the Community Foundation of Western North Carolina (CFWNC). Tara Scholtz, CFWNC's Vice President, said, "Protecting a 1,000-acre parcel like Trout Creek requires partnership, and CFWNC funding for due diligence costs is a piece of the puzzle. HCLT's knowledge of the area's conservation needs and opportunities and OSI's transactional and financing expertise anchored this complex project. The acquisition permanently protects biodiversity and rare habitat and provides opportunities for outdoor recreation. It also complements the 2025 Jackson County Headwaters District Conservation Plan focused on safeguarding water resources, directing growth away from sensitive lands, promoting stewardship and the outdoor economy, and balancing growth with conservation. We are honored to play a part."

In addition to funding from CFWNC, the project was supported by the Green South Foundation, Brad and Shelli Stanback through the Foundation for the Carolinas, Knobloch Family Foundation, and many individual donors.

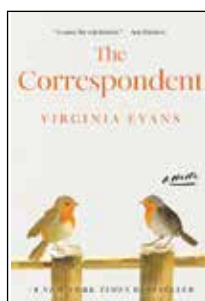
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• UPCOMING EVENT •

Highlands Heritage Jamboree celebrates the music, traditions and spirit of the mountains

The Highlands Chamber of Commerce/Visit Highlands, NC invites residents and visitors to celebrate the rich traditions of the mountains during the Highlands Heritage Jamboree on Saturday, September 26, 2026, at Kelsey-Hutchinson Founders Park.

This free community event brings together live music, mountain dance, local history, and great food for an afternoon and evening that highlights the heritage and culture that continue to shape Highlands today.

The festivities begin at 1pm with the beloved Highlands Bagpipers, whose stirring performance has become a local tradition. Throughout the afternoon, the Highlands Historical Society will present a historic moonshine display, offering a glimpse into one of the area's colorful chapters of mountain history.

From 1:30 to 3:30pm, audiences can enjoy an energetic performance by the U.S. Fleet Forces Navy Band: Four-Star Edition. Known for their versatility and stage presence, the group performs everything from classic favorites to today's rock, pop, country and hip-hop hits.

Adding to the afternoon's activities, The Hatchet Hauler and its trained coaches will be onsite beginning at 2pm, providing instruction and professional equipment for adults interested in trying their hand at axe throwing, while younger guests can join in classic apple bobbing.

The music continues at 3:30pm with the popular Fox-fire Boys performing bluegrass mountain music.

Highlands Smokehouse will begin serving its signature barbecue at 4pm, while guests can also enjoy a moonshine tasting that celebrates another part of local heritage.

The celebration concludes

with the Darren Nicholson Band taking the main stage from 5 to 7:30pm. Blending bluegrass, western swing, classic country, folk and gospel, the band delivers an authentic mountain sound with Brady Wallen, Sarah Griffin, Avery Welter, Darren Nicholson and acclaimed fiddler Aynsley Porchak. A special guest square dance caller will round out the evening, inviting everyone to join in the fun.

"The Highlands Heritage Jamboree gives us an opportunity to celebrate and share the traditions of the mountains," said Johanna Fein, Executive Director of the Highlands Chamber of

Commerce/Visit Highlands, NC. "It brings our community together through music, food, history and experiences that connect us to our local heritage."

Admission is free. Guests are encouraged to bring lawn chairs or blankets and enjoy a familyfriendly event filled with music, history and Highlands hospitality.

For more information, go to visithighlandscnc.com or contact the Highlands Welcome Center at 828-526-2112.

• The Highlands Chamber of Commerce/Visit Highlands, NC was founded in 1931, the Highlands Chamber of Commerce/Visit Highlands, NC serves as both the community's chamber of commerce and its official destination marketing organization. We work to strengthen the local economy by supporting businesses, promoting tourism, welcoming visitors, and creating opportunities that enhance the quality of life for residents. Through leadership programs, networking events, community celebrations, and strategic marketing, we help ensure Highlands remains a vibrant place to live, work, and visit.

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From left: Josh Bryson, President Highlands Rotary Club; Dehlia Festival Director Kim Daugherty; The Bascom's Bianca Mitchell & Priscilla Galloway; Billy Love, Rotary Host and The Bascom Executive Director

Rotary hears about the upcoming Dahlia Festival Sept. 10-12.

The Rotary Club of Highlands recently enjoyed an informative presentation hosted by club member and Bascom Executive Director Billy Love, covering the upcoming Dazzling Dahlia Festival. The Festival, celebrating its 16th year, will take place September 10th to 12th with all events at The Bascom, A Center for the Visual Arts.

During the presentation, Festival Director, Kim Daugherty and The Bascom's Director of Marketing and Communications, Bianca Mitchell, provided an overview of the weekend's activities, which include an opening Fall Reception, as well as the always stunning Dahlia displays, including Petals and Perspectives, a Floral Design Showcase with participating floral designers creating arrangements in direct

response to works of art on view in The Bascom's galleries, and the ever popular Single Bloom Competition and Public Viewing, which for the first time will have a Novice Division.

Additionally, concurrently, there will be a Studio Member Pottery Show, a Juried Dahlia Photography Exhibition, the Dahlia Dialogue with Highlands ecologist and garden designer Sonya Carpenter, and numerous workshops before and during the Festival weekend.

Details for the Dazzling Dahlia Festival can be found on The Bascom's website at <https://thebascom.org/all-events/events-by-type/special-events/dazzling-dahlia-festival-2026>. Admission and all programs are free to the public.

Mayor Patrick Taylor proclaimed the week of Sept. 6 as Dahlia Week in Highlands



Pictured from left: Kim Daugherty, Festival Director; Billy Love, Executive Director of The Bascom; Peggy Boruchow Arnette, Festival Director; Mayor Patrick Taylor; Priscilla Galloway, Community Engagement Manager; and Bianca Mitchell, Director of Marketing and Communications.

• BIZ/ORG NEWS •

Local P.E.O. chapter talks 'Pecans 101'

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Some of those pounds of pecans will reach the Highlands-Cashiers area very soon. Don't miss an opportunity to buy one or more bags of pecans - chopped or whole- and also support the annual fund raising effort of our local chapter of P.E.O. (Philanthropic Educational Organization). P.E.O. is a non-profit organization focused

on supporting the further education of women of all ages around the world. Educational support for women is at the heart of this organization. Through scholarships, grants, awards, loans, and stewardship of Cotter College, P.E.O. Chapters celebrate the advancement of women and strive to motivate women to achieve their highest aspirations.

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SUICIDE PREVENTION & MENTAL HEALTH ADVOCACY

DENNIS GILLAN

Suicide Prevention Advocate

Founder and executive director of the Half a Sorrow Foundation, Dennis turned his tragedy into purpose after losing his two brothers to suicide. Come hear how his candid story of perseverance creates connection, instills hope, and helps break the stigma of talking about mental health.



TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2026

First Presbyterian Church Highlands
in Coleman Hall

10:00am Coffee & light bites
10:15am Presentation

This event is made possible by



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

471 MAIN STREET | PO BOX 548 | HIGHLANDS, NC 28741

Join us!

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 2026
Kelsey-Hutchinson Founders Park

1:30pm
U.S. Fleet Forces Navy Band:
Four-Star Edition

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• BIZ/ORG NEWS •



From left: Josh Bryson,
President Highlands
Rotary Club; Bill
Grubb and Jim Ward,
Highlands Plateau
Greenway Board
members and speak-
ers.

Highlands Plateau Greenway plans Big Bear Pen Trail expansion

On a breathtakingly beautiful day for hiking, members of the Rotary Club of Highlands were treated to an update about the Highlands Plateau Greenway by Rotarians Jim Ward and Bill Grub. Both men are members of

the Greenways Board. Ward gave a brief history of the non-profit, fully volunteer organization, which was founded in 2008 by Ran Shaffner and Hillrie Quinn. Its mission is to enhance, develop, and maintain a system of interconnected

walking and hiking trails in and around Highlands. Using a hub and spoke design for its trail system, Kelsey Hutcheson Park is the hub and trails that form five distinct loops radiate out from the Hub: Mill Creek, Big Bear Pen, Satulah Mountain, the Biological Station and Ravenel Park.

Since its inception, the Greenway trails have increased from five to ten miles, each step fulfilling the goal of helping pedestrians get around town without having to walk on Highlands' streets. Looking forward, the Greenway is currently increasing its Big Bear Pen trail, which features scenic high-elevation slopes, high-altitude native flora, old-growth rhododendrons, and panoramic views overlooking the Highlands plateau.

Both Grubb and Ward expressed their appreciation to the many volunteers who build and maintain the Greenway trails. Newcomers are invited to join the monthly work parties (including free lunch!) on third Saturdays. The parties begin at 9am at the dog park parking lot shed behind the Recreation Center.

For more information or to make a donation, visit <https://www.highlandsgreenway.com>



MARIA'S HOUSE MUSEUM

141 Main Street | Highlands

mariashousemuseum.com

Free Admission

Friday, Saturday 10-4 | Sunday 1-4

Classical Paintings
Rembrandt Etchings
Militaria
(15th to 20th century)
Modern Weapons



• HS SPORTS RECAP •

Busy stretch for Highlands School athletics brings hard-fought volleyball battles, cross-country debuts, and soccer dominance

With the new school year in full swing, Highlands School athletics roared into action with a packed schedule of home games, road trips, and dominant team performances across multiple sports.

Lady Highlanders Show Grit Through Tough Volleyball Stretch

The week opened at home last Tuesday with a tough matchup against Robbinsville. The varsity Lady Highlanders fought hard through every rally, but ultimately dropped the match 3-0, while the JV squad fell 2-0.

Highlands bounced right back last Wednesday to host Rosman. The JV team set an explosive tone early, securing a dominant 2-0 victory with decisive set scores of 25-16 and 25-12. The varsity contest that followed was a thriller; after falling behind 2-0, the Lady Highlanders showed immense heart to take the third set. Carrying that momentum into the fourth, Highlands led for the majority of the game until a late, unfortunate injury to Taylor Hays put the team at a severe disadvantage, allowing Rosman to close out a 3-1 win.

Last Thursday, the volleyball team traveled to Rosman for a quick rematch against the Lady Tigers. Battered by three player injuries and a short roster, Highlands was forced to forgo the JV contest and field only a varsity squad. In a heroic repeat performance, the short-handed Highlanders once again refused to quit after dropping the first two sets. They battled back to take the third, but ultimately succumbed in the fourth set.

Continuing their grueling schedule into the second week

of classes, the varsity volleyball team traveled to Robbinsville on Monday, August 31st.

Still navigating low squad numbers and roster constraints, the program was again limited to fielding only its varsity lineup.

The Lady Highlanders showed tremendous pride and fought fiercely in every set, but ultimately fell in a 3-0 decision.

Cross Country Opens Season at Tri-County

Highlands High School Cross Country also kicked off its campaign on Thursday, traveling to Tri-County Early College in Murphy for their season opener. Representing the Highlanders in a packed field of 89 runners, Rowen Carnes delivered a strong 21st-place finish, while teammate Francisco Gooch crossed the line in 51st.

Varsity Soccer Shuts Out Madison on the Road

Highlands wrapped up the first week of school on Friday as the varsity boys soccer team traveled to Madison High School for their second match of the season.

The Highlanders dictated the tempo throughout the first half, with Michael Munoz finding the back of the net twice — including a slick assist from Rowen Carnes — to build a commanding 2-0 lead by halftime. Highlands maintained complete possession and pace in the second half to seal the 2-0 shutout victory.

Middle School Soccer Explosive in Season Opener

As Week 2 got underway, the Middle School boys soccer team kicked off its season in stunning fashion at home against



Brett Lamb
Athletic Director

Cherokee. The young Highlanders completely dominated from the opening whistle, cruising to a massive 9-0 victory.

The dynamic offense was led by hat-tricks from both Darwin Frias-Ovando (3 goals) and Brian

Munoz (3 goals), along with key strikes from Knox Holbrooks (2 goals) and Axel Mendoza (1 goal).

Looking Ahead: A Packed Slate for Week 2

Highlands athletics shows no signs of slowing down as the schedule continues:

- Tuesday: Middle School Volleyball hosted Murphy, while Varsity Volleyball hosts conference foe Summit.

- Wednesday: High School Boys Soccer travelled to Blue

Ridge.

- Thursday: Middle School Soccer heads to The Catamount School, while both Middle School and Varsity Volleyball travel to Blue Ridge for key con-

ference clashes.

- Friday: High School Boys Soccer closes out the week with a marquee matchup against Franklin.



Lady Highlanders show grit through tough volleyball stretch through first week of school.

— photo by Todd Sumner



Grace & Glorie

A play by Tom Ziegler
Directed by Jayne Pleasants
Cathy Myers - Assistant Director

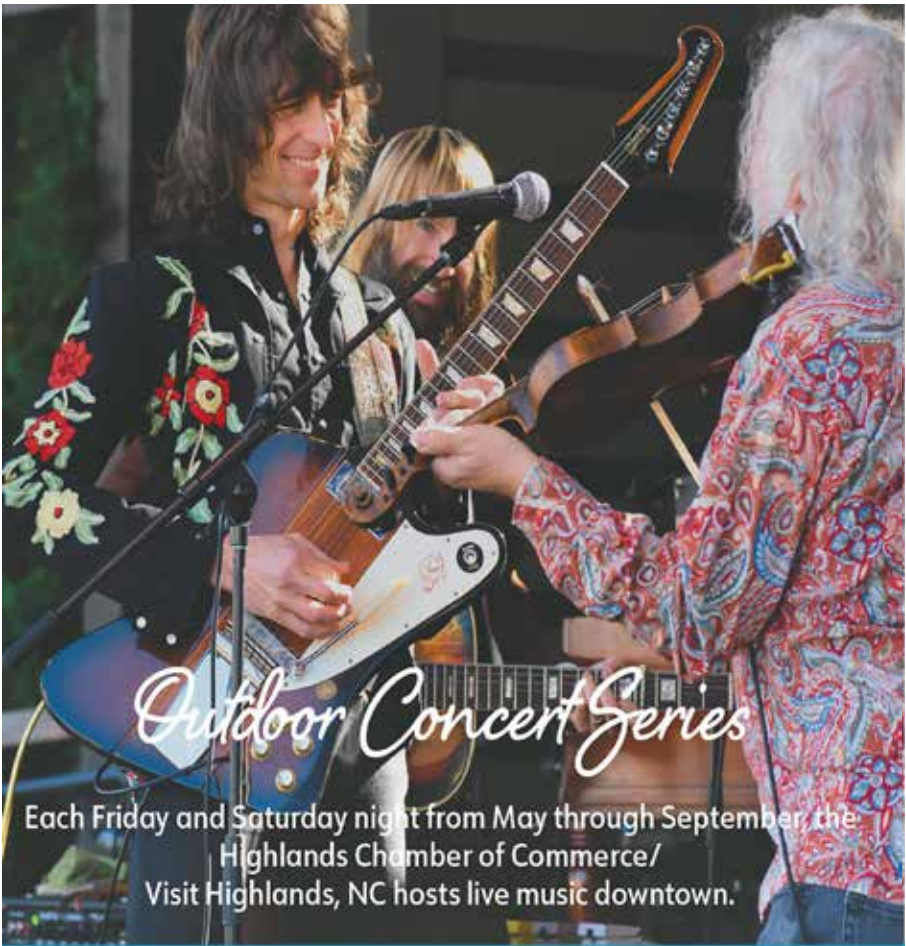
Highlands Cashiers PLAYERS

**August 27 -30 and
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2026**

Three easy ways to get your tickets:

- PAC Box Office - 828.526.9047
- HighlandsCashiersPlayers.com
- Scan QR code



Outdoor Concert Series

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

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

Friday Night Live

Town Square | 343 Main Street
Showcasing traditional
mountain music and local talent

SEPTEMBER 4
Silly Ridge

SEPTEMBER 11
Byrds & Crows

SEPTEMBER 18
Blackwell Tradition II

SEPTEMBER 25
Shortoff Mountain Boys

Saturdays on Pine

Kelsey-Hutchinson Founders Park
411-499 Pine Street
Featuring a variety of popular,
regional bands and musicians

SEPTEMBER 5
Diverse Groove

SEPTEMBER 12
High 5

SEPTEMBER 19
Boogitherapi

SEPTEMBER 26 - **5PM**
Darren Nicholson Band



visithighlandsnc.com

• BIZ/ORG NEWS •



Rotary president John Martin with sisters Martha Berlin and Sarah Popowski

A story of courage and survival

Sisters Martha Berlin and Sarah Popowski shared a powerful story of Holocaust survival, with the Mountaintop Rotary, one of courage, ingenuity, and resilience. Gold coins ingeniously sewn into clothing helped their family survive one of history's darkest chapters. Their remarkable story would later inspire Pat Conroy's Beach Music, creating an extraordinary connection between real-life history and fiction.



September Specials

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828-349-1280

HCFF schedule and tickets

Contact Charlotte for more information at cmuir@highlandsperformingarts.com.

Film Festival Pass – \$75 plus fees

Access to film screenings only throughout the festival.

Film Festival VIP Pass – \$150 plus fees

Access to all films and seminars throughout the festival.

Film Festival Society – \$750 per person/\$1,500 per couple

Exclusive access to the Black and White Masquerade (for Society members and sponsors only), Access to the Horror Deconstructed seminar (for Society members, sponsors only, and VIP pass only), VIP Festival Pass (includes all films + events), Reserved seating at all films + events, Special lanyard and festival badge, Free popcorn throughout the Festival in limited edition popcorn tub

Wed., Sept. 16

(PAC Main Stage)

FREE: Rise, Ruin, and Restoration: A History of Lake Toxaway + Q&A with the Director

1 – 3p (Registration Required)

FREE: Festival Kick-Off Party at the PAC: 6 – 8p

Open to the public, with live bluegrass music under the stars from local band, Silly Ridge. Enjoy a special meet and greet with our Artistic Director, Joy Jorgensen! Bring your own picnic and chair.

Pick up your festival passes or purchase passes if still available.

Thurs., Sept. 17

(MLT Theatre at PAC)

SHORTS Block 1

10-11:30a

Mallory's Ghost

1:30-3p

The Oldest Person in the World

6-7:30 p

(PAC Main Stage)

Honeyjoon

11a-12:30p

The Last Class and conversation w/the filmmakers

3:15-5:15p

If These Walls Could Rock

8-9:30p

Fri., Sept. 18

(MLT Stage at PAC)

SHORTS Block 2

11a-12:30p

Susan

2:45-4:15p

(PAC Main Stage)

Horror Deconstructed Workshop

10-11:15a

Path of the Panther and Wildlife Corridor Panel with the filmmakers

12:15-2:30p

Papertown

4:30-6p

Patriots Day and conversation with the screenwriter

6:45-9p

Sat., Sept. 19

(MLT at PAC)

Hold On To Me

2:30-4:15p

(PAC Main Stage)

Inside the Grid: The design of TRON: Ares Presented by Darby Fuccinto w/ Christian Haberkern

10:30a-noon

Natchez

12:45-2:15p

Black & White Masquerade (Exclusive for Sponsors and Film Society Members only) – 6-9:30p

The Black & White Masquerade transforms the PAC for an unforgettable Festival celebration. Dress in black and white, don your favorite mask, and join us for an evening centered around the 1926 silent-film classic The Phantom of the Opera, on the big screen with a live orchestral performance by musicians from WCU. Following the performance, the Awards Ceremony for competition films will be presented on stage while sweets and champagne are served.



"Papertown" Brings Local Story of Appalachian Town to HCFF

Sept 16-19, 2026

When the paper mill that sustained a small Appalachian town for more than a century shuts down, its people face not only economic collapse, but a deeper question: who are they without it? That's the premise behind *Papertown*, screening as a competition film at this year's Highlands-Cashiers Film Festival (HCFF), September 18th at 4:30pm at the Highlands Performing Arts Center. The full schedule and lineup is available on the website.

Papertown follows the closure of the Canton paper mill and what it means for the people of Haywood County and Western North Carolina — a story that hits close to home, with Canton just a two-hour drive from Highlands. But for director Jeremy Seifert, the film was never really about the mill itself. "This film isn't about the mill or its closing," Seifert has said. "It's a story about the people and community of a Southern Appalachian town named Canton... I can't wait to introduce the world to characters like Matthew Boydston, Roger Frady, Gail Mull, Zeb Smathers, Jonathan Lovelace, and so many more. This is a human story of resiliency, the meaning and dignity of workers and good paying jobs, the power of community and neighborliness, and the importance of home."

Seifert is an award-winning director, cinematographer, producer, and editor whose documentaries have premiered at Sundance, SXSW, Berlinale, Hot Docs, Tribeca, and AFI DOCS. *Papertown* was made with support from the Ford Foundation and Catapult Film Fund, and features music from Grammy-winning artist Dave Matthews, who joined the project as an executive producer and wrote an original song for the film alongside Sierra Ferrell.



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

• SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING

The community of prayer

Rev. Kelley Connelly
Associate Pastor
First Presbyterian Church

As a Christian minister I spend a lot of time thinking about, talking about, or participating in prayer. On Sunday mornings I prepare several prayers to confess our sins, pray for ourselves and the world, and to dedicate our tithes and offerings to God. Prayer binds us together as the body of Christ. Which is why it is so important that we reflect on not only how or what we pray for, but why we pray.

Recently, in a conversation with a friend she was sharing with me that it took her a long time to figure out why prayer is important to her. She said, "I've had so much tragedy happen over the years, I almost lost sight of why I believe prayer is important." Her comment struck me because not only was it profound, it was relatable.

It feels impossible to remember why we pray when faced with tragedy, suffering, or even death. Tragedy naturally makes us question the system because no devoutly spoken words can undo a devastating loss or instantly wipe away deep pain. But prayer is not a transaction with God - it's quite the opposite. Prayer is an ongoing relational conversation with the living God. And when we shift our perspective from a transaction to a relationship, our purpose of prayer transforms. It stops being a tool to change our circumstances and becomes the sacred space where God's grace finds a way inside us.

Because prayer ignites a holy compassion within us, reminding us that we are not helpless bystanders. We are agents of change - change that begins with prayer. And it changes our focus from asking God to mend to our immediate desires, to instead aligning us with God's deep longing for healing, comfort, and restoration in a fractured world. As I tell my congregation nearly every Sunday when we prepare for the prayers of intercession, "we do this to unite our hearts, with God's heart."

Prayer does not promise an easy immunity from suffering, but it guarantees we will never have to endure it alone. So, the next time you pause to pray — whether in profound gratitude or inescapable joy or even in the midst of grief — remember that your voice is joining a timeless, sacred dialogue. And draws us deeper and deeper into God's enduring love. Ensuring that no matter how deep the valley or how long the night, we walk forward with God, fully known, fully loved, and never alone.

• PLACES TO WORSHIP •

BLUE VALLEY BAPTIST CHURCH

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

BUCK CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH

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

CASHIERS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Senior Pastor: Rev. Amy Spivey
Assoc. Pastor: Rev. Wonyeong Lee 828-743-5298
Sundays: School at 9:30; Worship & Kids Worship 10:30
GRACE CHAPEL ON HIGH HOLLY

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

CHRIST ANGLICAN CHURCH

The Rev'd Dr. Marc Robertson & Rev. Nick McGee
464 U.S. Hwy. 64E, Cashiers, NC

CAC@christanglicancashiers.org • 828-743-1701
Sunday: Adult Christian Ed, 9:15a; Holy Eucharist, 10:30a;
Fellowship 11:45a; Wed: Bible Study/Contemplative Prayer, 5p
CHRIST CHURCH OF THE VALLEY, CASHIERS

743-5470 • www.cashiers.church
Sun. 10:45a; Wed Study 5:15p supper and childcare.

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE CHURCH

283 Spring Street - Sunday Service: 10:30 a.m.

CLEAR CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH

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

COMMUNITY BIBLE CHURCH

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

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

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH HIGHLANDS

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

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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

GOLDMINE BAPTIST CHURCH

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

HAMBURG BAPTIST CHURCH

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

HIGHLANDS ASSEMBLY OF GOD

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

HIGHLANDS CENTRAL BAPTIST CHURCH

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

HIGHLANDS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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

HOLY FAMILY LUTHERAN CHURCH: ELCA

2152 Dillard Road • 526-9741
Rev. Ken Langsdorf

Worship/Communion: 10:30 All are welcome.
Visit our website: Holy Family Lutheran Highlands NC

MACEDONIA BAPTIST CHURCH

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

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

MOUNTAIN SYNAGOGUE

Franklin • 828-634-1312 • mountainsynagoguewnc.com.
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 Aug. 18. Only the names of persons arrested, issued a summons/citation, issued a Class-3 misdemeanor or those of public officials have been used.

Accidents

• Unit 1 was parked facing West in parking lot on Log Cabin Lane. Unit 2 was parked facing west in parking lot on Log Cabin Lane. Unit 1 began to pull out of parking place traveling west and hit Unit 2. Unit 1 came to rest in parking place.

• Officers issued 14 citations and 33 warning tickets.

Aug. 6

• At 5:30 p.m., officers responded to a report of a possible hit and run at a residence on Mirror Lake Road.

Aug. 25

• At 2:30 p.m., officers responded to a complaint of someone communicating threats to an employee at Regions Bank.

The Highlands Fire & Rescue log from Aug. 22

Aug. 22

• At 6:24 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to Skyline Lodge.

• At 7:43 p.m., the dept. was first-

responders to a residence on Windy Top Road.

Aug. 23

• At 7:20 a.m., the dept. responded to motor vehicle accident on Buck Creek Road.

• At 3:27 p.m., the dept. investigated the cause of smile at a residence on Flat Mountain Road.

• At 6:49 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Blue Valley Road.

• At 7:13 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Falcon Ridge.

Aug. 24

• At 8:39 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Billy Cabin Road.

• At 9:25 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Clear Creek Road.

• At 9:02 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Crowe Drive.

Aug. 25

• At 1:50 p.m. the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Aunt Dora Drive.

• At 2:56 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Cherokee Dr.

• At 3:39 p.m., the dept. responded to a medical alarm at a residence on Horse

Cove Road.

• At 6:09 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Satulah Road.

• At 6:33 p.m., the dept. provided public assistance at a location on Main Street.

• At 9:57 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a location on Cullasaja Club Drive.

Aug. 26

• At 8:15 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on US 64 west (Franklin Road).

• At 11:03 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on NC 106 (Dillard Road).

• At 12:56 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Flat Mountain Estates.

Aug. 27

• At 2:05 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Azalea Woods Drive.

• At 11:40 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Country Club Drive.

• At 12:30 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Maple Way.

• At 12:40 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a location on Skyline

Lodge Road.

• At 9:30 p.m., the dept. responded to a call of a golf cart fire at a residence on Morewood Circle.

Aug. 28

• At 8:51 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Garnet Rock Trail.

• At 9:51 a.m., the dept. provided public assistance.

• At 10:17 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a location on Spring Street.

• At 11:42 a.m., the dept. responded to a motor vehicle accident on Buck Creek Road.

• At 6:25 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Falcon Ridge Road.

• At 11:18 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a location on S. 4th Street.

Aug. 29

• At 12:42 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a location on Main Street.

Aug. 30

• At 8:02 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Holt Knob Circle.

• At 1:08 p.m., the dept. provided mutual aid to Cashiers FD.

...NONPROFITS continued from page 1

was time to once again open a discussion among the board on how they want to handle requests for funding for non-profit organizations.

“We’re starting to have agencies come ask for funding,” said Cabe. “I am asking the board do you want to place them on the agenda as they come in, or bring them forward as a list every three months, or some other structure? The county has contingency funds ready to go, so the requests can be funded without drawing from fund balance, if the board is interested.”

Commissioner Gary Shields said this problem was why previous boards had established the Community Funding Pool and its task force, to review and make recommendations on non-profit funding requests.

“The county funding helps non-profits when applying for grants, and the taxpayer funds are worth the comparative reduction in costs to law enforcement, crisis management or other

agencies in the county that would need to cover the work they provide without such organizations like KIDS Place and Smoky Mountain Pregnancy Care Center to mitigate harm,” said Shields. “We had an estimate one time, if we had to dissolve KIDS Place, the county would have to provide \$250,000 to cover the costs of the work they do in the community.”

Shields asked Kellie Burns who was in the audience and has organized several fundraisers for local non-profits to speak on the issue.

“I do try to do events for the non-profits, but it doesn’t get enough revenue to really help them,” said Burns. “We have to show as a county we’re supporting them. It’s very crucial for them to get grants. We need to demonstrate community buy-in to be competitive for grants.”

Burns pointed out that organizations like Men’s Challenge of the Smokies and No Wrong Door deal with addiction support, help keep people off the street and save the county money on EMS and law

enforcement.

“When Mr. Cabe and I are constructing our agenda, it’s really hard to have non-profits ask for money and you just turn them down,” said Chairman Josh Young. “I felt like this was a worthy conversation for the full board, and I struggle because, you know, we’re operating in a deficit, right? We pulled \$3 million dollars out of fund balance to balance this budget. We’re obviously in a deficit and it’s hard to fund non-government organizations out of that. But seeing contingency funds available and seeing the impact of what these things do to the community, I mean, it’s an emotional decision and it’s a hard one.”

Young said it was a judgment call for each and every one of them.

“I feel like we just have to respectfully agree to disagree, but I feel like we need to make a decision either do or don’t, move or don’t move. I mean, they’re knocking on Mr. Cabe’s door. I feel like we’ve kind of danced all around this.”

Commissioners did not take any ac-

tion to fund or not fund local non-profits. Further discussion on the matter is expected at future board meetings. The board will meet for their next regular scheduled meeting on Tues., Sept. 8 in the commissioners’ boardroom.



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...MAYOR continued from page 2

Fast forward to now and Pine Street is a popular town venue. Hank's dual-purpose design for Pine Street and the park works simply fine. I do not think anyone would imagine anything different now.

My point is that as we move forward as a community, many of our immediate fears and concerns do not happen. After all the struggles and discussions about how to create a park that took place well over a decade ago, all

...DREDGE continued from page 1

Quality (DEQ) had signed off on allowing the material from the lake to be deposited in Roger Lee Wilson's landfill off NC 28, so now Wilson and the town will discuss the cost associated with hauling the fill from the lake to the landfill.

Commissioner Jim Tate since about 90,000 yards of sediment will be removed with 15-17 yards per truck depending on the size of the trucks.

Hansen said given the roads in Highlands, smaller trucks might be used, which could mean less yards per load and therefore more loads.

During Phase 2, which he called "The Open Water Phase," dredging will be halted five feet from all perimeters of any area in the lake defined as "wetlands" to preserve the wetland edge within the five-foot mark from the edge of the lake.

He said the same tactic will be used around any docks so the integrity of structures won't be jeopardized by the removal of silt.

The plan is to remove 4-6 feet of silt in the open water areas to acquire a depth of 8 feet – and he said more dredging will be done in the area referred to as Phase 1 which was financed by the MLIA.

"During that phase, 1 1/2 to 2 feet of sediment was removed, but we can do more," he said.

He requested permission from the town to do additional dredging to the Phase 1 area at no additional cost, which of course the town OK'd.

Commissioner Jeff Weller said he was all for that.

"We have to do what's right for the overall project even if it means we have to give up some recreational

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is now well with Founders Park. That is not to say future improvements may take place, but the changes and transformation in the park over the decades have been assets to the community.

Change does not always forebode negative outcomes; on the contrary, positive results most often happen. The community created a historical venue well into the future: Founders Park.

pathways since the purpose of the grant is to enhance the water quality. So do more in Phase 1," he said.

Phase 2 moves further up the river portion of the lake – north of the bridge -- where 2-4 feet will be excavated following the same offset rules of five feet from wetland areas and docks.

Dredging of the Phase 3 area, the part through the bon a fide wetland area, is a bit more problematic.

There are several water and sewer lines throughout the area that need to be located before disturbing the area. Hansen said locating the lines would cost about \$20,000 but commissioners said the town can locate the lines with its ground penetrating equipment at no cost.

Hansen said dredging around the various lines which are at various depths needs to be done carefully because sediment under the lines – basically holding them up and in place – shouldn't be disturbed.

"Caution will be needed in Phase 3 and utilities may limit dredge depth," he said.

Therefore, due to the lines the exact location of the planned kayak recreational path isn't known at this time. He said in addition easements must be obtained to remove some shoreline trees so dewatering areas can be set up along the riverine shoreline.

The takeaway is that the cost to transport the sediment – originally estimated to cost \$1.7 million – has been pared down to \$750,000 or less since the material can be deposited on private land instead of the county's landfill off Rich Gap Road.

"This savings means we can go further -- dredge more – basically get more for the money," said Hansen.

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POOL SCHEDULE

• Lap Swim: Mon.-Fri. 6am-9:45am, and Saturday 10am-11pm - 6 lanes. Water Aerobics: 18 y+ Mon.-Fri. 10-11am with Karen Chambers. Adult Swim: 18y+ only.

PICKLE BALL

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

MTN FINDINGS

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

FIBBER MAGEES

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

FARMERS MARKET

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

ALL WEEK

• Scaly Mountain/ Highlands/ Cashiers Alcoholics Anonymous "Open Meetings" are for anyone who thinks they may have a drinking problem or for anyone interested in the A.A. recovery program. Open meetings are held at Scaly Mountain @ Grace Chapel, 9915 Dillard Rd., Scaly Mountain each Tues & Sat at 5:30 pm and at Highlands @ the 1st Presbyterian Church, 471 Main St., on Monday at 5:30 p.m. and on Wednesday & Fridays @ 12:00 noon. Open in person meetings are also held in Cashiers @ the Albert Carlton Cashiers Community Library, 249 Frank Allen Rd. on Sunday at 5:00 pm, on Tuesday @ 7:00 pm, on Friday at 5:30 pm and on Saturday at 9:00 am. For more information please visit our website www.aawnc80.org or to speak with a member of A.A. 24/7 call our HELP Line 828 349-4357

Mon. & Thurs.

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

Mon-Wed-Fri

• Aerobics with Tina Rogers 8-9am at the Rec Park.

• Balance, Stretch & Strengthen Class at the Rec Park 8:30-9:30am. The cost for the class is \$30 a month and is led by Vivian Brewer. Call the Recreation Department at 828-526-3556 for more information.

Mon., Tues., Thurs.

• The Food Pantry behind the Methodist Church on Spring Street is open from 10a-6p.

2nd Mondays

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

4th Mondays

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

2nd Tuesdays

• Highlands Writers Group meets on alternate Tuesday afternoons at 3pm. Writers still uncomfortable with in-person gatherings may participate via Zoom meetings. For more info contact Bud Katz at either 828-526-3190 or at 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 ncpost370@gmail.com or just join us at 9am.

Sept. 3

• Hudson Library Ribbon Cutting, at 11a.

Sept. 5

• Public Open House, 67 Sagee Dr., noon to 2p.

• Pop Up Pipers at Highlands Methodist Church porch on Main Street 4:30-5p.

Sat. -Sun, Sept. 5-6

• Public Open House at 1875, Highlands' newest exclusive gated community. 11a to 4p each day. Charcuterie, and registration for exciting gift card. High Gate Drive off Dillard Road.

Thurs., Sept. 10

• Mirror Lake Improvement Association annual meeting at the Mirror Lake Bridge at 6p. Michael Hanson (McGill & Associates), the Engineering Firm retained by Town of Highlands, will address, explain, discuss, and take questions regarding the continuing Mirror Lake Dredging Phases 2 & 3.

• Bingo for The Literacy & Learning Center partnering with the Highlands Rotary Club @Bingo

Night at 6:30p in the Community Building by the ballfield.

Tues., Sept. 11

• An Open House at Blue Ridge Health on the HC Hospital campus to introduce Sherry Burkett, DNP, to the community she now serves from 1-4pm at 209 Hospital Drive #301.

Mon., Sept. 14

• Cashiers Cares 5th annual golf tournament will be held at Trillium Golf Club. Play is limited to first 96 players to sign up and Cost is \$300/player. The format is a scramble start at 10:30 AM. Lunch is provided and also awards party at the golf course. Raffles and Silent Auction featuring local merchants will be part of the activities, including golf foursomes at private clubs here on the plateau. There will be a Long Drive event with a Golf Pro and the chance to win a trip to Pebble Beach to play golf. To sign up to play in the tournament go to <https://cashierscares.org> the details.

Tues, Sept. 15

• At First Presbyterian Church Highlands in Coleman Hall, "Suicide Prevention & Mental Health Advocacy with Dennis Gillan, suicide prevention advocate. 1a coffee & light bites, 10:15a presentation.

Wed, Sept 16

• A FREE 2nd showing of Rise, Ruin, and Restoration: A History of Lake Toxaway, The Return of Lake Toxaway is at 1p at the PAC. Documentary chronicles the creation of the resort on Lake Toxaway, the dramatic collapse of the dam in 1916, and the effort to resurrect the mountain lake some 40 years later. Director Dan Johnson will be available for comments following the film. Registration is required. Seating is limited. Arrive early. Register at www.eventbrite.com/e/1996882373935?aff=oddttdtcreator

• 2nd Annual Highlands Cashiers Film Festival Kick-Off Party - Free and open to the public at 6p at PAC. Bring the family, a picnic and lawn chairs and gather round a bonfire (weather permitting) with live music from Silly Ridge, Highlands-based acoustic bluegrass

band, and enjoy a first meet-and-greet with Artistic Director Joy Jorgensen.

Wed.-Sat Sept. 16-19

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

Thurs., Sept. 17

• Library Party at the Hudson Library from 5-7 p.m. Unveiling the capital campaigns and newly completed outdoor spaces 5-7 p.m. Live music, food and drinks and tours.

Sat.-Sun., Sept. 19-20

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

Sun., Sept. 20

• CLE's free annual Porchfest from 1-6 PM. Over 40 musicians will perform across 16 venues in Downtown Highlands.

Mon., Sept. 21

• The 2026 Town of Highlands Scholarship Golf Tournament at the Cullasaja Club. The day will begin with a light breakfast, followed by at 10:30AM shotgun start. Following golf, there is a full buffet dinner in the Cullasaja Club clubhouse. The event will be capped off at 28 teams. The cost is \$800 per team (\$200/player). Hole sponsorships are available, as well as a variety of sponsorship levels. Mike and Jim Bryson are sponsors of the event. For more information call Brian Stiehler (787-2778) or to register, contact Gibby Shaheen at Town Hall by calling 526-2118.

Sat. Sept. 26

• The Annual FREE Highlands Heritage Jamboree is at the KH Founders Park. It's a free event of live music, mountain dance, history and food. From 1:30-3:30p, it's the US Fleet Forces Navy Band: Four-Star Edition. At 3:30p the Foxfire Boys will perform. At 4p Highlands Smokehouse BBQ and moonshine will be available. Then from 5-7:30p it's the Darren Nicholson Band.

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