

Highlands Newspaper

FREE Every Thursday

Volume 23, Number 10

Real-Time News, Weather & WebCams: HighlandsInfo.com

Thurs., March 5, 2026

TB applicants offer insight through Q&A

By Kim Lewicki

On Thursday, March 12 the Town Board will hold a Special Called Meeting to hopefully pick the member for the Town Board who will fill John Dotson's vacated seat which was affective Dec. 31, 2025.

Three sit on two town boards – Bill Grubb, Jan Pittman and Margot Teed – Marc Hehn is a past commissioner and Daryl Griswold is new to the Town of

Five applicants applied for the seat – Daryl Griswold, Bill Grubb, Marc Hehn, Jan Pittman and Margot Teed.

• See **APPLICANTS** page 4

•INSIDE THIS ISSUE•

Mayor on Duty	2	HS Sports.....	12
Weather	2	Spiritually Speaking	14
Investing at 4,118 Ft.....	6	Police & Fire Report.....	15
Obituary.....	9	Classifieds	17
Letter	10	Events.....	18



Brent Holbrooks



John Shearl



Kellie Burns



Dylan Castle

Sheriff Holbrooks wins; Districts 1 & 2 Rep winners face off with Dems in Nov.

By Kristin Fox

Tuesday's primary saw a low turnout with only 8,335 out of 29,022 voters turning out to vote for the local races of sheriff and three county commissioners' seats. Out of the 15 precincts in Macon County this meant just over a fourth or 28.72 percent of the citizens casts their votes in the primary.

With only two Republican candidates on the ballot, the office of sheriff was decided at this week's primary. Incumbent Sheriff Brent Holbrooks overwhelming beat opponent Bob Cook with 69.32% percent to Cook's 30.68% percent. Holbrooks unofficially won the reelection as Macon County Sheriff for another four years receiving 4,406 votes to challenger Cook's 1,950 votes.

Due to an issue in Halifax County with a precinct opening one hour late, results statewide were delayed until the polls closed there. Although Macon County's results were uploaded on time, the results were not reported on the state web sites until 8:30 p.m. after the polls closed in Halifax County.

Incumbent John Shearl narrowly won the Republican primary for the District 1 receiving 2,409 votes (38.27%) to opponents Joey Wilson's 1,960 votes (31.14%) and Don Willis who finished third with 1,926 votes (30.60%).

Shearl will face Democrat Russ Lunn in November's general election.

• See **ELECTION** page 9

Highlands Food & Wine 10-year run is over; not returning for 2026

By Kim Lewicki

After ten years of culinary excellence, world-class music and community celebration, Highlands Food & Wine will conclude its historic run and will not return in 2026, nor in the future it seems.

The festival – specifically the annual Saturday event on Main Street, known as the Main Event – came under scrutiny this year and was the subject of a passionate discussion at the January Town Board meeting.

Safety was the theme of the discussion which was initiated by Highlands Police Chief Andrea Holland.

"I am here to discuss the negative impact to public safety and the town's infrastructure," said Holland.

She said the number of people on the 4th to 5th block of Main Street during HF&W's Saturday Main Street event reported at 1,200, made it impossible for police officers to properly monitor the event.

"Hosting the event on Main Street may seem festive and beneficial for businesses but the narrow space becomes dangerously congested when large crowds gather, especially when combined with alcohol consumption," she said.

Holland said events need to be kept to a size the Highlands Police Department can handle saying she didn't feel her small department could safely manage a crowd of 1,200.

"A manageable event means safer streets, officers who can do their jobs affectively and a community we can all feel good about," she said.

Chief Holland said she understood the positive aspects

• See **HF&W** page 7



Rare Opportunity in Ravenel Ridge - Elegance, Privacy, and Panoramic Views



Jody Lovell
(828) 226.6303

812 Ravenel Ridge Road | MLS 1001984

Highlands Sotheby's INTERNATIONAL REALTY

MCCULLEY'S

The largest selection of Scottish cashmere in the U.S.A.

In Highlands ...on the hill
242 S. 4th St. • 828-526-4407

Open 7 days a week

www.mcculleys.com

• THE PLATEAU'S POSITION •

• MAYOR ON DUTY •

Upcoming retreat is mostly about the budget

Wednesday, March 11, will be the Town Board of Commissioners' retreat. The town is a big spender when it comes to putting on this annual event. It will not be at some out-of-town resort but rather at the Highlands Community Building next to the ballfield. The only food and drink served are coffee and donuts to begin the morning, and a bag lunch at noon. There is no afterglow cocktail party in the evening; the retreat will unceremoniously end around 4 pm.

The retreat is opened to the public, and the press always attends. The presentations and discussion of this all-day event will be broadcast on the town website. A day-long agenda will be published for those people interested in specific topics and funding issues.

Let me review the current budget highlights to paint a picture of what department expenses the board will be reviewing. At each yearly retreat, department heads present their needs for the coming year. A major part of department budgets is



Highlands Mayor
Patrick Taylor

dedicated to personnel salaries, so much of the town budget is pretty much set. And with only about 75 town employees, there is little, if any, room for savings by cutting personnel without also reducing critical services.

The town budget was \$40.9 million this fiscal year, a huge yet deceptive number. Some might say that the town is flush with money. The old saying is just let Highlands pay for it. Easy to say if you are living in unincorporated Macon County. Not so if you live in the town limits, where residents pay both county and town taxes. Let me say that again. Highlands residents pay both town and county taxes, which turns out to be a major part of all the taxes collected in the county.

Over half of the town budget comes from enterprise funds, that is, those fees collected from residents to run the water, electric, and sewer systems. Those utilities are major assets for town residents. These utilities are operated by the town, and the board of commissioners is the elected officials who are answerable to the customers. No corporate call centers involved, only the staff and Town Manager at the front desk of Town Hall, the workers in the field, and the board commissioners. These departments required \$23 million in funding this past year. For instance, the town paid Duke Energy about \$3.8 million for wholesale power last year, not to mention all the other personnel, material, and equipment expenses to run the electric department. Like a business, this utility earns a profit that supports the long-term operation of the electric system, including new electric circuits. The same can be said, to some extent, of our water and sewer operations. The good news is that no increase in electric rates is expected for this coming year, as has been the case for about seven years. We did increase water and sewer rates this year, and stepped increases have been built into the systems for the coming years. The NC Local Government Commission mandated these increases after doing an analysis of our future operating and maintenance needs. Simply put, they told us our rates were too low and that we needed to build stronger reserves for these departments.

The town must also show in the budget the current state grant funds. Our finance staff must carry over much of this funding

• See **MAYOR** page 17

• SNAPSHOT •

King and Queen for the night



Crowned as the 2026 Mardi Gras King and Queen were Mary Adair Trumbly and Dr. John Baumrucker, whose leadership and fundraising efforts helped the Royalty Court collectively raise more than \$23,000 in support of R.E.A.C.H.'s lifesaving programs for survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking in Macon County. In total, the Mardi Gras event raised over \$48,000.

• WEATHER •

Thu, 5-Mar	Fri, 6-Mar	Sat, 7-Mar	Sun, 8-Mar
 64°F 48°F	 68°F 52°F	 66°F 49°F	 65°F 47°F
Partly sunny	A couple of thundershowers	Couple of thunderstorms	A shower and thunderstorm
RealFeel® High 65° Low: 45°	RealFeel® High 71° Low: 56°	RealFeel® High: 68° Low: 54°	RealFeel® High 64° Low: 52°

Highlands NC 4-Day Forecast By AccuWeather.com

Highlands Real-Time Weather Station @ HighlandsInfo.com/wx.htm

HIGHLANDER ROOFING SERVICES INC.

New & Re-Roofing Applications Including:
Asphalt • Cedar • Metal • Synthetic Materials

Showroom: 1511 Highlands Rd • Franklin • O: 828-524-7773
info@highlandernc.com • www.highlandernc.com

Highlands Newspaper

www.highlandsinfo.com

Phone: (828) 200-1371

Email:

HighlandsEditor@aol.com

Publisher/Editor: Kim Lewicki

Reporters: Kristin Fox

Digital Media/Circulation - Jim Lewicki

Locally owned and operated by

Kim & Jim Lewicki

Adobe PDF version at

www.HighlandsInfo.com

265 Oak St. PO Box 2703

Highlands, N.C 28741

Copyrighted - All Rights Reserved.

5,000 copies printed weekly.

Independently verified by:

Gannett Printing Knoxville TN

Letter Policy:

There is a 500-word limit. We reserve the right to reject or edit letters-to-the-editor. No anonymous letters will be accepted. Views expressed are not necessarily those of Highlands Newspaper.

Obituary Policy

Obituaries are \$8 per column inch.

\$10 per photo.

Payable prior to publication.



PAT ALLEN
pat@patallenrealtygroup.com
828.200.9179

Pat Allen

REALTY GROUP

828-526-8784



JULIE OSBORN
julie@patallenrealtygroup.com
828.200.6165

Featured and Fabulous



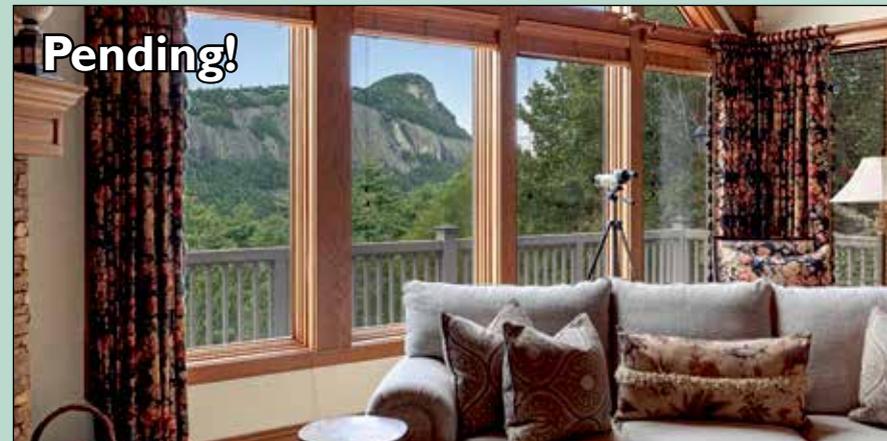
This charming freestanding cottage is the only residential-use condominium within the Freeman Center, conveniently located off Dillard Road. Offering three bedrooms and two baths, this Highlands cottage has been extensively and thoughtfully renovated by skilled artisans who preserved its original character while elevating it with refined finishes and modern updates. A rare, in-town, move-in-ready opportunity, this cottage offers exceptional flexibility for use as a primary residence, rental property or professional office space. Offered mostly furnished, with select exclusions for \$650,000. MLS# 1002588



Perched above Highlands' famed 4,118 feet – this craftsman-style elegant mountain gated residence is newly roofed, with an open concept floor plan, spacious rooms, a cozy stone fireplace and gorgeous sunsets from the spacious decks and oversized sun porch that you will just love! Offered for \$2,400,000. MLS# 1002556.



This unique +/-1-acre property presents a versatile opportunity, just minutes from town. The site features a substantial open-air garage/barn previously utilized for the storage of heavy equipment, landscaping boulders, and related materials. Its existing configuration makes it ideal for equipment staging, contractor storage, or specialty uses such as a car barn or collector vehicle storage. Gated for security. Offered at \$295,000. MLS# 1002578.



Prepare to be captivated by sweeping, unobstructed views of iconic Whiteside Mountain from this stunning Highlands Falls CC residence, a home so remarkable it has been featured twice in an architecture magazine. Wormy chestnut accents, open floor plan, screened porch with grilling station and Whiteside Mountain in full view! A spacious lower level with fireplace for guests' privacy plus a whole house generator! Offered for \$2,999,000. MLS# 1002557.



Voted America's Best

...APPLICANTS continued from page 1



Daryl Griswold



Bill Grubb



Marc Hehn



Jan Pittman



Margot Teed

Highlands governance game.

Selecting the next Town Board member will be through a nomination/ballot method. Applicants will progress based on the number of votes they get each time a vote is called. Once an applicant gets a majority vote, which commissioners voted for whom will be disclosed as part of the public record.

During the meeting, each candidate will be called forward to first provide brief opening remarks and then to answer questions posed by each sitting Town Board member. A lottery system will be used to determine which applicant speaks first and so on.

The following Q&A offers insight into each candidate's thoughts regarding Highlands as it is now and what it will be in the future.

Daryl Griswold

What qualifies you to be a Town Board commissioner?

I've been a practicing commercial

attorney for almost 43 years in private practice, working in an in-house capacity in a variety of industries, and in the governmental sector. With each of these experiences, I have been exposed to a broad range of matters, including regulatory and legislative matters. I have been fortunate to learn from others and develop skill sets to fashion creative solutions to complex matters. Listen first, examine all sides of a matter, consider varied views, and then problem-solve.

What measures could the town take to better support the businesses and working community?

The Town could support local businesses and the working community by improving infrastructure, expanding access to resources such as workforce housing and childcare, and fostering stronger communication between municipal leadership and business owners. All of these actions would help retain talent making the town a more competitive place to live

and work.

What can the Town Board do to ensure that Highlands is a viable town for all – working people and parents, children in the K-12 school, tourists, 2nd homeowners, retirees?

It is crucial to maintain the character and livability of Highlands so that we can continue to attract and retain first-responders, healthcare workers, teachers, Town employees, and other critically important working members of our Town. Finding additional opportunities for the Town to partner with the public sector to meet the needs of workers who serve others will benefit all residents of Highlands, full and part-time.

Do you think the Planning and Zoning board members are getting the training needed to understand the ramifications of their decisions?

Both of these boards are advisory in nature. The Town Commission makes the final decisions on matters evaluated by the boards, taking into consideration the recommendations of the boards as well as other facts that may impact a decision. For anyone who serves on a volunteer basis, including in service to a planning and zoning board, training and keeping up to date on relevant issues will always help to serve in a more impactful manner and benefit the Town.

Do you think the board should solicit the general assembly to change the occupancy tax from 3% to 6% so 3% of those proceeds can go to the town to offset tourist-related infrastructure and service needs?

The current occupancy tax is assessed by Macon County. Making changes to the current legislation needs a great deal of study to determine the best path forward. All affected parties must have a seat at the table for this discussion as an additional occupancy tax will have an impact on the hospitality industry. Also, recent guidelines within the General Assembly concerning the use of occupancy tax dollars appear

to be more restrictive than the current legislation, which could result in more restrictive limitations on the use of the occupancy tax than exists today.

Bill Grubb

What qualifies you to be a Town Board commissioner?

My management experience navigating complex regulations, creating and managing budgets, and managing multiple stakeholders qualifies me. I genuinely care about the future of Highlands and believe in creating win-win solutions.

What measures could the town take to better support the businesses and working community?

Having a successful business requires workers. So many workers in our town travel great distances to their daily job because they cannot afford to live nearby. I know workforce housing is a complex problem with no easy solutions but we need to keep working on it as a town with private stakeholders.

What can the Town Board do to ensure that Highlands is a viable town for all – working people and parents, children in the K-12 school, tourists, 2nd homeowners, retirees?

A viable town requires a multi-generational strategy, we cannot favor one demographic or group over the other. For families: continue to supporting facilities like the rec-center and protect our neighborhoods. For retirees/2nd homeowners: we need good healthcare and emergency services and protection of the quiet enjoyment they moved here for. For tourists: maintain the aesthetic charm and natural spaces that make Highlands a destination.

Do you think the Planning and Zoning board members are getting the training needed to understand the ramifications of their decisions?

I am on the Planning Board so I can speak directly to the excellent training we have from the UNC School of Gov-

Bryson's Food Store
Proudly Serving Highlands, North Carolina since 1977

The best meals start here!

Wine Tasting every Thursday, 2-5p

Open daily 7:30a to 6:30p

403 Highlands Plaza, Highlands, NC • (828) 526-3775

...APPLICANTS continued from page 4

ernment when we join the board. Our Zoning Board consists of an enviable cross-section of active and retired professionals (attorney, builder, physician, B&B Owner, etc). The Planning Board and Zoning Board make decisions based on the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinances, respectively. I agree with Zoning Board member Mike King that to protect our town character we need to revisit and update these documents with respect to building height, lot density, and aesthetics -- this is how we ensure decisions are consistent with our town's character. (Reference this paper Nov 20, 2025.)

Do you think the board should solicit the general assembly to change the occupancy tax from 3% to 6% so 3% of those proceeds can go to the town to offset tourist-related infrastructure and service needs?

Our permanent residents should consider infrastructure costs – wear and tear on public facilities, emergency services, trash collection – generated by visitors. As a matter of fiscal fairness I would like to see the NC General Assembly and Macon County regulations explicitly allow the allocation of occupancy funds towards infrastructure and physical improvement needs. I would only support an increase if this change were made first.

Marc Hehn

What qualifies you to be a Town Board commissioner?

Masters Degree in City and Regional Planning, Member American Institute of Certified Planners, 45 years of local government experience, licensed Water, Sewer and landfill operator, four years of service on the Highlands Town Board. Managed the construction of federal and state funded infrastructure for years. My greatest accomplishment during the four years I served on the Town Board was advocating that we apply for state funds to upgrade our potable water treatment plant. I am very familiar with our Water Master Plan and Capital Improvement Program. \$35M in projects was the estimated cost in 2019. We are getting more aggressive in pursuing grant funds to upgrade our water distribution system. I realize the urgency of these projects.

What measures could the town take to better support the businesses and working community?

Communicate regularly using kind,

true words with the Chamber, business and working community. I do think parking is a problem in the downtown area and we have missed two opportunities already. The Planning Board should be tasked with reviewing the Parking Plan to identify other options.

Town needs good relation with the business and working community.

What can the Town Board do to ensure that Highlands is a viable town for all – working people and parents, children in the K-12 school, tourists, 2nd homeowners, retirees?

The housing crisis is very real and that is the biggest challenge to making this a viable town for all income groups. The housing we need to attract physicians and healthcare professionals is a \$20M problem. It was suggested in 2019 when I was elected that the Town would never raise taxes to support healthcare. That was just more misinformation and disinformation. All I ask is the Town honor the commitments that were made 30 years ago to provide water and sewer service for housing on the hospital campus. It will be a start.

Do you think the Planning and Zoning board members are getting the training needed to understand the ramifications of their decisions?

Yes training is available for our Planning and Zoning Boards from the League of Cities and the UNC School of Government; however, my understanding is training is not mandatory. I happen to have been appointed to the Macon County Planning Board last year.

Do you think the board should solicit the general assembly to change the occupancy tax from 3% to 6% so 3% of those proceeds can go to the town to offset tourist-related infrastructure and service needs?

I am certain there are particulars that would need to be vetted and perhaps local legislation passed in order to pursue the idea of increasing Town Revenues via the concept of using other people's money (visitors and out of town residents) rather than simply raising property taxes. I believe a tax is also allowed on prepared meals My understanding is North Carolina allows over 200 counties and municipalities to levy local occupancy (room) taxes on short-term rentals, hotels, motels, and similar accommodations

Jan Pittman

• See APPLICANTS page 11



66 Summit Trail, Highlands

\$2,450,000 • MLS# 1002246



4 Woodland Lane, Highlands

\$1,350,000 • MLS# 1001756



700 Silly Ridge, Scaly Mountain

\$5,800,000 • MLS# 1001131

Andrea Gabbard

c: 828.200.6742

AndreaGabbard@gmail.com

Recognized as the top .002% of NC Agents
by Real Trends

Highlands Sotheby's
INTERNATIONAL REALTY

114 N. 4th Street • Highlands, NC



COREY JAMES GALLERY

& Estate Consignments

Bronze sculpture • Paintings
Vintage & Antique Collectables &
Furniture • Costume Jewelry



(828) 526-4818

On the corner of 3rd & Spring

WHOLE LIFE MARKET

Natural Products Store

Hours: 9am-5pm

Mon-Sat

828-526-5999

Wholelifehighlands@icloud.com

LOCATED AT 680 N 4TH ST, HIGHLANDS

NECTAR
Juice Bar

Organic smoothie/juice
bar located
inside Whole
Life Market

Read Highlands Newspaper, Highlands' only locally owned and operated newspaper free from everywhere – on the street or on the web.
Go to www.highlandsinfo.com,
Click on Local News.
Delivered and Uploaded every Thurs.AM

March
SPECIALS



Korean Lash Lift
20% Off



Free Consultations
Memberships
Package Deals

Highlands Office:

828-349-1280

Franklin Office:

828-349-1280

Hair
Laser Removal
20% OFF



Special does not apply to packages

• INVESTING AT 4,118 FT. •

2026 real estate trends on the plateau: Pat's Perspective

If the past few years have taught us anything, it's this: real estate on the plateau is resilient – but it evolves.

As we move through 2026, we're seeing thoughtful shifts in the Highlands, Cashiers, and surrounding Plateau markets. While national headlines often focus on volatility, our mountain market continues to operate with its own rhythm – driven by lifestyle, legacy, and long-term investment.

Here are the trends we're seeing locally:

1. Stability Over Frenzy

The intense bidding wars of 2021–2022 have softened. Buyers are more measured, more analytical, and more selective. That doesn't mean demand has disappeared. It means we're in a healthier, more balanced market. Well-priced homes in desirable locations – particularly those with updated finishes and strong views – are still moving steadily.

2. Luxury Buyers Are Intentional

The Plateau has always attracted luxury buyers seeking privacy, beauty, and community.

Today's buyers are looking for move-in ready properties and low maintenance mountain retreats. Legacy estates and generational properties remain especially attractive.

3. Inventory Is Improving –Slightly

We are seeing a modest increase in inventory compared to the tightest years of the pandemic surge. However, quality inventory remains limited. This creates opportunity: Sellers who price correctly are still commanding attention.

Recently, I noticed two homes that I felt initially to be over-priced and when the prices dropped, they went under contract in three days.

Our responsibility as brokers is to study the market daily, so we know market values.

I've also noticed luxury homes selling for \$1-2 million less than listing prices. Sellers deserve an accurate evaluation from the listing broker from day one...not to have to shift to a reasonable price after sitting on the market for months. That also creates an inaccurate balance of list to sell ratio in our MLS. Buyers should have a broker who totally understands trends and inaccuracies that can help them comprehend values and negotiate an accurate sales price.



Pat Allen, BIC
Pat Allen Realty Group
pat@patallenrealtygroup.com

racies that can help them comprehend values and negotiate an accurate sales price..

4. Interest Rates Are a Factor — But Not a Barrier

Rates are no longer at historic lows, although lowered again this week, and buyers are adjusting expectations. However, many Plateau purchases are either cash or large down-payment transactions, which cushions our market from extreme

fluctuations. Serious buyers are still buying. Instead of money in the stock market fluctuating creating nervousness daily a wise investment here in property allows a relaxing way to enjoy life while allowing your investment and equity to grow.

5. Local Expertise Matters More Than Ever

In a shifting market, strategy is everything.

Pricing correctly from the beginning. Understanding neighborhood differences.

Uncluttering and simple staging increase value.

Knowing which homes will show well seasonally.

Marketing with intention – not just putting a sign in the yard.

In a community like ours, relationships and reputation still matter.

The Bottom Line

Real estate on the Plateau has never been about quick flips or short-term speculation.

It's about lifestyle.

It's about legacy.

It's about finding the right place to breathe and relax.

As we move through 2026, we're seeing a return to thoughtful decision-making – and that's a good thing for everyone.

It's not a "buyer's market" or a "seller's market." It's becoming a strategic market.

• Pat Allen is owner and Broker-in-Charge of Pat Allen Realty Group, a *bonDque* and privately owned firm with 22 years' experience as an award-winning and top producer on the plateau.

She and her daughter, Julie Osborn, remain in the top 1.5% of all agents and teams nationwide. She may be reached at pat@patallenrealtygroup.com or 828-200-9179.

...HFW continued from page 1

of the event and suggested relocating the event out of the confined Main Street area to a place that can accommodate crowds and where law enforcement and EMS can act quickly and effectively.

“The Highlands Police Department believes the HF&W event can continue to thrive but only in a location that prioritizes safety for attendees, residents and businesses,” she said.

However, according to Jack Austin, president of Highlands Festivals, Inc that sponsored the event since the appeal of the weekend was built around an elevated, multi-event itinerary, with the Main Event as the centerpiece, moving the Saturday event wasn't a viable option.

“For both financial considerations and attendee experience, eliminating or relocating the Saturday event was not an option. For now, at least, the exciting construction projects underway downtown limit appealing and usable space for the festival. And at this point in our planning process, with the new guidelines from Town leadership redefining the Saturday event in time for a 2026 festival is unfeasible,” he said.

During discussions between Highlands Events and the Town, stipulations were laid out regarding ingress and egress which hampered the footprint of Saturday's event.

“The footprint and logistics required to produce Highlands Food & Wine in the way our guests and partners have come to expect have now meaningfully shifted and are beyond our control,” said Austin.

Austin said the four-day November festival quickly grew into a signature regional event, generating millions of dollars in economic impact over the past decade while supporting local businesses, hospitality partners and the Plateau community transforming downtown High-

lands into an immersive culinary and music experience.

“From the beginning, a world-class, intimate and elevated experience was the goal. Rather than alter that formula in ways that would compromise its character, after much thoughtful consideration, we believe it is the right time to close this chapter with gratitude and pride.”

Austin said over its decade-long history, Highlands Food & Wine welcomed thousands of guests annually, introduced visitors to local restaurants and merchants, generated measurable tourism impact and contributed more than \$238,500 to charitable partners. Beneficiaries included the Culinary Institute of America's Louis Osteen Scholarship, The Bascom: Center for Visual Arts, Friends of Founders Park, Highlands Food Pantry, Highlands Emergency Council and numerous other regional nonprofits.

The festival's board and organizers express deep appreciation for the Highlands Chamber of Commerce, chefs, beverage partners, sponsors, musicians, volunteers, crew members and community supporters who helped shape the festival's success.

“We are incredibly proud of what Highlands Food & Wine accomplished over ten years and the legacy it leaves behind,” Austin added. “The festival became one of the most coveted tickets in the Southeast: it became a must-stop for A-list talent and a much-anticipated annual tradition for ticketholders. It created memories, fostered friendships and showcased the very best of this community.”

There are no plans to resurrect the festival elsewhere.

“Highlands Food & Wine was created specifically for the Highlands community and Plateau setting. As it stands, there are no current plans to relocate. We are proud of what it achieved here over the last ten years,” said Austin.

Sign up now for Chamber's 'Small Business Series'

The Highlands Chamber of Commerce/Visit Highlands, NC is teaming up with Southwestern Community College's Small Business Center to present a FREE Lunch and Learn workshop series to equip local business owners with practical digital skills and fresh creative tools.

Each session is designed to provide clear guidance, actionable takeaways, and opportunities for participants to ask questions specific to their own businesses.

March 18:

Google Business Profile

This class will guide you step-by-step through setting up and optimizing your profile to attract more local customers, boost your visibility in search results, and build trust with your audience. Register: <https://www.ncsbc.net/reg.aspx?mode=event&event=490460042>

April 15: Canva

This hands-on Canva class teaches you how to easily design eye-catching marketing materials, social media posts, and more. Learn tips and tricks to customize templates, use fonts and colors ef-

fectively, and produce professional visuals that make your brand shine – all without needing any prior design experience.

Register: <https://www.ncsbc.net/reg.aspx?mode=event&event=490460043>

May 20: Artificial Intelligence

This introductory class explores the ways artificial intelligence can streamline tasks, improve decision-making, and boost productivity. From chatbots to data analysis, discover practical AI tools you can start using today to work smarter, save time, and gain a competitive edge in your industry. Register: <https://www.ncsbc.net/reg.aspx?mode=event&event=490460044>

The workshops are FREE and open to the public 11:30am to 1pm at the Highlands Community Building, 849 N 4th Street. Advance registration is required. Bring their own lunch – beverages and light refreshments will be provided by the Chamber.

For additional information, call the Highlands Chamber of Commerce/Visit Highlands, NC at 828-526-5841.



Introducing
Massage Therapist
Vickie Franco to Highlands



LMBT # 20596

Call now
to book your service.

Offering

- Traditional Swedish Massage
- Deep Lymph Flushing Massage

Specializing in:

- Craniosacral Therapy
- Myofascial Release Therapy

322 Main St • Highlands
828-482-1112

JULIE VOS

T H M L

NEW SEASON SS'24 shop new arrivals

Modern MTN Life
Books • Gifts • Her • Home

142 Hwy 107 Cashiers, NC • 828-743-8030
Open Year Round Mon-Sat 10-5

HIGHLANDS DINING

HIGHLANDS BURRITO

Tuck into Tasty Mexican Favorites & the Best Margaritas in Highlands

Host your next party at Highlands Burrito for birthdays, game days & more!

CALL 828-526-9313 TO BOOK

 **DINE IN OR TAKE IT TO GO**
226 South 4th Street, Highlands, NC



Open Mon.-Sat. 11a to 8p • Sun. 11a to 7p

Closed Tuesdays

828.526.3554

595 Franklin Rd. Highlands, NC

The Secret Garden

Sandwich shop and gourmet food market

Open Year-Round

Mon.-Fri. 11:30a to 4p

Sat., noon-4

Call (828) 305-7509 to place a pick-up order.

Catering and Custom Charcuterie

Courtyard and Indoor seating!



208 N. 5th St. • Village Square • Next to Pine St. Park

The Ruffed Grouse Tavern at Highlander Mountain House

Open for

LUNCH

Wednesday-Saturday

11:30-3p

Open for

DINNER

Wednesday-Saturday

5:30-9p

Open for

SUNDAY BRUNCH

with Blue Grass music

10a-3p



290 Main Street • Highlands • 828-526-2590
highlandermountainhouse.com

A HIGHLANDER MOUNTAIN HOUSE HOTEL

OUTPOST INN



Now serving wine,
beer & coffee!
Open to the public!



Coffee Bar 8a to 4p daily
Wine/Beer Bar:
Thurs-Sat 5-10p

790 North 4th Street, Highlands | info@outpostinnhighlands.com | 828-482-7776

DON LEON'S

Empanadas • Tequenos • Roasted Chicken
Gyro • Salads • Pitas • Burgers • Philly Cheese
Steak • Susan's Rueben • Italian Sausage
Appalachian Fries • Onion Rings
Shrimp Gumbo • Soups, and more!

Open

Breakfast: 7-10a

Lunch: 11a-3p

Dinner:

Thurs., Fri., & Sat. 5-8p

828-482-1513

462 Dillard Road, Highlands
(across from Dusty's)



WILD THYME GOURMET RESTAURANT

Serving Lunch and Dinner Year-Round
Gourmet Foods & Full Service Bar
Town Square at 343-D Main St. • Highlands



Open 6 Days

Closed Wednesdays

Lunch: 11a-3:30p

Dinner:

5:30p - closed

No Dinner Sundays

Fall into Dusty's
828-526-2762

**ENTERTAINING
MADE EASY**

Steaks, Chicken, Pork, Lamb

Butcher Specials

Fresh Produce

Sides and Entrees

Appetizers

Deli Salads

Fresh Bakery Items

Sandwiches

Wine & THC/CBC

Toys & Gifts

493 DILLARD ROAD

Magliocca's Ristorante

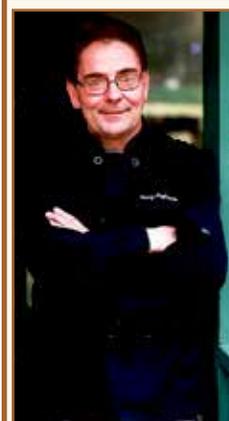
Classic Italian dishes,
thoughtfully prepared with
the finest ingredients
reflecting the heart and soul
of Italian cuisine.

Dining Hours

Thursday - Saturday

5pm - close

BYOB



Chef Danny Magliocca

828-526-0803

20 Old Mud Creek Road
Scaly Mountain, NC

• OBITUARY •

Joseph K. (Jodie) Cook



Joseph K. (Jodie) Cook was born on April 10, 1946, in Dallas, TX. to the late Mimi Platter Cook Carrere and the late Maxwell Joseph Cook. Mimi Platter was a highly rated pilot in the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP's) who taught men combat bomber techniques. Maxwell Joseph (Joe) Cook was a highly decorated navigator having seen combat duty in B-17 bombers in the South Pacific during WWII and was also an instructor at the Great Bend Army Air Corp training base.

After getting married Mimi and Joe Cook soon moved to Dallas, Texas. Jodie Cook would be born in Dallas where his parents were adjusting to a post WWII United States. After Jodie's birth, Mimi and Joe Cook moved to Jackson, MS where Mimi's father was a cotton broker. Jodie's sister, Janet Cook, was born there as were twins Nancy Clare Cook and Kenneth Henry Cook.

The Cook family then moved to Atlanta when Jodie was four. Jodie had trouble staying kindergarten because he already knew how to read and consequently was kicked out of two kindergarten schools

In Atlanta twins, Andrew Michael Cook and Christopher James Cook as well as sister Laura Van Every Cook were born, which made Jodie the eldest of seven children.

Jodie attended the Christ the King parochial school in Atlanta through 7th grade, then Marist College, a military all boys Atlanta high school, graduating in 1964. He would next attend the Georgia Institute of Technology.

At Georgia Tech he received a degree in Chemistry with a minor in Mathematics and Philosophy of Science.

For several years at Tech, he received compensation from the Philosophy of Science department working for several of its professors. He was a member of the Phi Delta Theta Fraternity and worked as a waiter at the Atlanta Lion's Head restaurant, a popular restaurant owned by two GA. Tech grads who would only have GA Tech students as waiters. Jodie also had several other part-time jobs which allowed him to pay his way through GA. Tech.

In 1970 he would marry Mary Morrison, and they would have two children: Joseph Kendall Cook, Jr. and Mary Mc-

Donough Cook.

After graduating from GA. Tech, Jodie worked for several chemical companies, among them were Curtin Scientific, Westvaco Corp. and DSM Chemicals. The latter was from 1975 to 1985 in Augusta, GA. In November of 1975 and prior to moving to Augusta, Jodie and Caroline Abbott would marry in Atlanta at St. Luke's Episcopal Church.

In Augusta, both Caroline and Jodie taught and coached a neighborhood swimming team and participated in other community projects.

In 1985 Jodie left DSM Chemicals and started Highlands Chemical which had the 'Highlands' name because it was at Caroline's parents' vacation home in Highlands where he decided to start his own company: Highlands Chemical. In the early 1990's they began a remodeling/restoration of the Highlands 'Abbott' house and moved there in 1997.

BioCat Solutions was established by Mr. Cook and Jim Harris to produce an extract from kelp through a process developed by Mr. Cook This extract would be sold to water treatment plants to accelerate biological purification of wastewater. Later the product was sold as a septic tank treatment and used in other ways. Mr. Cook eventually became the sole owner.

In the late 1990's Jodie became a member of the Rotary Club of Highlands. Rotary would be focal point of his life for many years. He was president from 2010 - 2011, the year the club was named the Best Large Club

in the District. He started Highlands Rotary Bingo and took the game to the District meeting a few years later. Jodie loved cars, especially Jaguars and was a part of Highlands Rotary and its involvement in the Highlands Motoring Festival. He served as Assistant Governor for 5 years. Then he held two positions in District - Publicity Chairman and Project Development.

Jodie served on the Blue Ridge Dental Clinic Board. He helped to facilitate the NC Mom 3-day event with the Highlands Rotary and the Dental Clinic at Western Carolina University,

Jodie helped start the Upper Cullasaja Water Association with Bob Wright. He was Treasurer and President of UCWA. He served on the Macon County Watershed Association. Jodie served as President of the Peggy Crosby Center. He became a tutor for the Literacy Council of Highlands. Initially, Jodie tutored those who were not doing well in Math courses and Chemistry. Later he began to tutor juniors and seniors at the Highlands School in college courses in various Math and Chemistry classes. He even taught himself college Statistics to tutor one student. He served as President of the Literacy Council. He was a proud member of the Church of the Incarnation in Highlands, NC.

He is survived by his wife of 50 years, Caroline Abbott Cook. His son Joseph Kendall I(Kendall) Cook and his granddaughter Adeline Cook. His daughter Mary (Mimi) McDonough Cook. His siblings, Janet von Schuschnigg, Nancy Carley (Steve), Chris Cook, Van Burns (Rick) and Sasha Tatasciore.

A Memorial Service will be held 11:00 AM, Saturday, March 21, 2026, at the Episcopal Church of the Incarnation in Highlands, NC.

Memorials may be made to Highlands Literacy and Learning Center, the Church of the Incarnation or Marist School Atlanta, GA.

Many thanks to 4 Seasons Care/Hospice who helped Caroline care for Jodie the last few weeks.

Online condolences may be made at www.bryant-grantfuneralhome.com.

Bryant-Grant Funeral Home is honored to serve the Cook family.

• DINING •

Open for our 37th Season



Open Tuesday - Saturday

Dinner Starts @ 5:30 PM

Serving Easter Brunch 11 AM - 2 PM

Outdoor Dining / Dine-In Art Gallery / lakesiderestaurant.info



531 Smallwood Ave. | 828-526-9419 | Highlands

...ELECTION continued from page 1

eral election for the District 1 seat.

District two saw a crowded republican primary with four candidates running for a chance to represent the Republican party in November's general election. The top two unofficial winners in the primary were Kellie Burns with 30.79 percent of the vote followed by Dylan Castle with 25.75 percent. Burns received 3,281 votes with Castle receiving 2,744 votes.

Both candidates will face democrats Janet Jacobs Greene and Terry Bell in the November general election to replace the open District 2 commissioners seats replac-

ing Commissioners Gary Shields and Danny Antoine who both chose not to seek reelection.

Former Franklin Town Council Member David Culpepper was third receiving 18.81 percent with 2,005 votes followed by Macon County Sheriff's Office Captain Nick Lofthouse with 18.30 percent (1,950 votes). Danny Reitmeier who dropped out of the race earlier but still appeared on the ballot received 6.35 percent (677 votes).

Results will become official after the county canvass to be held on Friday, March 13 at 3 p.m.

• LETTER •

Which version of America will survive?

Dear Editor,

The following excerpt was taken from a weekly newsletter that I get from Maria Shriver, the niece of President Kennedy. I wanted to share her timely thoughts with you as we begin the work of electing the Democratic candidates that won the March 3rd election.

“If you are reading the stories day after day about how Trump is destroy-

ing our Republic with his actions, you are probably not feeling very optimistic about this great country. On the one hand, you see our President encouraging protesters to stand up in Venezuela and Iran and to stand down in American cities. You read completely different accounts of the facts and the truth from reporters on the ground and from government spokespeople. It’s dizzying. And

it is scary.

Just over a year ago, this president was sworn in. What a tumultuous year it has been. DOGE took a wrecking ball to the government, USAID was dismantled, and HHS has been turned upside down. Landmark buildings have been renamed and remade in the image of this president, millions have lost health insurance, and the press has been struggling as this

President is suing every network in sight.

The world is watching. All are asking: Which version of America will survive? Will it be the America that wielded power to help people or the America that hoards power, protects the ultra-wealthy, and fears the strength of the many? Which America will it be? It is up to us! This is not a moment for spectators. This is a moment for engaged, informed, brave citizens. Our real hope is not the absence of threats but the presence of resilience. It will take the gifts from all of us to help the right version of America survive. Great societies fall when the people inside grow weary, feel powerless, and close their eyes. And great societies are reborn when ordinary people realize: This is our moment to rise.

On November 22, 1963, my uncle, President John F. Kennedy, was scheduled to give a speech. He never got the chance. But these are the words he intended to say: “There will always be dissident voices heard in the land, expressing opposition without alternatives, finding fault but never favor, perceiving gloom on every side, and seeking influence without responsibility. The voices are inevitable. But we can hope that fewer people will listen to nonsense. So let us not be petty when our cause is so great. Let us not quarrel amongst ourselves when our Nation’s future is at stake. Let us stand together with renewed confidence in our cause, united in our heritage of the past and our hope for the future and determined that this land we love shall lead all mankind into new frontiers of peace and abundance.”

We can be an unstoppable force for good. Are you with me?” -- Maria Shriver

Let’s protect our Republic. As Maria Shriver said, this is not the time to be an observer, sitting on the sidelines.

Linda Arnold
Chair Highlands Democratic Precinct

Read Highlands Newspaper for free from everywhere ... on the street or on the web. Go to www.highlandsinfo.com. Click on Local News. Delivered and Uploaded every Thurs.AM

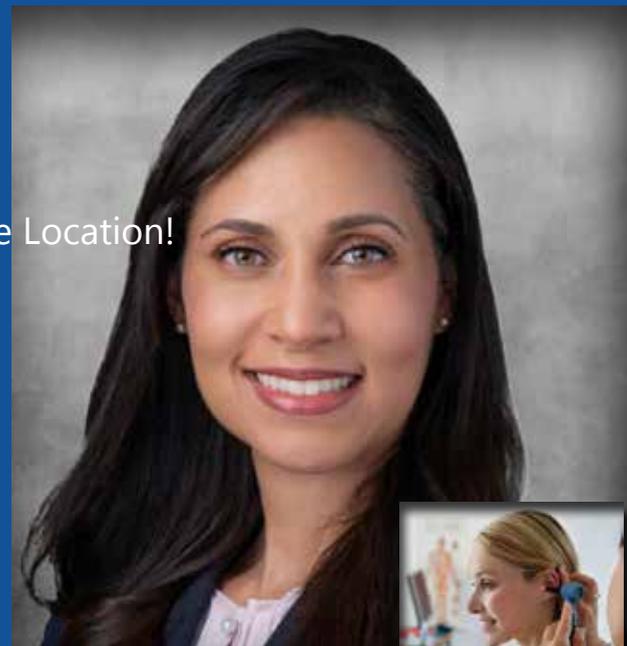


MOUNTAIN LAKES
MEDICAL CENTER
162 Legacy Point Clayton, GA 30525

Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT)

Audiology Care

All in One Location!



Dr. Keith Jackson, MD, ENT
Emory University and
Medical College of Georgia

Dr. Erica McVey, Audiologist
University of Texas



Contact: (706) 782-0478

CONNECT



www.mountainlakesmedicalcenter.com / www.mlmphysiciansgroup.com

...APPLICANTS continued from page 5

What qualifies you to be a Town Board commissioner?

My work-life experience uniquely qualifies me to serve on the Town Board as commissioner. I have years of experience serving as president of a large quasi-governmental sector homeowners association. This role required me to manage multi-million-dollar budgets while allocating funding for infrastructure improvements, architectural consistency, community enrichment, security/safety upgrades, updating documents, community bylaws, and town festivals. As part of my budget planning, a strong reserve fund was created after physical and financial analyses were completed. A large part of my responsibility was directed toward balancing the needs of the local residents and short-term rentals. This issue is one of the most complex challenges in community government.

Also, in Atlanta I was a 30-employee business owner of two outpatient rehabilitation centers for injured workers. I was appointed by the governor to chair the Georgia Worker's Compensation Blue Ribbon Committee. This involved working with major insurance companies' VPs, risk management experts, and attorneys during the tort reform era. I worked as a lobbyist during tort reform and was known for my ability to bring opposing parties together at the table. As a result of my success, the governor further appointed me to serve on the start-up license board for professional counselors.

I have served in many non-profit organizations, including as president of the Humane Society of Bay County and on numerous committees to raise funds for the American Heart Association, Kids Chance, Big Brothers Big Sisters, and Hospice. Under my direction and with the support of the community, the Humane Society became a no-kill shelter.

Locals matter. With this firmly in mind, I will be a good steward. I will listen to our citizens' concerns and work together to find balanced solutions to the issues that confront us.

What measures could the town take to better support the businesses and working community?

Locals must know that they matter. As Highlands grows, locals and small businesses increasingly feel pushed out. Highlands is at a crucial crossroads between something it was never meant to

be and protecting what has always been special. I support regular Town Board meetings to determine the concerns of our residents, working community, and business owners and to devise the best solutions to our challenges.

Workforce housing must be a priority. A public-private partnership would be a start. With some state legislative tenacity, the Town may be able to allocate part of occupancy tax dollars for workforce housing. Tourism should sustain the system it depends on.

Infrastructure/impact studies are crucial. Decisions made for the Town of Highlands should not be based on assumed impacts or pressure from developers.

Some zoning codes unintentionally block small/local enterprises. A zoning rules study committee should be appointed to advise the town commission on more efficient zoning that is fair for all.

What can the Town Board do to ensure that Highlands is a viable town for all -- working people and parents, children in the K-12 school, tourists, 2nd homeowners, retirees?

For Highlands to be viable for all, the Town Board must first address the concerns, needs and priorities of all residents and businesses. Each board member should be assigned the task of community outreach through meetings with parents, businesses, retirees, and tourists to listen to their concerns. Each board member would report their findings. Locals must be included, not excluded. Highlands is blessed with some brilliant minds. It is time we tap into these valuable resources and ask for their help. This is a great way for our Town Board to stay connected to the community.

Do you think the Planning and Zoning board members are getting the training needed to understand the ramifications of their decisions?

As an alternate member of the Highlands Zoning Board, I can answer "No." Board members should be required to go through training and education to understand their role and to ensure that decisions are legally defensible and based on fact, not assumption.

Do you think the board should solicit the general assembly to change the occupancy tax from 3% to 6% so 3% of those proceeds can go to the town to offset tourist-related infrastructure and service needs?

• See APPLICANTS page 15




BROWN BAG Lunch + Learn SESSIONS



Google Business Profile

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18 | 11:30AM - 1PM

Highlands Community Center, 869 N 4th St

Learn how to optimize your profile to:

- Attract Customers
- Build Trust
- Boost Search Visibility
- Grow Your Business



Class, beverages and snacks provided by The Highlands Chamber of Commerce, in partnership with Southwestern Community College Small Business Center.



Open to all.
Scan for
Registration.



Mark your calendar for upcoming classes!

APRIL 15

Canva



MAY 20

A.I.



Highlanders post-season wrap-up: Grit, thrillers, and deep playoff runs

It was a postseason of high drama for Highlands High School basketball. From buzzer-beating layups to dominant defensive displays and deep state playoff runs, the Highlanders left everything on the hardwood this winter.

Boys Basketball: A Thriller at the Dam

The Varsity Boys' conference tournament started with an instant classic against Nantahala. In a game that saw a 27-27 halftime deadlock and a one-point deficit heading into the final frame, the closing seconds defined the Highlanders' season.

With the game tied and under 30 seconds remaining, Coach Bishop called a timeout to orchestrate a final strike. The execution was clinical: Jayven Alverado found Paolo McRae, who drove the lane before hitting a cutting Chase Kenter for the go-ahead layup. A final defensive stand secured the 58-56 victory.

- Isaiah Vilardo: 16 points;

Paolo McRae: 12 points, 7 rebounds; Chase Kenter: 10 points, 7 rebounds

The win propelled Highlands to the Championship game against Hiwassee Dam. Despite a slow start that saw them trailing 38-14 at the half, the Highlanders refused to quit, outscoring the Eagles in the second half before falling 62-55. Bryan Jarquin put on a scoring clinic in the effort, racking up 25 points.

State Playoffs & Season Farewells

The boys hosted North Stokes in the first round of the NCHSAA State Playoffs. In typical Highlander fashion, they battled back from an early deficit to pull within four points with two minutes left. However, a potential momentum-shifting three-pointer wouldn't fall, and the season ended with a hard-fought 58-63 loss.

The boys finish the season 8-18. We extend a massive thank you to our



Brett Lamb
Highlands School
Athletic Director

seniors for their years of dedication: Bryan Jarquin, Aiden Crook-Jenkins, Paolo McRae, and Isaiah Vilardo.

Girls Basketball: A Historic Run to the Third Round
While the Lady Highlanders fell early in the conference tournament to Summit (32-17), they saved their best basketball for the state stage.

Dominance in the Opening Rounds

Highlanders opened the NCHSAA playoffs by dismantling Triad Math and Science Academy. A massive 43-10 halftime lead turned into a defensive masterclass in the third quarter, where the Highlanders held TMSA to zero points. The reserves saw significant action in the 59-16 win.

- Charlotte Westendorf: 15 points; Hunter Conner: 10 points, 12 rebounds, 7 steals; Jordyn Borino: 10 points

In the second round, the ladies traveled to Clover Garden School. After a tight first quarter, the defense locked down, allowing only 2 points in the second quarter. Hunter Conner delivered a historic performance, recording her fourth triple-double of the

season with a career-high 27 points, 14 rebounds, and 10 blocks in the 59-38 victory.

The Road Ends at the Dam

For the first time since the 2021-'22 season, the Lady Highlanders advanced to the third round. Facing conference rival Hiwassee Dam for the third time this year, Highlands battled to a 25-22 halftime score. However, a cold stretch in the third quarter proved too much to overcome, resulting in a 56-41 loss.

The Lady Highlanders finish an impressive season at 16-11. A heartfelt thank you to our seniors: Hunter Conner, Heidi Doerter, Lillian Rutter, and Anne Elizabeth Woods.

Final Box Scores – 3rd Round

Player	Points	Notable Stats
Jordyn Borino	12	5 steals
Hunter Conner	11	9 blocks, 7 rebounds
Charlotte Westendorf	9	-
Anabelle Hays	7	-

With the winter season officially in the books, the focus shifts to the fields and tracks as Spring Sports begin this week. Go Highlanders!

COUNSELING SERVICES OFFERED IN CASHIERS



Tracy Franklin

Tracy Franklin is now seeing clients at Church of the Good Shepherd in Cashiers.

Counseling space is graciously provided through our non-profit partnership with Church of the Good Shepherd.

(LMCH) Tracy enjoys working with teens and adults and is trained in EMDR and specializes in Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), helping clients improve communication and reduce anxiety, sadness and loneliness through altered thinking patterns.

info@counseling-center.org

828-482-7417

counseling-center.org

Offices in Highlands and Cashiers



The Counseling Center strives to strengthen families and individuals by providing access to quality mental health services, regardless of financial ability.



Varsity Girls win at Clover Garden last Thursday.

We Locals



Call 866.526.8008 to Book Special Perks

Sundays - Thursdays. Now through March 2026. Excludes holidays.


HALF-MILE
FARM

OLD 
EDWARDS
INN *and Spa*

SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING

An invitation to a Holy Lent

Rev. Kirkland "Skully" Knight

The Episcopal Church of the incarnation



Dear People of God: The first Christians observed with great devotion the days of our Lord's passion and resurrection, and it became the custom of the Church to prepare for them by a season of penitence and fasting. This season of Lent provided a time in which converts to the faith were prepared for Holy Baptism. It was also a time when those who, because of notorious sins, had been separated from the body of the faithful were reconciled by penitence and forgiveness, and restored to the fellowship of the Church. Thereby, the whole congregation was put in mind of the message of pardon and absolution set forth in the Gospel of our Savior, and of the need which all Christians continually have to renew their repentance and faith.

I invite you, therefore, in the name of the Church, to the observance of a Holy Lent, by self examination and repentance; by prayer, fasting, and self denial; and by reading and meditating on God's Holy Word. And, to make a right beginning of repentance, and as a mark of our mortal nature, let us now kneel before the Lord, our maker and redeemer.

(From the Ash Wednesday liturgy; p. 264-265, The Book of Common Prayer)

The word "lent" actually doesn't have anything to do with fasting or repentance. It is connected to words that mean "spring" or "lengthening of days," but the season of Lent has come to be synonymous with "prayer, fasting, and self-denial" as we read above. Because of this, there can be a tendency to focus on our shortcomings, our failures, and ways we feel that we might disappoint God. But the opening collect, or prayer of the Ash Wednesday liturgy starts with these words, "Almighty and everlasting God, you hate nothing you have made and forgive the sins of all who are penitent."

We can get down on ourselves during Lent if we're not careful. We can dwell on our sinfulness and start to allow ourselves to think that God desires our (or their) punishment. But it's the opposite that's true. God loves us and simply wants us to repent. Return. God wants us to come home. God desperately wants to forgive us and welcome us back into God's loving arms — the arms of the one who made us and remembers how fragile we are, even when we forget.

We spend so much time and energy trying to be perfect. Not make mistakes. Not show any weakness. On the one hand, it's futile and ridiculous. And on the other, it's exhausting. The season of Lent is a time to stop kidding ourselves and thinking that we can do everything on our own. It's a time to be honest with God

• See **SPIRITUALLY** page 18

PLACES TO WORSHIP

BLUE VALLEY BAPTIST CHURCH

Rev. Oliver Rice. Pastor 706-782-3965

Sundays: School: 10 a.m.; Worship: 11

Sunday night services every 2nd & 4th Sunday at 7

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

BUCK CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH

828-269-3546 • Rev. Jamie Passmore. Pastor

Sundays: School: 10 a.m.; Worship: 11

CASHIERS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Rev. Aryn Williams-Reubel. Pastor 828-743-5298

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

GRACE CHAPEL ON HIGH HOLLY

9615 Dillard Rd Scaly Mountain, N.C.

Pastor Steve Kerhoulas. <http://www.Graceonhighholly.com>

Sunday School 9:45; Worship 11; Prayer Service Wed 5:30p

Men's and Women's Bible Study throughout the week

CHRIST ANGLICAN CHURCH

The Rev'd Dr. Marc Robertson & Rev. Nick McGee

464 U.S. Hwy. 64E, Cashiers, NC

CAC@christanglicancashiers.org • 828-743-1701

Sunday: Adult Christian Ed, 9:15a; Holy Eucharist, 10:30a;

Fellowship 11:45a; Wed: Bible Study/Contemplative Prayer, 5p

CHRIST CHURCH OF THE VALLEY, CASHIERS

Pastor Jacob Tedder • jacob@cashiers.church • 743-5470

www.cashiers.church

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

CLEAR CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH

Pastor Jim Kinar

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

Bistro

EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF THE INCARNATION

Rev. W. Bentley Manning, Rector • 526-2968

5th and Main streets • www.incarnationwnc.org

Sunday: Rite I, spoken, 8 am in Chapel, Rite II with Choir 10:30

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

Morning Prayer: Mon-Thurs 8:30 am in Chapel

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH HIGHLANDS

828-526-4153 • www.fbchighlands.org

Dr. Mark Ford, Pastor • 220 Main Street, Highlands

Sun.: Worship 10:45 am; Sun.: Bible Study 9:30 am

Wed.: Men's Bible Study 8:30 am; Women's 10:30 am

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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

828-526-3175 • fpchighlands.org

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

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

GOLDMINE BAPTIST CHURCH

(Off Franklin/Highlands Rd)

Sunday School: 10 am. Worship Service: 11 am

GRACE COMMUNITY CHURCH OF CASHIERS

Non-Denominational-Contemporary Worship

242 Hwy 107N. 1/4 miles from Crossroads in Cashiers

www.gracecashiers.com • Pastor Steve Doerter 743-9814

Services: Sundays 10am - Wed. - 7pm; Dinner - Wed. 6pm

HAMBURG BAPTIST CHURCH

Hwy 107N. • Glenville. NC • 743-2729 • Nathan Johnson

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

Wed. Kidsquest 6p.; Worship 7p.

HIGHLANDS ASSEMBLY OF GOD

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

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

HIGHLANDS CENTRAL BAPTIST CHURCH

Pastor Dan Robinson • 11339 Buck Creek Road

The Highlands Central Baptist Church is temporarily

sharing the facilities of the Shortoff Baptist Church.

Sunday Worship is at 9a. & 6p. Wednesday Worship is 6p

HIGHLANDS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Rev. Dr. Randy Lucas. Pastor 526-3376

In-Person and live-streamed Worship Services

909a Bluegrass and 11a Traditional

www.highlandsmethodist.org

HOLY FAMILY LUTHERAN CHURCH: ELCA

2152 Dillard Road • 526-9741

Rev. Ken 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.

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

Kippur.

MOUNTAIN BIBLE CHURCH

743-2583 • Independent Bible Church

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

(4.5 miles from NC 107)

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

OUR LADY OF THE MOUNTAINS

CATHOLIC CHURCH

Rev. Fr. Jason K. Barone — 526-2418

Sat. 4pm 5/24/25-10/25/25; Sun. - 11am

SCALY MOUNTAIN BAPTIST CHURCH

Rev. Marty Kilby

Sundays: School — 10 a.m.; Worship — 11 a.m. & 7

Wednesdays: Prayer Mtg.: 7 p.m.

SCALY MOUNTAIN CHURCH OF GOD

290 Buck Knob Road; Pastor Donald G. Bates • 526-3212

Sun.: School: 10 a.m.; Worship: 10:45 a.m.; Worship: 6 p.m.

SHORTOFF BAPTIST CHURCH

Pastor Rev. Richard Salmonson

Sundays: School: 10 a.m.; Worship: 11 a.m.

ST. JUDE'S CATHOLIC CHURCH

Mass: Sun. 9a (English); Mon. 9:30a (Vatican II in Latin); Tues.

7p (Spanish); Wed., 9:30a (English)

THE CHURCH OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD

1448 Highway 107 S.. Office: • 743-2359 • Rev. Rob Wood

Sunday Service (summer): 9am & 11am

Visit our website: www.goodshepherdofcashiers.com

Our Bazaar Barn supports outreach in the community.

Open Fri & Sat. 11am-3pm

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP

85 Sierra Drive. Franklin • ufranklin.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 Feb. 27. Only the names of persons arrested, issued a summons/citation, issued a Class-3 misdemeanor or those of public officials have been used.

Feb. 27

- **ACCIDENT:** Vehicle 1

...APPLICANTS continued from page 11

I support increasing the occupancy tax if the funds can be used for infrastructure and for additional first-responders services. This will require the board to demonstrate that expenditures are related to tourism. This is where an impact study could be valuable to justify the division of funds collected. As of February 2026, the North Carolina Supreme Court is reviewing cases to clarify what qualifies as tourism-related spending.

Margot Teed

What qualifies you to be a Town Board commissioner?

From local political campaigns to seven years as Zoning Board Chairman to managing a busy retail store on the plateau, I've talked to hundreds of people about the quality of life here. I've worked with the Town's legal team, the staff at Town Hall, several board members, and I have a working understanding of our policies, procedures and ordinances. Being ready to go on day one might be helpful in this abbreviated term.

What measures could the town take to better support the businesses and working community?

This town has a wealth of knowledge and talent waiting to be tapped. We need fresh ideas to effectively manage growth while preserving the things that brought us all to Highlands in the first place. A liaison committee with members from the Town, the Chamber, and resi-

was stopped at the intersection of Mirror Lake Road and US 64. Vehicle 2 was traveling East on US 64. Vehicle 2 began to turn left onto Mirror Lake Road. Vehicle 1 pulled out to turn left onto US 64 hitting Vehicle 1 in the intersection. Both vehicles came to a stop at a driveway and contacted law

dents together could help frame goals, generate new ideas, identify issues and find solutions.

What can the Town Board do to ensure that Highlands is a viable town for all -- working people and parents, children in the K-12 school, tourists, 2nd homeowners, retirees?

The current trajectory of tourism in Highlands may not be sustainable. Is our vision a retreat town or a tourist town and does the Comprehensive Plan align with that vision? Viable towns have clear ordinances that are applied and enforced equally. When we improve that, all stakeholders will benefit.

Do you think the Planning and Zoning board members are getting the training needed to understand the ramifications of their decisions?

The Zoning Board interprets ordinances to the best of their ability and always with legal counsel. Much like traditional juries the job requires hearing cases without prior prejudice and reaching an outcome based solely on information presented at each hearing. Appeals of ZBA decisions only get heard in Superior Court and I support the right of anyone to seek that. As for the Planning Board, they are advisory in nature and their decisions are non-binding recommendations so there are no "ramifications."

Do you think the board should solicit the general assembly to change the occupancy tax from 3% to 6% so

enforcement.

- Officers issued 10 citations and 2 warning tickets Feb. 23-March 1.

The Highlands Fire & Rescue log from Feb. 25 Feb. 25

- At 7:26 a.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Pinecrest Road.

3% of those proceeds can go to the town to offset tourist-related infrastructure and service needs?

This question can't be answered in a vacuum because it's intricately tied to sources and uses of funds, budgets, and future forecasts. If a future tax increase is necessary, it should not fall solely on our property owners but rather shared by the groups stressing our infrastructure and services. The option of an increase should be on the table, but we need to know more before an informed decision can be made. What does state law allow occupancy tax funds to be used for?

What are other towns in NC using their occupancy tax funds for? Franklin has chosen a 3% occupancy tax but what would be appropriate for Highlands? Maybe we could join the League of Municipalities to lobby for a statewide set of standards that allow for defined expenditures for infrastructure and services. Maybe Visit Highlands could solicit a change in their organizational format to allow for some of their receipts to be used to offset tourist-related services. There is a lot to be explored here.

The Special Called Meeting at 3 p.m. in the Community Building is open to the public. The person chosen to fill the seat will be sworn in at the March 19 Town Board meeting and will complete Dotson's term until the 2027 municipal election.

- At 8:13 a.m., the dept. provided public assistance at a location on US 64 east (Cashiers Road).

- At 11:30 a.m., the dept. provided public assistance at a location on US 64 east (Cashiers Road).

- At 1:07 p.m., the dept. investigated the cause of smoke at a residence on US 64 west (Franklin Road).

- At 2:58 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Cherokee Drive.

- At 5:34 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a location on S. 4th Street.

Feb. 26

- At 8:19 a.m., the dept. responded to a medical alarm at a residence on Flat Mountain Road.

- At 4:34 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at the

hospital.

Feb. 28

- At 2:17 a.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a location on Clubhouse Trail. It was cancelled en route.

- At 3:48 a.m., the dept. responded to a possible structure fire at a residence on Dolly Lane.

- At 4:57 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Mack Wilson Road.

- At 2:26 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Whiteside Mountain Road.

March 2

- At 8:49 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to the hospital.

- At 11:40 a.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a location on Clubhouse Trail, but it was cancelled en route.

THE FIREWOOD COMPANY



Highlands • Cashiers • Atlanta

828.200.3050

bobhenritze@gmail.com • www.firewoodcompany.net

**Need some help managing life?
Relationships?
Finding your purpose
moving forward?
Join us Sundays at 9 a.m.
A small group environment --
breakfast included.
Live Stream --
Andy Stanley/North Point CC
Join us for a
non-denominational
gathering
For more details, text Bee
at 404-307-1415**



EST. 1957 HOWARD HANNA
ALLEN TATE REAL ESTATE
#1 Family-Owned in the U.S.
Ryan M. Bears
Branch Leader
Cell: 803.271.5426
ryan.bears@howardhannatate.com

REALTOR LUXURY PORTFOLIO INTERNATIONAL



**Elevated Home Maintenance & Repairs,
A Step Above the Rest**
Carpentry • Tile Work • Drywall • Remodels
Painting • Flooring • General Labor • Realtor Punchlists
(828) 371-9071
ElevatedHomeMaintenance.com



**Kiln dried
FIREWOOD**
Delivery or pickup

2460 Cashiers Road • Highlands 828-526-2395
highlandslawnandgarden.com

CHRISTIE'S | **HIGHLANDS CASHIERS**
INTERNATIONAL REAL ESTATE

Colleen Kerrigan, *Broker*
615-400-5498
colleen.kerrigan.wnc@gmail.com
Authenticity, Honesty, Integrity



Highlands Office 210 N. Fifth Street

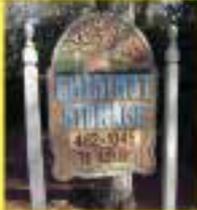


GENERAC
Cummins
KOHLER

▶ 828-526-9325 ◀
*Generators aren't just a "thing" we do,
generators are all we do!*

CHESTNUT STORAGE

Storage Units Available
Secure 24-Hour Access
Easy In - Easy Out
Great Rates - Great Terms



Call today to find out why we're
"Highlands Premier Facility"

828-482-1045 Look for our sign!
Buck Creek Rd - 1/2 mile off Cashiers Road near the hos-

**360 MAIN STREET
ESTATE JEWELERS OF
HIGHLANDS**



**WE BUY
AND CONSIGN
OLD JEWELRY**

Appointment Only!
Call: 828-526-1960
Text: 770-855-0825
Email: ejofhighlands@gmail.com



- Grading
- Excavating
- Driveways
- Build sites
- Hauling
- Septic Systems

Edwin Wilson
Cell (828) 421-3643
Office/fax (828) 526-4758
wilsongrading@yahoo.com



**LISA THOMPSON
DOG SITTING**

- daily drop-in visits
- overnight & extended stays
- dog walking

828.424.4637



**COUNSELING
CENTER
OF HIGHLANDS**

Peggy Crosby Center • 348 South Fifth Street
828-482-7417
info@counselingcenter.org • counseling-center.org

We are nonprofit and provide counseling on a sliding scale fee so everyone can receive the care they need regardless of ability to pay.



EST. 1957 HOWARD HANNA
ALLEN TATE REAL ESTATE
#1 Family-Owned in the U.S.
Al Stoneham
Realtor-Broker
Luxury Home Specialist
Licensed in NC & GA
Cell: 828.332.9767
al.stoneham@howardhannatate.com

REALTOR LUXURY PORTFOLIO INTERNATIONAL

Classifieds:
\$10 for first 10 words; 30 cents for each additional word; \$5 for graphic; \$2 for color highlight
Business Cards
\$23 Black & White • \$28 color

• CLASSIFIEDS •

FOR SALE

LOCATION • LOCATION • LOCATION –

Short Walk up 5th Street from Chestnut Street to Main Street • #44 Chestnut Walk • Unique Investment Opportunity or Family Compound • House and three cottages on 4 contiguous lots totaling 1,850 square feet of living area. Includes 4 BR, 4 BA, and 3 separate kitchens • (1) #44 Chestnut Walk: 850 square foot custom built, creek-front house built in 2022, quality craftsmanship, Hardy Plank exterior, hardwood floors, granite countertops, ceramic tile BA with heated floor and bidet, duel Mitsubishi HVAC, wood stove, W/D, very comfortable year round: \$625K • (2) #46 Chestnut Walk: 400 square feet, STR registered with excellent rental history on ABnB, creek view from deck, built in 2022, Smart Plank exterior, pine paneling, vaulted ceilings, hardwood, granite countertops, ceramic tile, Mitsubishi HVAC, detached storage bldg, W/D, furnished: \$395K • (3) #49 Chestnut Walk: 430 square feet, completely remodeled inside and out in 2022, Hardy Plank exterior, STR registered with excel-

lent rental history on ABnB, new covered front porch with laundry room, W/D, storage loft, granite countertops, tile bath with heated floor and bidet, duel Mitsubishi HVAC, stainless appliances, furnished: \$395K • (4) #50 Chestnut Walk: 240 square feet consisting of 1BR, 1BA, situated as 2nd BR & BA for either #46 or #49, or the perfect studio, office, or stand alone tiny home, built in 2022 with Smart Plank exterior, pine paneling interior with vaulted ceilings: 195K. OFFERED All or Part by Appointment Only chasdash@rocketmail.com (Feb. 29-March 19)

WATERFALL SOUND HOMESITE. Rare 2-Acre homesite off Walkingstick Rd. Awesome sound of nearby waterfall, private peaceful. Established neighborhood of fine homes. 10 minutes downtown. Power in Place. \$76,000 Highlands Sotheby's International Realty 561-632-3781. (st. Jan. 1)

HELP WANTED
THE HIGHLANDS-CASHIERS CHAMBER MUSIC FESTIVAL is hiring for the position of Administrative Assistant. Excellent salary, vibrant atmosphere at the Highlands Performing Arts Center. parttime/fulltime. Call 828-526-9060 for an appointment. (st. 2/29)

FOR RENT
3 BED, 2 BATH HOUSE FOR RENT. Rolling Acres. \$2,500/month. Available now. Huge yard. Hardwood floors. All appliances. Qualified dogs OK. Outdoor fire pit. Warm, friendly place and neighborhood. Call Dick at 828-200-4264. (st. Dec. 25)

4 BD/3BA FOR RENT HIGHLANDS – Updated farm home, located between Highlands & Cashiers off Hwy 64. \$2,800/month, includes all utilities with high speed wifi. Call Marcy 828-482-4239 (st. 7/10)

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

SERVICES
CUSTOM WELDING – gates, railings, trailer repairs, fencing, hand rails and more. I come to you! Call Gavin at 828-200-4219 or email smallgavin26@gmail.com

MURPHY'S PAINT CO. - interior/exterior painting/sheetrock repair/wallpaper removal/log homes/ decks. Insured. Free estimates. 828-332-0525 or 828- 421-8600. (3/12)

CREATURE COMFORTS – In-House Pet or People sitting. Call Peg Ellis. Retired RN. References available. 828-200-1028. (st. 11/20)

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. (6/26)

HIGHLANDS-CASHIERS HANDYMAN – Chatlos Construction – Remodels, Additions, Framing, Siding, Roofing, Decks, Painting. References. Insured. 828-200-4071. (4/30)

NEED FURNITURE MOVED OR ANYTHING HAULED AWAY? Call or text James of Going Gone at 828-421-2655. (7/31)

...MAYOR continued from 2

from year to year until grant projects are completed and off the books. We have received grants for waterline replacements, water plant upgrades, Mirror Lake dredging, and a new water plant generator. I am grateful that we have been the recipients of these grants. They alleviate some of the pressure on the town's tax and rate-payers.

A significant portion of the budget under review will be the general fund. That part of the budget funds critical departments, including police, roads, recreation, sanitation general services, and administration. The general fund is normally around \$7 million.

The general fund comes from property taxes, sale taxes, local and state fees, and from reserve funds. The reserve funds are the town's savings account that has been built up over the years.

The town collects about \$3.2 million in property taxes that go to the general fund. Even more surprising is that we collected only \$1.56 million in sales tax this year. Of the 6.75 cents in sales taxes collected on each dollar spent, the state gets 4.75 cents. Two cents are sent to the counties, which distribute a part of that revenue to the towns in their counties. I believe Macon County, after the town distributions, netted about \$17 million in sales tax revenue this year.

Highlands receives \$550,000 from Macon County for the recreation department because it is open to both town and county residents. The town also contributes several hundred thousand dollars to the department. The county also gives the town \$50,000 for the Highlands Police Department to staff an SRO at the Highlands School. The school is funded by the county.

The town also receives just under \$500,000 in general fund fees and state franchise taxes. All the revenues for the general fund total around \$5.5 to 6 million.

But usually, the general fund is at least \$7 million. What is the difference, and where does the make-up of the shortfall come from? Well, in the past, it has come from reserve funds to ensure items like road paving and sidewalks are built or maintained. Transfer of reserve funds in the past has been around \$1.5 million or more each year.

The impending problem is that the reserved funds are dwindling each year. So, what will the board do? Raising property taxes is a possibility, but I do not see that prospect for this budget year. Reducing services and cutting back on projects would be hard options, but they will certainly be on the table in the future. I am sure these issues will be a major topic in this year's retreat and going forward.

Another department that will be carefully reviewed is the fire department. The town, in cooperation with the county, increased the fire district tax several years ago from 8/10 of a cent per \$100 of property valuation to 3 cents – to build the new fire station, buy a new truck and add 24-hour staffing – with the property tax reveal, and the county's revenue neutral mandate, the rate dropped to 1.91 cents per \$100 property valuation.

This year, an increase in the fire tax will have to be considered. Inflationary pressures are in play. The cost of the needed pumper truck replacement is now \$500,000 instead of \$250,000. Increasing the firefighter response crews from two per shift to three per shift will also be on the table. There are three shifts with a total of 12 shift-workers. The approval of the fire department budget is done by both the town and county commissioners.

Please let me or your commissioners know about any budget concerns.



828-787-2360

2851 Cashiers Road, Highlands

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

Here's what's Highlands Automotive is all about!

- Same-day service for most maintenance and routine repairs.
- Top-tier diagnostic & programming tools – just like the dealer.
- New tire, alignment & balancing equipment for precision and speed.
- Same experienced technicians.

We service **ALL** domestic and foreign vehicles.

Also serving customers in:

Atlanta, GA | Dallas, TX | Houston, TX

Come see the difference.



• HIGHLANDS AREA EVENTS •

NOTE:

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

MOVIES

• At PAC The Choral, March 6-8. As World War I rages on, Dr. Henry Guthrie takes over a British choral society that's lost most of its men to the army. The community soon discovers that the best response to the chaos of war is to make beautiful music together. Fri. & Sat., March 6&7: 2pm & 5:30pm; Sun., March 8: 2pm (w/captions) & 5:30pm. Tickets are \$12 total (including taxes and fees)

POOL SCHEDULE

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

PICKLE BALL

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

MOUNTAIN FINDINGS

• **Winter Hours:** Friday & Saturdays. Open: 10 am - 1 pm. Spruce Street. www.mountainfindings.org

ICE SKATING IN PARK

• Thurs., 3:30-8p; Fri. 3:30-10p; Sat. 1-10p, Sun. 1-5p \$8 with or without skates.

ALL WEEK

• Scaly Mountain/Highlands/Cashiers Alcoholics Anonymous "Open Meetings" are for anyone who thinks they may have a drinking problem or for anyone interested in the A.A. recovery program. Open meetings are held at Scaly Mountain @ Grace

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

Mon.Thurs.

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

Mon., Tues., Wed, Fri.

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

Mon-Wed-Fri

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

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

Mon., Tues., Thurs.

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

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

Second Mondays

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

Tuesdays

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

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

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

2nd Tuesdays

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

2nd Wednesdays

• Hudson Library, in partnership with VAYA Health, is hosting an educational series on adult mental health topics, at 11 AM. To register, stop by the library or call 828-526-3031.

Wednesdays

• Digital Navigators will be at the Hudson Library from 1-3 PM, digital navigators will host a Tech Time drop-in time at Hudson Library with the goal to assist attendees with basic smartphone, laptop, iPad and tablet skills. For more information, call the Library at 828-526-3031. This program is free and open to the public.

Thursdays

• Kickboxing 8:15-9:15a. at the Rec Park. No martial arts background necessary. Contact the Rec Dept. at 828-526-3556 for more info.

• At First Presbyterian Church

a free concert "Music for Prayer" at noon. These casual concerts are almost entirely improvised and last 30-45 minutes. This offering is called Music For Prayer.

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

Fridays

• At Hudson Library, Friday afternoons at 2 PM, a variety of children's programs including board games, STEM programs, and crafts.

3rd Saturdays

• Dec. 20th meeting is cancelled. Meeting will resume in January. 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.

Sundays

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

Wed., March 18

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

Sat., April 18

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

Volunteers needed for Plateau Pickup

The Highlands Chamber of Commerce/Visit Highlands, NC invites community members to roll up their sleeves and help beautify our local roadsides and public spaces during the annual Plateau Pickup on Saturday, April 18.

Volunteers will gather at 8:30am at Kelsey-Hutchinson Founders Park (Pine Street) to check in and receive clean up assignments along key corridors including U.S. 64, N.C. 28, N.C. 106, and select areas of downtown Highlands.

All supplies will be provided, including a light breakfast, safety vest, gloves, pick-up tools and garbage bags. After the cleanup, volunteers are invited back to the park for a thank-you t-shirt and boxed lunch at 12pm.

"Plateau Pickup is one of those days that brings out the very best in Highlands," said

Johanna Fein, executive director of the Highlands Chamber of Commerce/Visit Highlands, NC. "This year, we're proud to be part of the Greatest American Cleanup, working together to make our community cleaner, greener, and more beautiful as we look ahead to America's 250th celebration."

To participate, email events@highlandschamber.org or call 828-526-5841. For more information about Plateau Pickup or other Highlands events, visit highlandschamber.org.

• REC DEPT. NEWS •

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

Franklin Little League Baseball registration is open until March 8th. Cost to register is Baseball \$65 and Tee Ball is \$50 with sibling discount of \$15. online registration www.franklinlittleleaguebaseball.com.

Franklin Little League Softball registration is open until March 13th. Cost to register for softball is \$55. Open for ages 4-14 years old. Online registration at www.franklinlittleleaguesoftball.com.

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

...SPIRITUALLY continued from page 14

and with ourselves.

There is another prayer that seems to capture this spirit of Lent. It is a prayer For Quiet Confidence.

O God of peace, who has taught us that in returning and rest we shall be saved, in quietness and confidence shall be our strength: By the might of your Spirit lift us, we pray you, to

your presence, where we may be still and know that you are God; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Lent is a time of returning and rest. It is a time to place our confidence in our Creator. To find our strength in God's strength. I hope we will all accept the invitation to a Holy Lent.

**To list events,
email
highlandseditor@
aol.com
or
text or call
828-200-1371**

SILVER EAGLE
Native American Jewelry
Crystal & Gem Gallery

349 Main Street, Highlands, NC
828.526.5190 silvereaglegallery.com

COUNTRY CLUB PROPERTIES
Bright Square Office
Real Estate

Country Club Properties
Your local hometown
Real Estate professionals.
3 Offices 828-526-2520
www.CCPHighlandsNC.com

Highlander Mountain House & The Ruffed Grouse Tavern

highlandermountainhouse.com

Weichert REALTORS
Highlands Properties
450 N. 4th St. Highlands, NC
828-526-5522
www.highlandsproperties.com

BERKSHIRE HATHAWAY | MEADOWS MOUNTAIN REALTY
HOMESERVICES

CHAIRMAN'S CIRCLE
TOP 2% OF THE NETWORK

LUXURY COLLECTION™
Of the 55,000+ BHHS agents across the globe, Faye ranks in the TOP 2% and is a Luxury Collection Specialist.

FAYE WURM
828.200.1345
faye@bhhsmmr.com
2334 Cashiers Rd, Highlands
https://fayewurm.meadowsmtnreality.com/

COVETED HIGHLANDS LOCATION

371 Dixon Drive
Highlands, NC

Offered Furnished for \$1.695 M

- 3 Bed, 3 Bath
- 2 Fireplaces
- Large, Level Lot
- Adjacent to Conservation Property

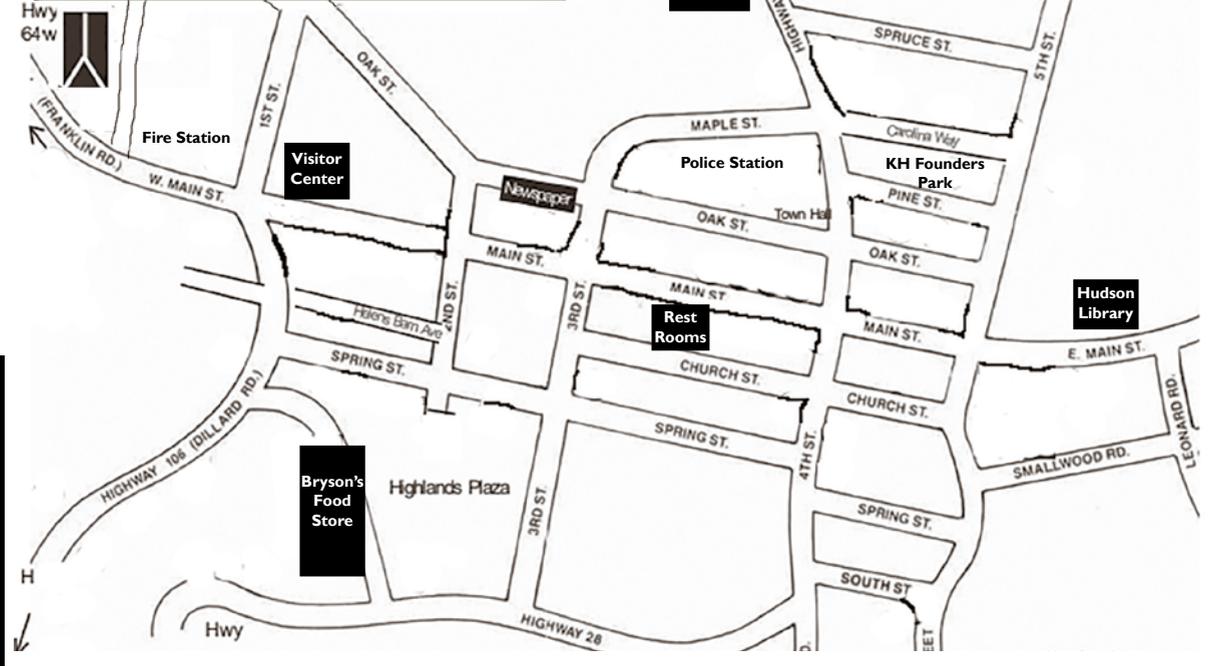
HOWARD HANNA
ALLEN TATE REAL ESTATE

Darlene Conley
Mountain Luxury
Your Dream. Your Journey.
YOU'RE HOME.
Dedicated to finding the home

Team RickSteve "The Power of 3"
Trusted advisors providing impeccable, personalized service

HOWARD HANNA
ALLEN TATE REAL ESTATE

#1 IN THE CAROLINAS • 404-219-1349 • TEAMRICKSTEVE@ALLENTATE.COM



Clif Gottwals
303.887.7479
Clif.Gottwals@Gmail.com

Ace is the Place,

Reeves
Hardware

At Main & 3rd streets
Highlands 526-2157

CHRISTIE'S
INTERNATIONAL REAL ESTATE
— HIGHLANDS CASHIERS —

HighlandsCashiersCIRE.com
210 North Fifth Street
Highlands, NC 28741

Highlands Sotheby's INTERNATIONAL REALTY

114 N. 4th Street • Highlands, NC

Local Expertise, Global Connections.

Licensed in NC and GA
office: 828.526.8300 • cell: 828.337.0706
sheryl.wilson@sothebysrealty.com • highlandssir.com

Live Love Highlands

Mountain Life
PROPERTIES
Denise Boothby
828-482-2434
www.LiveLoveHighlands.com

CHRISTIE'S | HIGHLANDS CASHIERS
INTERNATIONAL REAL ESTATE

Highlands Office | 210 N. 5th Street

Cell: 828-787-1895
pamela.nellis@yahoo.com

Pat Allen

REALTY GROUP

Voted America's Best



More than 33 years of exemplary
service on the plateau!

Our clients rate us 5 out of 5



JULIE OSBORN & PAT ALLEN



julie.osborn@gmail.com
828.200.6165



pat.allen@gmail.com
828.200.9179

STAY A
moment



For vacation rentals, visit
LANDMARKVACATIONS.COM
or call 828-743-9234.

your mountain story begins here—
embracing both the life you lead
and the getaway you crave



Jody Lovell

(828) 226.6303

#1 Broker
IN THE CAROLINAS

\$1 Billion +

TOTAL CAREER SALES VOLUME

#8 Agent Worldwide

AMONG 26,100+
SOTHEBY'S INTERNATIONAL REALTY AGENTS

PER REAL TRENDS, HCMLS AND COUNTY RECORDINGS

Highlands

Sotheby's
INTERNATIONAL REALTY

BERKSHIRE HATHAWAY HOMESERVICES | MEADOWS MOUNTAIN REALTY

If you want an
award-winning real
estate experience,
choose an
award-winning
agent.



MITZI RAUERS
Broker / Luxury Collection
Specialist
(404) 218-9123
mitzi@bhhsmmr.com

*Based on 2023 sales data. Out of a global network
of 55,000+ BHHS agents.



DAVID BOCK BUILDERS

www.BockBuilders.com 828-526-2240

Mountain Living ...
begins with
conversation and a
cup of coffee.

CHRISTIE'S
INTERNATIONAL REAL ESTATE
— HIGHLANDS CASHIERS —



BEE GLEESON
Broker | Realtor* | 404.307.1415
BeeGlee4@Gmail.com

PAT GLEESON
Broker | Realtor* | 828.782.0472
PatrickGleeson4@Gmail.com

JESSICA HABERKERN
Broker | Realtor* | 254.718.7494
JessHaberkern@Gmail.com

HighlandsCashiersCIRE.com | 210 North Fifth Street, Highlands, NC 28741



...on the Verandah
Restaurant
on Lake Sequoyah

828-526-2338

42 Years of Fine Dining

Open
7 nights
5:30-9p



www.ontheverandah.com

M'CULLEY'S CASHMERE

Scotland's Best Knitwear

Open 7 days a week

526-4407
242 S. 4th St.

