

Highlands Newspaper

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Thursday, May 16, 2019

Town tweaking FY '19-20' budget; considering fire tax increase

The Town of Highlands budget deliberations for FY 2019-20 is wrapping up. The final word will come Thursday night at

the Town Board meeting and then a public hearing will be set for the June meeting before the final version of the budget is passed.

Since March, requested/needed capital items from each department have been considered.

• See **FIRE TAX** page 10

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County proposing 1.59¢ tax hike for 2019-2020

By **Brittney Lofthouse**

At the direction of county commissioners, Macon County Manager Derek Roland presented his 2019-2020 fiscal year budget Tuesday night, and emphasized the county's growing economy, population, and needs. The manager's proposed budget totaled \$52,834,025, a nearly \$2 million increase over the current year.

Macon County Commission Chair Jim Tate preceded Roland's budget presentation by stating that Roland was tasked with several requests from commissioners to prioritize projects in the budget, which would likely result in an increase in needed funding. Tate noted that commissioners wanted to enhance

• See **TAX HIKE** page 19

O'Shea named Highlands School 'Fan of the Year'



When Brian O'Shea attended the Highlands School High School Athletic Banquet last Monday night to snap a shot of the annual "Fan of the Year" recipient for Highlands Newspaper, little did he know he would be the recipient! O'Shea has doggedly followed Highlands School sports wherever they go – Macon or Jackson counties, in nearby Georgia or South Carolina – all year long posting stories and photos on his Plateau Daily News site and in Highlands Newspaper. Highlands School athletes pick the person who consistently shows support for school athletics during the school year usually just for attending the games. But Brian went far beyond that criteria. Good work Brian! Pictured from left is Highlands School Athletic Director Brett Lamb with O'Shea.

– Submitted photo

Newly formed HC Health Foundation accepting grant requests

Grant workshop on May 22, at Cashiers/Glenville Recreation Center, noon-2pm; or May 28, Hudson Library in Highlands, 12:30-2:30pm

The new beginning for the Highlands Cashiers Health Foundation, a public charity is underway, and the announcement of its grant application is now online. The Foundation is pleased to accept grant applications for proposals to improve the health and wellbeing of our Highlands Cashiers and surrounding communities online at www.highlandscashier-healthfoundation.org The grant application submittal deadline is June 15 for the first grant cycle.

Since February 1 of this year, the Foundation has been immersed in establishing policies, procedures and new offices at the Peggy Crosby Center in Highlands. Driven by its commitment to donors and local communities, the grant-making process has been established with concentration on transparent and due diligence procedures through every step.

"We are grateful for legal and research guidance from Dogwood Health Trust and especially pleased with the dedicated work of our Programs and Grants Committee over the past two months, led by Board member Stephanie Edwards," said Dr. Walter Clark, Foundation Chair.

The committee, comprised of four board members and three community advisory members, spent numerous hours studying needs assessment data, health impact factors and conducting listening engagements with 25 organizations across the plateau. The process resulted in a fully vetted, prioritized list of focus areas that have significant potential for fulfilling the Foundation's purpose to improve the health and wellbeing of our Highlands, Cashiers and surrounding com-

• See **GRANT** page 8

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• THE PLATEAU'S POSITION •

• MAYOR ON DUTY •

Budget process is finishing up



Highlands Mayor
Patrick Taylor

The May Highlands Town Board meeting is tonight at 7pm. The meeting will be at the Highlands Community Building next to the ballfield. While the meeting agenda may not be long, there are several important items for the board to cover.

The first item will be a discussion of the speed limit on Hickory Hill Road. A number of residents want to see the speed limit reduced. I believe the board will take appropriate action. In addition to this residential road, I would like the board to review speed limits in other neighborhoods and in certain business areas. There are several questions that need answering such as, what are safe speeds in certain areas and how speed limits can be enforced? Enforcement on short and narrow neighborhood streets is not that simple.

In planning matters there will be a request for a public hearing for amendments to the Unified Development Ordinance. One of these changes deals with construction and reconstruction of fences, while another relates to accessory uses and structures. Other areas to be reviewed

concern dimensional and density standards in residential and non-residential developments.

While I am providing a brief description of the proposed amendments, Town Manager/Acting Planning Director Josh Ward will present a detailed description. No action will be taken until after the public hearing at the June board meeting.

Another important agenda item will be the official awarding of the contract to build the aerial fiber portion of the broadband network. JBL Communications will be the contractor and should start the construction in the coming weeks. The board will also approve the contract for the administration of the contract and construction. Wide Open Networks will oversee the building of the network.

The last item on the agenda will be the presentation of the proposed town budget for fiscal year 2018/2019. For several months town staff and the board have been developing this new budget that will go into effect on July 1. Town Manager Ward, will present the proposed budget which by state law is balanced. At the end of the budget presentation a motion will be made to have a budget public hearing at the June Highlands Town Board meeting.

This proposed budget has a significant amount of infrastructure spending. The 4.6 million-dollar loan to build the fiber network has been entered twice in the budget. Our accountants and auditors require this procedure that appears to balloon the budget by over 9 million dollars. This loan will be repaid from funds generated from the fiber network operation. Also, the budget includes replacement of the Split Rail waterline for \$876,000 and four road paving projects totaling \$620,000.

While electric utility rates will not increase again this year, the basic usage rates for water and sewer will increase for the first time in a number of years by a couple of dollars. The town is facing several water system improvements and incurred a shortfall this year. Many towns have kept water and sewer rates down while ignoring essential maintenance and upgrades. That strategy is a formula for a water system requiring major funding just to bring it up to minimum

• HIC'S VIEW •



"I hope you won't consider this a complaint. But tell the chef a pinch less salt and a dab more garlic next time."

Highlands Newspaper

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Letter Policy:

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.

Town of Highlands Notice of Public Forum

This Public Forum is to notify all residence living in the Highlands Fire and Rescue's rural fire district of a public information meeting to be held on the 21st day of May, 2019, at 6pm, at the Civic Center in the Arts & Crafts Room, 600 North 4th Street, Highlands, North Carolina. This meeting will be in reference to the proposed fire tax increase to accommodate the purchase of land and a new main station.

All interested residents/citizens are encouraged to attend.

Gibby Shaheen
Town Clerk

• WEATHER •

	Friday 5/17		Saturday 5/18		Sunday 5/19	
	Daytime	Overnight	Daytime	Overnight	Daytime	Overnight
Temp	75 F	54 F	76 F	56 F	74 F	56 F
RealFeel	85 F	58 F	85 F	63 F	81 F	64 F
Winds	4 g 6	3 g 5	4 g 6	3 g 5	5 g 8	3 g 6
T-Storms	44%	24%	24%	24%	40%	24%
Rainfall	0.04	0	0	0	0.1	0
Snowfall	0	0	0	0	0	0

For Real-time Weather and the Extended Forecast, go to www.highlandsinfo.com and click on Weather



Photos shown are of another Old Edwards Club project, Cottages on 5th, and are representational of what will be offered at Cottages on 4th

COTTAGES ON 4TH

Another great community from Old Edwards Hospitality! Located in-town, an easy walk to all that Highlands has to offer, this property is just over three acres; six homes will be constructed, each on a half acre lot. The community will be gated and heavily landscaped and include a common area with a pavilion and small pond. John Lupoli, the renowned Highlands builder, will build them so the quality will be second to none! There are two floor plans — a one level and a two-story, both with three bedrooms and three-and-a-half baths. Too many features to name here!

Pricing includes a full membership to Old Edwards Club valued at \$80,000. This membership includes all of the new family-friendly amenities at GlenCove by Old Edwards.

Offered for \$1,695,000 | Contact Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Meadows Mountain Realty for more information: 828.526.1717

HIGHLANDS IN-TOWN This amazing 8+ acre property features three completely updated homes with the main house boasting five bedrooms, a guest house with one bedroom and a charming cabin with two bedrooms. Clear Creek runs through the property and a lake has been formed. The current owners raised championship golden retrievers and have a terrific kennel adjacent to the home. This area would also make a great art studio. Located only two short miles to Highlands' Main Street.

MLS# 89607 | Offered for \$2,395,000



HIGHLANDS COUNTRY CLUB The living room of this beautiful home has a high coffered ceiling and stone fireplace with lovely built-in bookcases. The kitchen boasts a large island and both the kitchen and living room open to two large screened porch areas, one with a fireplace. The master is offset from the common areas for privacy. Also on the main floor is a large office/study with a full bath. All the bells and whistles with quality second to none!

MLS# 90522 | Offered for \$2,000,000



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In Due Diligence

CHESTNUT HILL A lot of home for the money! The great room is spacious with multiple seating areas, beautiful hardwood floors, and vaulted ceilings. The master is oversized with an extra large walk-in closet, a bath with double vanity, and a private sitting room. Landscape care, water, sewer, roads, and snow removal are provided by the HOA as well as the exterior including the roof - like living in a condominium but better!

MLS# 90818 | Offered for \$325,000

CHESTNUT HILL Great location on a level lot with a small fenced dog yard in the back. Lovely rocking chair front porch plus a screened porch in the back. Located on a cul de sac with plenty of room to walk the dog or fiddle in the yard. Landscape care and exterior maintenance of the home is provided by the HOA. This is like living in a condo but enjoying a single family home on one level with a garage. HOA fees also include road maintenance, snow removal, water and sewer.

MLS# 89978 | Offered for \$305,000



CHESTNUT HILL Hard to find in this price range: a home that is in great condition with a covered front porch that has a mountain view and a private screened back porch. The home is one level with three bedrooms and two generous baths. The large great room boasts vaulted ceilings, beautiful hardwood floors, and built-ins next to the gas fireplace. Single car garage. HOA fees include landscape care, exterior building maintenance, water, sewer, roads, and snow removal.

MLS# 89579 | Offered for \$315,000

CHESTNUT HILL Nicely situated on a quiet road, only 3 miles from Main Street and around the corner from the Highlands-Cashiers Hospital. The open great room is light and bright and has vaulted ceilings; it opens to the large sun room. Landscape care, water, sewer, roads, and snow removal are provided by the HOA as well as the exterior including the roof - like living in a condominium but better!

In Due Diligence

MLS# 89430 | Offered for \$298,000



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The Highlands Cashiers Health Foundation

seeks to address social determinants of health that uniquely challenge our surrounding communities. We believe in investing in programs that offer constructive solutions and measurable improvements for healthy living. We want to partner with your organization to keep our communities strong and vibrant for years to come.

GRANT WORKSHOPS:

May 22
Cashiers Area
May 28
Highlands Area
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Highlands Cashiers Health Foundation is now accepting grant applications online www.hchealthfnd.org

WE WELCOME APPLICATIONS FROM ORGANIZATIONS ADDRESSING THESE FOCUS AREAS

Access to Healthcare



Given our mountainous terrain and population demographics, access to care plays a vital role in supporting healthy and strong communities. We welcome proposals that involve emergency and public transportation, indigent care, behavioral health, physician recruitment and retention.

Education Initiatives



The attainment of education is one of the highest factors in predicting good health. We welcome proposals to advance technologies for academic enrichment, reduce k-12 absenteeism, improve student access to health and counselor professionals, teacher development and retention, early childhood learning and literacy improvement for all ages.

Community Vitality



There are numerous opportunities for manifesting healthful mountain living. We welcome proposals for community initiatives to promote healthy, active lifestyles, community health screenings, broadband access and substance abuse prevention programs.

Economic Stability



Affordable housing initiatives and food insecurity are among the most critical needs to be addressed for a sustainable economy.



For more information please visit our website: www.hchealthfnd.org Email: info@hchealthfnd.org

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MAY 1-22, Room 112

Gary Hewins,
Vesta Jones

Many believers today are dealing with addictive issues or want to know how to minister to others struggling with addiction. This workshop is for anyone wanting to know how they can be set free, or help others be set free, from the bonds of addiction.

S.H.A.P.E.

MAY 8-29, Room 308

Russ Johnsen,
Thomas Bates

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4th - 6th GRADE

CLASS, JUNE 5 - JULY

31, Room 308

Julie Hughes

Rising 4th-6th graders meet in the 4th & 5th grade room,

6-7 pm, to discuss and answer some of their biggest questions about their faith through a study of the Word. We'll use *Case for Christ for Kids* by Lee Strobel as a tool, along with the Bible, to address the existence, miracles, ministry and resurrection of Jesus.

GRIEFSHARE

JUNE 12 - SEPT 18,

Room 112, Mary

Blackburn, Bill + Sharon

Youngerman

A biblically-based grief support group designed for people who are grieving the death of a family member or friend.

MARRIAGE

JUNE 12, 19, 26, JULY 10,

Family Room

Thomas + Lisa Bates

Exploring love languages, improved communication, conflict resolution, debunking marital myths & more.

FOUNDATIONS

JULY 17 - AUGUST 14

Media Room

Various Elders

Geared toward the new believer, this class will provide insight and instruction on how to best begin your walk with Christ. This will help you to grow and mature in your faith and to become an effective member of your church family.

• OBITUARY •

Leota Myers Weston

Leota Myers Weston passed away peacefully at the Eckerd Living Center in Highlands on May 2, 2019. She was 104 years old.

She was born near Winterset, Ohio, September 14, 1914.

She graduated from Gnadenhutzen High School in 1932. Soon after graduation, she married James Nelson Weston.

She lived in Ft. Myers, FL with her husband of 54 years. After her husband died, she moved to northeast Georgia to be near her family. She had two children; Ronald and Lynda.

She is survived by her son, Ron and wife Babs; daughter, Linda; one sister; eight grandchildren, 11 great-grandchildren; and five great-great grandchildren.

She has been a faithful member of the Church of Christ for 88 years.

Her celebration of life will be held at the Rabun County Church of Christ on June 1, 2019 at 11 a.m. The church is located at 876 Bethel Road, Tiger, GA, 30576.

In lieu of flowers, please send donations to the Eckerd Living Center at H-C Hospital.



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Highlands Playhouse

...GRANT continued from page 1

munities. The information provided extraordinary insight and specific examples of challenges and barriers to healthful living and wellbeing throughout our surrounding communities.

But the learning process has not ended. The Foundation plans to continue these listening sessions in order to deepen and broaden its knowledge throughout the six-county region. Organizations are encouraged to submit grant applications whether they have participated in a listening engagement to date. "Our committee members and foundation directors plan to continue learning about health and wellbeing conditions as well as creative, innovative solutions for improving our communities," said Stephanie Edwards, Chair of the Programs and Grants Committee.

Using the basis of "Social Determinants of Health," the areas for funding initiatives have been determined by evidence-based concepts. "Social Determinants of Health" is the phrase used to define areas that have proven influence on people's physical health and mental wellbeing. The five common domains include: 1) Health and Healthcare, 2) Education, 3) Economic Stability, 4) Social and Community Context, and 5) Neighborhood and Built Environment.

"What this means is that good health and wellbeing is about more than health care and the absence of illness," said Dr. Clark. "When communities work together to improve physical, mental, spiritual and social wellbeing, we all benefit. We believe in investing in areas that offer constructive solutions for healthful and productive lives."

The following focus areas include initiatives for a healthy, safe and thriving community, setting the stage for happiness. The Foundation encourages proposals for projects and initiatives that keep our communities strong and vibrant, particularly programs that are involved in proactive collaborative partnerships. Grant applications are welcome from organizations working in these focus areas:

Access to Healthcare: Given our mountainous terrain and population demographics, access to care plays a vital role in supporting healthy and strong communities. We welcome proposals that involve emergency services and public transportation, indigent care, behavioral health, physician recruitment and retention.

Education Initiatives: The attainment of education is one of the highest factors in predicting good health. We welcome proposals to advance technologies for academic enrichment, reduce K-12 absenteeism, improve student access to health and counselor professionals; teacher development and retention, early childhood learning, and literacy improvement for all ages.

Community Vitality: There are numerous opportunities for manifesting healthful mountain living. We welcome proposals for community initiatives to promote healthy, active lifestyles, community health screenings, increase broadband access and support substance abuse prevention programs.

Economic Stability: Affordable housing initiatives and food insecurity are among the most critical needs to be addressed for a sustainable workforce.

For more information, interested applicants may attend a grant workshop on May 22, at Cashiers/Glenville Recreation Center, noon-2pm; or May 28, Hudson Library in Highlands, 12:30-2:30pm; to RSVP, please contact.

For general information about Highlands Cashiers Health Foundation and access to the online grant application please visit our website at www.hchealthfnd.org or email r.oakley@hchealthfnd.org

- Submitted

• WORD MATTER •

Enough already ... again

Editor's Note:

Much of this column was inadvertently cut off last week. Here it is in its entirety.

It really doesn't matter which side of the political spectrum one occupies, one thing is certain – don't believe anything anyone says regarding the content of the Mueller report unless they've read it, annotated it, and are carrying it with them. There are many lies

being promulgated regarding what it says and doesn't say, about Russia's interference in the 2016 presidential election, collusion, attempts at, as well as actual obstruction of justice, and what may or may not have been the role of anyone associated with the Trump and/or Clinton campaigns. It's almost impossible to glean what is or is not fact or truth. And, I'm sorry, but fact and truth are still important.

Every accusation or denial must be viewed in the context of partisan politics. This renders whatever did or did not happen thoroughly obscured by smoke, mirrors, and, pardon me, bovine feces.

There are three Mueller Investigation books already available on Amazon.com ... for a price. There are also free PDF downloads of the report from a variety of news sources. I'd suggest NPR's version. They rely on federal funding regardless of which party is in control of anything, making them one of a few media organizations committed to straight, down-the-middle news coverage.

For those of us who would like to know what the report says and what it means, getting straightforward analysis is a difficult and elusive proposition. Everyone has an agenda, and veracity is in short supply.

Look, if I haven't been clear since we've known one another, let me say this again; I'm not a Democrat, a Republican, a Libertarian, a Green, a Socialist or member of any other recognized political party. I registered No Party Affiliation (NPA) because I don't think any political party speaks for me or adds any value to the American political process. All of them are covered with warts, weeds, moss and mold as far as I'm concerned.

That said, by the time all is said and done, the Mueller investigation will have cost we, the American people upwards of \$30 million. During the time period between January 2017 when the president took office, and the end of March 2019 when the report was issued, precious little if anything



Bud Katz

got done in Washington. No immigration or healthcare reform. No infrastructure investment. No Social Security or Medicare reform. Nothing.

This follows the pattern set back in the late 1990s, during the second Clinton term, with investigations into Whitewater, Monica Lewinski and Vince Foster. Remember the (Kenneth) Starr investigations? That little exercise in partisan political

waste cost the American people over \$70 million.

We elect people and send them to Washington to do the people's business. While all this investigating is happening, and while all kinds of politically motivated, partisan bickering is going on, the people's business is definitely not getting done.

Maybe I have this wrong, but we all send a sizable chunk of change to Washington and I'm not seeing our children's education improve, our nation's healthcare getting less costly, our veterans getting the care they need and have earned – I could go on, but you get the gist.

I take issue with the Attorney General, a political appointee, deciding, beyond legitimate security and privacy concerns, what we, the American people, can and can't see in this or any other government-funded report.

I take issue with politicians on both sides telling we, the American people, that they are going to do what they want to do, for partisan political reasons, and the will of we, the American people be damned.

I take issue with our elected "leaders" wasting precious time and treasure on matters I consider frankly irrelevant to the lives and needs of most of we, the American people. It's time they stopped this nonsense and started taking care of our nation.

I know this polemic started out with thoughts about the Mueller report, but 99+% of us won't take the time to read it. We won't take the time to read the Attorney General's digested summary of the Special Prosecutor's findings. We won't even read a newspaper's or magazine's in-depth account of the affair. No, 99+% of us – who am I kidding – not nearly that many, will rely on someone's two-minute version of things on some TV "news" report. The rest of us are too busy watching The Bachelor, or Entertainment Tonight.

Sorry, folks, but we have way many bigger fish to fry and this partisan, political BS is hogging the kitchen.

BREAKFAST * LUNCH * DINNER * GRILL
WOOD-FIRED PIZZA * DELI * BAKERY



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Wood-fired pizza oven - daily 11:00 until close

Authentic Neapolitan pizza made from scratch, Fresh Grande cheese, basil, crushed tomatoes, homemade Italian sausage and pancetta.

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SUNDAY SOUTHERN BRUNCH BAR

Every Sunday from 11:30- 3:30

Menu may include skillet fried chicken, country Angus steak, skillet corn, biscuits & preserves, mashed potatoes, veggies, cobbler, with soup & salad bar available.

WINE MARKET & CRAFT BEER

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...FIRE TAX continued from page 1

Across departments, requests ranged from vehicles to capital items particularly in the water/sewer departments.

Each year, paving tops the list in the Street Department and each year Public Works Director Lamar Nix is asked to prioritize the paving projects. Usually a couple are put on the back burner for the next fiscal year.

However, this year, all four suggested paving projects will likely make the cut for a total expenditure of \$620,000.

“We continue to get complaints about there being potholes everywhere,” said Town Manager Josh Ward. “32 tons of patch was used over the last few months to fill them, but it’s just not a permanent fix. Patching and paving two roads on the list [Satulah and 1.1 miles of Cullasaja Drive] just isn’t enough.”

Though originally two of the roads, Oak Lane and Hickory Hill Road were red-lined – meaning they might not make the capital needs list for FY 2019-20’ – Ward made it clear they need to be included.

Another red-lined item – Ground Penetrating Radar – in the MIS/GIS Department, will likely be included at a cost of \$30,000. Ward said this is a piece of equipment the town can use across departments, specifically in the water/sewer departments where the radar will show a picture of existing lines throughout

town.

In the Electric Department, two reconductor projects were listed – one on a portion of US 64 east and one on a portion of Horsecove Road. This involves getting rid of copper lines – something the town has been doing due to upkeep. At first the Horsecove Road portion at a cost of \$91,000 was red-lined but it may make the cut after all. That’s two projects in the Electric Department totaling \$238,000.

Before the deletions of red-lined items, the total on the Capital Needs list is \$3.23 million. If the items red-lined are cut, then the total would be \$2.8 million. But after last Thursday’s budget meeting it looks like everything on the list will be financed.

As far as fee increases go for residents and businesses, since the the water/sewer and sanitation enterprise funds/departments are in the red, it looks like those rates will each increase by a couple of dollars per month. The final figure will be decided tonight at the Town Board meeting at 7 in the Community Building.

The biggest increase fee/tax-wise may be the fire tax which has been stable for several years. It is currently the lowest in the county at one cent per \$100 property

• See FIRE TAX page 11



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...FIRE TAX continued from page 10

valuation. The assessed property valuation for Highlands and Highlands Township is currently \$3,504,725,216.

Fire taxes across the county range from 1 cent (Highlands) to 12 ½ cent per \$100 valuation.

Commissioners are proposing increasing it to three cents per \$100 valuation. The fire department runs purely on proceeds from the fire tax.

Though the department's operating budget for FY 2019-20' is only \$435,000 proceeds from the proposed fire tax in-

...MAYOR continued from page 2

standards. We are not going to make that mistake.

The budget also contains a major increase for the fire tax. As I have stated previously, we have to build a new fire station and move toward more full-time staffing. On Tuesday, May 21, we will have an open forum for residents to learn about and ask questions concerning the new fire department plans. The meeting will be at the Highlands Recreation Department at 6 pm.

crease would be used to finance the new fire department building whether on the current site or on a new piece of property. Obviously procuring property would increase the cost of the project substantially.

Turns out the existing parcel isn't big enough for a new or renovated building which needs to include residential units for



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more full-time firemen. Fire Chief Ryan Gearhart said 24/7 fire protection would lower insurance rates and eventually taxes.

In addition, where the department would operate and store trucks and equip-

ment if the current building is razed or renovated is a big question.

According to MC Emergency Services Director Warren Cabe, the trucks need to

• See FIRE TAX page 19

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UNC Charlotte



Valedictorian
Jesus Damian Clemente
UNC Charlotte



Salutatorian
Grace Crowe
WCU



Alexandra Pokora
Gap Year



Maria Tapia Valerio
SCC



Michael Zachary
SCC



Perla Garcia Montano
SCC



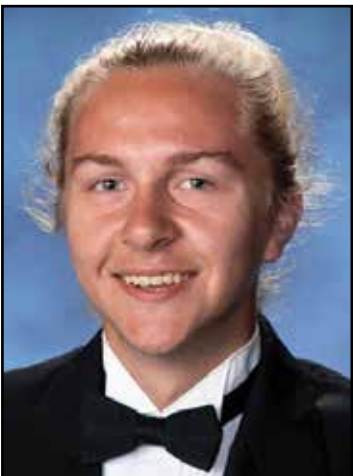
Caden Smolarsky
WCU



Carson Talbert
WCU



Chase Sullivan
Tallahassee CC



Destin Gearhart
Catawba CC



Selwyn Chalker
WCU



Freddi Garcia Lopez
SCC



Hannah Holt
UNC Charlotte

Highlands School Class of 2019



John Collins
UNC Charlotte



Jake Billingsley
North GA Technical College



William Shearl
Cape Fear CC



John Brooks
Full Sail University



Joshua Kennedy
Gap Year



Katie McCall
SCC



Katy Munoz
AB Technical CC



Logan Houston
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Mattson Gates
UNC Charlotte



Nicholas Pokora
Gap Year



Rylee Rivers
AB Technical CC



Samuel Hawkins
NC State University



Toby Barnes
SCC



Tristan Castro
U of North GA



Yeynor Vasquez Cerrato
SCC

2019 Upcoming Events

at the
Center for Life Enrichment



May Schedule

- **Should We Still Worry About Nuclear War?**
Thursday, May 16 Time: 2-4 Cost: \$25/\$35
Presenter: Todd Sechser, UVA
- **Bats in Your Backyard**
Tuesday, May 28 Time: 10-12 Cost: \$25/\$35
Presenter: Matina Kalcounis-Rueppell of WCU
- **If at First (and again and again) You Don't Succeed: Miguel de Cervantes and the World of Don Quixote**
Wednesday, May 29 Time: 10-12 Cost: \$25/\$35
Presenter: Santiago Garcia-Castanon of WCU
- **Southern Appalachia and the Atomic Bomb**
Thursday, May 30 Time: 10-12 Cost: \$25/\$35
Presenter: Kelley Dinkelmeyer
- **From Curing Cancer to Covert Espionage: How Nanotechnology is Changing the World**
Friday, May 31 Time: 10-12 Cost: \$25/\$35
Presenter: Channa DeSilva of WCU

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- **American Safari: September 8-13**
- **Spain/Portugal: September 15-27**
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HIGHLANDS AREA EVENTS

Ongoing

- Movies at the Playhouse – NEW SCHEDULE – Fri. & Sat. 1, 4, and 7 p.m.; Sunday 1 and 4 p.m.; NO MOVIES MONDAY; Tues., Wed., and Thurs. 1, 4, 7 p.m. Tickets are \$10 / \$2 off on Tuesdays.

- The Bascom is open Friday - Monday 10am -5pm (Sundays 12pm - 5pm). The Bascom galleries and shops will be closed Tuesdays - Thursdays. Admin offices and The Dave Drake Studio Barn are open normal business hours. Visitors are welcome to enjoy the newly updated Story Walk Trail throughout the week.

Monday - Saturday

- Mountain Findings Thrift Store on Spruce Street is open from 10a to 4p.
- Fibber Magee's Clothing Thrift Store on Laurel Street is open Tues.-Friday 10a to 4p and on Saturday from 10a to 2p.

First Mondays

- Shortoff Baptist Church non-denominational Men's Mtg at 7p.

Mondays

- At the Rec Park, Dance2Fit classes with Tori Schmitt at 5:30pm.

Mon. & Thurs.

- The Joy Program at HUMC 11:30a to 1:30p. Includes a free lunch and a variety of programs and games. All seniors are welcome. For more info, call Tricia Smith at 828-338-8167.

Mon.-Wed.

- Hip Hop classes with Tori Schmitt 5:30-6:30.

Mon., Wed., Fri.

- Heart Healthy Exercise Class Monday, Wednesday and Friday 8:30am-9:30am.

- Step Aerobics with Tina Rogers 8-9a.

- Gentle Yoga at the Rec park at 9:15-10:30 a.m.. All levels welcome.

Mon., Wed., Thurs.

- Pickle Ball at the Recreation Department Gym 10:30am -1pm

Tuesdays

- FREE Community Table Dinner at the Community Bldg. at 6p.

- The Highlands Writers Group meets every Tuesday, 3pm in the downstairs boardroom at the Bascom Center for the Visual Arts. Writers at all levels of proficiency are welcome. For additional information, contact Bud Katz, 828-526-3190 or budandlynn@me.com.

- The Humanist Discussion Group meets from 10:30-11:30 am in the Meeting Room at the back of the Hudson Library.

2nd and 4th Tuesdays

- OccupyWNC meets at the 7pm in the Sneak E. Squirrel Community Room (1314 Main St., Sylva. Visit www.occupywnc.org or call 828.331.1524

Third Tuesday

- The Macon County Poultry club meets to discuss topics related to raising backyard chickens. For more information please call 828-349-2046 or 828-369-3916.

- Highlands Area Indivisible Group meets at 5 pm in the Meeting Room at the back of the Hudson Library.

Tuesday and Thursdays

- At the Rec Park, Dance2Fit with Tori Schmitt at 7:30am.
- Exercise Class with Michelle Lane at 5:30. A combination class with many different styles of exercise at Rec Park.

Wednesdays

- At Community Bible Church, 5-5:30p - Dinner – Free (Donations Appreciated) 5:45-7p - G.R.O.W. Get Real on Wednesdays – Classes offered on money management, addiction, discovering your spiritual gifts and personality type, studying the bible, evangelism, parenting, marriage, grief, and more. All are welcome! Visit www.cbchighlands.com for class schedule.
- Power Flow Yoga with Nalicia Allio a certified Yoga In-

Highlands Motoring Festival is June 6-9



From Thursday, June 6 through Sunday, June 9 it's the 12th annual Highlands Motoring Festival. Thursday, June 6th is the opening event – Monte Carlo Night at HFCC. From 6pm to 10pm. Food, beverage, and gaming. At the end of the evening, items donated by local merchants will be auctioned off. On Friday, June 7, the Festival's "One Lap of the Mountains" driving tour leaves Highlands in the morning for a day of driving a curated route on special roads of WNC. It's sold out. On Friday evening it's a Parade of Main Street beginning at Kelsey Hutchinson Park at 5:30pm. A procession of classic and modern exotic cars will leave the Park at 6pm. Upon returning to the Park, there is a Welcome Party at the High Dive until 8 p.m. The Festival's main event, "Cars in the Park" opens to the public at 10am on Saturday, June 8, with more than 100 classic cars on display. On Sunday, June 9th in Wright Square from 8am to 12pm there is an unjudged event. It is open to the public and free of charge. For more information or to volunteer visit the website: www.HighlandsMotoring-Festival.com

HCP 'Calendar Girls' opens at PAC May 23



A few of the ten Calendar Girls who will be performing in the Highlands Cashiers Players production of the play of the same name. From left: Kaye McCann, Barbara Werder, Jamie Thomas, Lindley McLain, Robin Phillips, Pam Sharpe. The play opens on Thursday, May 23, to run Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays through June 2 at Highlands Performing Arts Center, 507 Chestnut Street. Call the HCP box office for tickets, 526-8084 or on line at highlandscashiersplays.org.

HIGHLANDS AREA EVENTS

structor 12-1pm and 6:30-7:30pm.

First Wednesdays

• Family Movies at the Hudson Library at 3:30pm. Call 828-526-3031 for titles.

3rd Wednesdays

• Recently released movies at Hudson Library at 2pm. Call 828-526-3031 for titles.

Wed. & Fri.

• Duplicate Bridge 12-4pm at Rec Park.

Thursdays

• Beginning June 6 through July 18, The Church of the Incarnation announces that a Grief Support Group will be offered on Thursdays, from 4 – 5:30, beginning June 6 through July 18. The group will not meet on July 4th. The purpose of the group is to offer support for those suffering from life transitions, such as terminal illness, death of family or close friend, miscarriage, and relationship or job loss.

• Storytime at Hudson Library, 10:40 am. Open to the public

• Kids Zone at Hudson Library, 3:30- 5 pm. A different STEAM Program each week.

• NAMI Support Group for individuals dealing with mental illness and the family members of individuals dealing with these challenges from 7 – 8:15pm at First United Methodist Church Out Reach Center on West Main Street in Franklin Call Donita for more info (828) 526-9510.

• Hip Hop classes with Tori Schmitt at 6:30-7:30 at the Rec Park.

2nd Thursdays

• Sapphire Valley Needlepoint Guild meets at the Highlands Rec Park at 10 a.m.

3rd Thursdays

• Kidney Smart Classes in Franklin: from 4:30-6pm, Angel Medical Center; Video Conference Room, 3rd Floor, 120 Riverview St. Contact Majestic 828-369-9474

Fourth Thursday

• At the Hudson Library, Kids Zone LEGO Club. Intended primarily for kids in grades 1-5, LEGO Club allows creativity and STEM skills to develop together as kids enjoy making LEGO creations.

First Fridays

• The Bascom at Sotheby's series features different artists each month with a reception the first Friday of every month at Highlands Sotheby's International Realty from 4-5:30p at the corner of Main Street and Highway 64 across from The Old Edwards Inn. The public is invited to come meet the artist, view the exhibit and have some wine.

• At the Rec Park Pool. Movie Float-in Night - all ages First Friday night of every month. Pool opens at 6:30p and movie starts at 7 p.m. Call for movie title and prices. For any other information call 828-526-1595.

Fourth Friday

• Community Coffee with Mayor Pat Taylor at the Hudson Library in the Meeting Room from 11a until noon.

Friday - Monday

• At the Bascom, 10am - 5pm (Sundays 12pm - 5pm): Free Admission to exhibition spaces and SmArt Space for children. For more information call 828-526-4949.

Saturdays

• At The Bascom, Pottery Sale in the barn from 10a to 5p.

• The Bascom Knitters on the Terrace at The Bascom from 10 am until noon or downstairs in The Bascom Library room.

Sundays

• Live Music in OEI's Hummingbird Lounge 8 p.m. to close with Paul Jones.

• Nantahala Hiking Club members and others celebrate Easter on the trail by bringing hard boiled eggs, fruit and goodies to hand out to the hikers on the Appalachian Trail. Meet at the Nantahala Clubhouse to pack the items before taking them out on the trail.

Fri., May 17

• Want some great music by some of the best musicians in this part of the country. Come see the Ram Cats at L'italiana restaurant! Highlands Road in Franklin. You'll hear a killer harmonica, drums, and voices. You can even dance! 7-10 p.m.

Sat., May 18

• The Highlands Plateau Greenway monthly work day on the Greenway Trail from 9a to noon, Saturday. If you are interested in participating, please email highlandsgreenway@nctv.com or leave a message at 828-482-2346. We'll meet at the large upper parking lot behind the Recreation Center at 9 a.m. for a brief orientation session, and you will be furnished with the necessary tools and safety equipment.

• A Live Auction benefit will be hosted for Gage Sherrod and his parents, Jennifer and Ronnie Sherrod on Saturday, at Mountain View

Intermediate at 161 Clark's Chapel Road in Franklin from 4-8p. Gage is 2 years old and is currently suffering from complete kidney failure. Benefit proceeds will go toward medical bills, travel and lodging, and time off work for his parents. Live auction, hot dog dinner, raffle prizes for gas cards and a rifle, a cake walk, live music, and plenty of activities for the kids.

• Put your dancing shoes on – and come to L'italiana restaurant Highlands Road in Franklin to hear the Remnants for great songs, great guitar playing, and out of sight drums! 7-10 p.m.

Sun., May 19

• Fiber Sunday at Cowee Textiles from 2-5p.m. in room 104 at The Cowee School Art & Heritage Center located at 51 Cowee School Dr. Franklin N.C. 28734. Bring a textile project you are working on from spinning, knitting, weaving, rug hooking, baskets etc. Questions? Call 828-349-3878

• At First Presbyterian Church, Asheville Symphony Chamber Concert at 4 p.m. Free.

Tues., May 21

• Public Forum meeting at Civic Center in Arts & Crafts Room, N. 4th Street. at 6 p.m., to hear about the proposed fire tax increase.

Thurs-Sun, May 23-26

• HCP presents "Calendar Girls" at Highlands Performing Arts Center. Thursday, Friday, and Saturday evenings at 7:30 and Sunday matinees at 2:30. Tickets will be available Thursday, May 23. Box office is 828-526-8084, website highlandscashiersplayers.org.

Fri., May 24

• Operation Medicine Drop at the Crawford Senior Center Friday, from 8am – noon at 108 Wayah Street. Drop off outdated or unused prescription/over-the-counter medicine for proper disposal.



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When is it time to sell?

I was recently asked when is it time to sell a second home? Not in the context of when is the best time to list a house, but at what point does a seller decide it is time to let go of a second home. This is a difficult question to answer, as every case has different circumstances. It did remind me of some of the unusual comments that I have heard regarding family homes and the challenges they can bring.



Carl Romberg
 Landmark Realty Group
 678-936-9309

Many times parents will buy a second home while they have young children. Memories are made growing up as weekends, summers and holidays occur at this special location. As the children mature, marry and start their family, they often continue the tradition. There are even times that it continues into third generations. In some cases there may be two, three or more families sharing the use of the family get-away. I have heard of some siblings dominating the use of the property; others that refuse to participate in the upkeep (even to the point of changing a light bulb!). Some family members are not located where they are able to use a property and would prefer to have their share in cash. Or a buyout is arranged with promises by one sibling that are not kept. Besides financial impact, these can create family relationship issues that survive well beyond ownership of a property.

I also know of successful circumstances where the property ownership is set up properly, specifically outlining how use, maintenance, expenses and eventual sale or transfer of ownership is to occur.

If someone is considering keeping a property in the family, there are many items to consider. There are conversations that should occur within the family first, and then involve the appropriate legal and financial advice from professionals.

There are other circumstances that occur that may prompt the sale of a second home including: moving up or down in size; wanting a different type of property; financial needs; relocation of a primary residence; or unfortunate circumstances like divorce, health changes or death. In these times a real estate professional can help work through a plan, taking into consideration the specific property, financial needs

and time frame. No doubt, it can be a difficult and emotional decision to make.

That brings us back to when is it time to list? On the plateau there are obviously more buyers looking between May and October. Most buyers are looking on line, well before looking in person. Any serious buyer is ready to move when the right property for them is on the market at the right price.

During the off season, there are not as many properties on the market, which limits the options for buyers at that time and may make a property stand out. Some sellers may decide to wait for a "seller's market" to list. There are times that can be beneficial to sellers, but in a second-home market a true "seller's market" is hard to come by as compared to an urban market.

In summary, individual circumstances will let you know when it is time to sell. With the proper advice in preparing a property to sell, the proper pricing and marketing, any time is a good time to list.

• Carl Romberg is a full-time Highlands resident and the Broker in Charge of Landmark Realty Group's Highlands Office located at 225 Main Street. Feel free to stop by and visit with him, or reach him at 678-936-9309 or carl@LandmarkRG.com

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• THE INK PENN •

The Magic of Billy Joel



Kathy Manos Penn

I'm a Billy Joel fan, and I saw him long ago with Elton John at the Omni in Atlanta. I got reacquainted with his music when I listened to the Billy Joel station on SiriusXM on a January trip to the mountains—both up and back.

If you're not a fan, you may be wondering how I did that without getting bored. Bored? Not hardly; instead I was fascinated with the interviews where he explained how he came to write many of his songs and what they meant.

First, I was intrigued by the story behind his 1989 hit "We didn't start the fire." A friend of Sean Lennon's was in Joel's studio and commented that it was an awful time to be 21, to which Joel replied that he remembered it had been rough for him too what with Vietnam and civil rights and more in 1970. The reply was something like "Yea, but you grew up in the '50s and everyone knows nothing happened in the 50s."

Joel was flabbergasted and sat down and wrote a laundry list of chronological headlines for what would become a hit song. A bookworm and history buff who once wanted to be a history teacher, he crafted lyrics that formed a 40-year history lesson, 1949 – 1989, including cultural touchpoints and significant events.

As a Beatles fan, I enjoyed hearing that it was seeing the Beatles on Ed Sullivan that convinced Joel to pursue a musical career. He felt the Fab Four came across as smalltown guys like him as opposed to Hollywood stars. Over almost eight hours of listening, I heard several of Joel's Madison Square Garden concerts where Paul McCartney joined him onstage.

"River of Dreams," released in '93, was his final rock album. It's also the only one of his albums that I have on CD, and I have at times played it repeatedly. That could be why I like so many of the songs it holds: "Lullabye," "Shades of Grey," and "Famous Last Words," in addition to the title track. Lullabye is just what the title indicates, a lullaby to his daughter Alexa Ray. He later wrote a children's book titled "Goodnight, My Angel" based on words in the song.

I always thought "Shades of Grey" was a wise song, a song about being mature enough to realize that not everything is black and white: "Now with the wis-

dom of years, I try to reason things out; And the only people I fear are those who never have doubts." Listening to the song again as I wrote this column made me think we could do with a few more folks these days who see shades of grey.

Finally, it was hearing Billy Joel describe "Famous Last Words" that made me realize the song was prophetic. The way he tells it, he didn't understand that he meant it when he wrote:

*And these are the last words I have to say
It's always hard to say goodbye
But now it's time to put this book away
Ain't that the story of my life*

Can it really have been over 25 years since his last rock album? I'm struck by how relevant his songs still seem, and I've had a sudden urge to see him in concert. He's doing a stadium tour this year but not coming anywhere near the Southeast, so I've been trying to find someone to go with me to NYC to see him at Madison Square Garden. Sadly, I've had no takers.

• *Kathy is a Georgia resident. Find her books "The Ink Penn: Celebrating the Magic in the Everyday" and "Lord Banjo the Royal Pooch" at Books Unlimited in Franklin and on Amazon. "Lord Banjo the Royal Pooch" is also available at Highlands Mountain Paws. Contact her at inkpenn119@gmail.com, and follow her on Facebook, www.facebook.com/KathyManosPennAuthor/.*

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• SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING •

'Land of the Free, Home of the Brave' ... Really?



Rev. Jim Murphy
Christ Anglican Church,
Cashiers

Brooks is a supporting character in the movie, *The Shawshank Redemption*, played by the late James Whitmore. *Shawshank* is a fictional (Stephen King) story that unfolds, for the most part, in a prison. In the story Brooks has a bona fide problem. He is due for parole and he is seriously anxious. He is afraid of what awaits him beyond the familiar walls which have defined his life for decades. No one pays attention to his fears. The day comes for his release whereupon he leaves the prison, checks into a hotel and proceeds to commit suicide.

Brook's story is an oxymoronic tragedy. For us, he represents someone who yearns to be free but can only find a pseudo-freedom in confinement or addiction. Brooks is not alone. There are tens of millions of individuals who face similar problems—people who embrace the idea of freedom but who choose to or would rather live confined behind some sort of bars.

Consider, if your will, those who rely on drugs, legal and illegal. Given the option, many prefer to stay under the bondage of chemicals. Then too there are untold numbers of folks, who imprison themselves in so-called "safe spaces." They confine themselves in an illusory cocoon. There are many others to consider—the poor, the broken, those in bondage to sexual aberrancy, those addicted to an ideology, lust, entitlements, all the oppressed and the sin sick. Many, under the oppression of each of these, resist freedom and release when offered the opportunity to get out of jail. They become pawns of the progressive age wherein progress is a chaotic, regressive mess.

And we fancy ourselves as the "Land of the Free and the Home of the Brave?" How curious is that when many of us place ourselves in bondage. Alas, it does not have to be that way. We don't have to resort to Brooks' solution or living the lie. Real healing, true release and freedom are promised to all who are "in Christ." In large part, Jesus' mission as the anointed One was to preach the good news, to heal the broken and the sick, to set free the captives and those who are oppressed. (Cf. Luke 4:18-21) In other words, God wants us to be set free from our self-limiting prisons.

When the Lord of creation was talking about Truth, he said in part, "Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed." (John 8:36) Jesus was referencing the lies of the evil one, the "fake news" that keeps people in prison, as opposed to the Truth of God's freeing love. The apostle Paul talked in the same vein when he wrote about walking in Jesus' Spirit, "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me (us) free from the law of sin and death."

• See SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING page 19

Proverbs 3:5

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John 3:16

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...TAX HIKE continued from page 1

services and infrastructure in Macon County and acknowledged that to be able to do so, additional funding would be needed.

"Projected expenditures have increased by \$1,805,016 or 3.5% over the FY '18-19' original budget," said Roland. "At this level of expenditures, we will continue to deliver high quality public services to Macon County residents and visitors. In FY '19-20', our prior year's commitment to enhance education funding will be solidified, upgrades to our infrastructure will be completed and additional personnel and equipment will be added to help meet the growing service demands within the Public Safety and Health and Human Services budget functions."

For the last 10 years, the county's annual budget expenditures have increased on average by about \$1 million a year. While the expenditures have increased, county leadership has consistently

...FIRE TAX from page 11

be stored in climate-controlled units. Staff said they can't find any climate-controlled units big enough for fire trucks.

So, now there is talk of acquiring a piece of property and constructing a new fire department building. In that case, the old one will be used until the new building is ready.

A 3-cent per \$100 valuation fire tax would net the department \$1,080,389 per year which would give it enough money to acquire property, build the building and pay down the estimated \$4 million loan.

The 2018-19 1-cent per \$100/valuation netted the dept. \$414,000

BB&T has offered a 15-year loan. At 4% ,payments would be \$360,000 a year.

An explanation for the proposed fire tax increase will be discussed at a public forum May 21, at 6 p.m., at the Civic Center in the Arts & Crafts Room, 600 North 4th Street, Highlands. Plans for the new building will also be displayed.

— Kim Lewicki

maintained a revenue-neutral tax rate, as required by law. A revenue-neutral tax rate might see a slight incline in the county's tax rate however, the increase is only to be able to produce enough revenue to maintain the prior year's budget.

However, at the direction of commissioners, for the first time during his tenure as county manager, Roland proposed a tax rate increase beyond revenue-neutral to meet the requests of commissioners and needs of the county.

The current tax rate for Macon County sits at .003532, (35.32 cents/\$100) one of the lowest rates in the state. A revenue-neutral tax rate would come in at .003561 (35.61 cent/\$100) for 2019-2020.

However, because the revenue-neutral tax rate would only generate \$400,000 in new funds for county projects, the needs were too high to maintain that tax rate. Roland's budget proposes increasing the county ad valorem tax rate to .003694 – (36.94 cents/\$100) a 1.59 cents increase.

"This increase will generate approximately \$1,050,000 in recurring revenue. This amount is needed to cover increased funding for operations (\$500,000) technol-

ogy (\$300,000), and annual capital outlay (\$250,000) in the school system's budget, as approved by the Board of Commissioners in FY '18-19'.

The bulk of the increased revenue will go directly to fund recurring needs within Macon County Schools, something both the school system and the public have championed for in recent years.

Rather than being funded as a recurring need, previously appropriations for the school system came from the fund balance or from the county's consolidated capital projects fund.

As in all businesses and governments, a large majority of the county's overall operating budget is for personnel costs. In Roland's proposed budget, increases in health insurance premiums accounted for a significant portion of the budget.

After personnel expenses, the county's budget included new positions in public safety, new vehicles for several county departments, and capital expenditures addressing aging facilities. The two departments accounting for the bulk of the budget are public safety and the school system.

...SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING continued from page 18

(Romans 8:2) Paul enjoyed the complete freedom from condemnation that the Lord gave him.

Later, Paul would reconfirm the ministry of Jesus. It is "for freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery." (Galatians 5:1) God wants us to be defined by the freedom we have in him, not by being indentured servants to something that has a hold on us. If we are to live as a nation that proclaims ourselves to be "the land of the free and the home of the brave," then we should to take the "Get Out of Jail Free" card that Jesus offers us.



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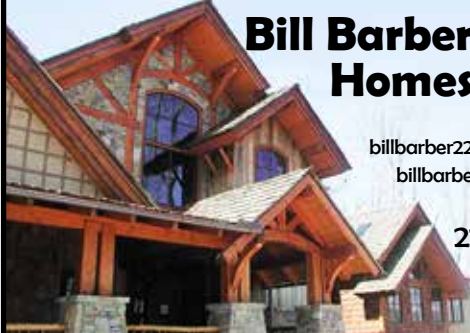
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POLICE & FIRE REPORT

Highlands Police enforces from April 27. Only the names of persons arrested, issued a Class-3 misdemeanor or public officials have been used.

April 27

• At 4:46 p.m., officers responded to a 2-vehicle accident on NC 106.

May 1

• At noon, officers were called about someone entering a home and using the fireplace at a residence on Woodcrest Way.

May 5

• At 9:45 a.m., officers were called about an argument over car keys on S. 4th Street.

May 6

• At 10:26 a.m., officers responded to a 2-vehicle accident on US 64.

May 6

• At 11:54 a.m., officers were called about a structure fire on Paul Walden Road.

May 7

• At 6:36 p.m., officers responded to a 1-vehicle accident at Maple near Oak Street.

May 8

• At 10:05 p.m., officers were called about a simple assault at a residence on Cullasaja Drive where a woman was pushed.

The Highlands Fire & Rescue log from May 7.

May 7

• At 2:19 p.m., the dept. provided mutual aid to Glenville-Cashiers Rescue on a search.

• At 5:34 p.m., the dept. responded to a call of a possible electrical fire at a residence on Garnet Rock Trail.

May 9

• At 6:08 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a location on Helen's Barn Ave.

May 12

• The dept. was first-responders to a location on US 64 west.

May 13

• At noon, the dept. was first-responders to a location in Highlands Plaza.

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