

Highlands Newspaper

Happy Memorial Day!

FREE Every Thursday

Volume 21, Number 21 Real-Time News, Weather & WebCams: HighlandsInfo.com Thurs., May 23, 2024

What's next concerning STRs in Highlands

By Kim Lewicki

Short-term rentals were front and center at both the Worksession prior to May's Town Board meeting and again during a Short-term Rental Leg-

islative Update Discussion later that evening.

STR software

During the Worksession, after hearing a comprehensive presentation by representatives from

GovOS – a STR monitoring software company – commissioners agreed unanimously to abandon the Granicus software company it has been using and pay \$25,000

• See STRs page 18

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FY '24-'25 MC county budget is presented

By Brittney Lofthouse

In a presentation to the Board of Commissioners on Tuesday night, County Manager Derek Roland introduced the FY 2024-'25 budget, marking it as the highlight of his tenure. Roland credited a decade of prudent financial stewardship for the county's robust fiscal health, underlining that such stability has been achieved through strategic decisions, overcoming economic fluctuations, natural disasters, and a global pandemic.

"Out of the 11 budgets I have had the privilege of presenting, this budget is the one of which I am most proud," Roland said. "The strong financial position anchoring this budget did not happen overnight nor did it happen by accident. It is the product of a decade of fiscally responsi-

• See BUDGET page 13

Highlands School Class of 2024



Inman Ahrens, Allison Buck, Olivia Cole, Nicolas Cotton Arteaga, Catelynn Couch, Brooke Fogarty, Henry Garcia Lopez, Harrison Gates, Landon Green, Cooper Hall, John Head, Sara McDonald, Danny Mendoza Cortez, Peyton Naron, Jasmine Oakley, Daggar Owens, Luke Ramos, Evelin Rios Gopar, Annamaria Silverthorn, Madison Smith, Darby Templeton, Caitlin Tingen, Alexis Turner, MacKenzie Woods and mascots Paisley Keener and Maverick Ramey. Graduation is Sat., May 25 at 10 am in the new gym. See photos on pages 20 & 21.

- Photo by Sunset Staff

MC BOC signs resolution for Highlands healthcare housing

By Brittney Lofthouse

To address the housing crisis affecting healthcare workers in the region, the Macon County Board of County Commissioners passed a resolution in support of a housing development aimed at providing affordable and sustainable housing for healthcare professionals in Macon and Jackson Counties.

The resolution, presented by Breck Kean, Vice President of Development for ReaVentures during the May meeting of the commissioners stated:

"In August 2023, Lee Ventures Group, LLC was selected to initiate due diligence and determine feasibility of a housing community on the campus of the

• See HOUSING page 15

As we enjoy this beautiful weekend, let's pause to remember and honor the heroes who made the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom.

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• THE PLATEAU'S POSITION •

• MAYOR ON DUTY •

STRs are under control...let sleeping dogs lie



Highlands Mayor
Patrick Taylor

On the last Thursday's Town Board agenda was the topic of the status of STR legislation. I can report that Senators Tim Moffitt and Bobby Hanig's SB 667 is still in play. Our town attorney stated it still can come before the legislature any time before the speaker closes this short session. The title of the bill says it all: "An Act to Limit the Regulation of Short-Term Rentals by Local Governments to Protect Property Rights and to Establish Guidelines for Regulating Short-Term Rentals." The bill passed the first reading in April and is now in the rules committee.

At our board meeting, several commissioners expressed a strong interest in wanting Highlands to move forward with the amortization of STRs. They would pass an ordinance allowing current STRs to continue operations until a designated period, say for another three years.

When the STR issue surfaced with intensity several years ago, the board considered amortization as a remedy for prohibiting and removing STRs in residential zones.

The plan was put on hold, and an ordinance was adopted on September 15, 2022, allowing residential property owners already operating STRs to continue under a grandfathered status. Our attorneys advised us that this ordinance was on solid legal footing. And I will say with the spread of STRs back around 2021, I saw amortization as a viable option to protect the residential character of our neighborhoods. I still want to protect our neighborhoods from STR over-development, not just by

imposing amortization.

All of my board colleagues share the same concern about protecting neighborhoods. The community has a group called Save Highlands and a counter group that I would call The Neighborhood Coalition. Some on the Town Board feel that amortization will eliminate STRs which they believe are businesses operating in our neighborhoods. They also feel the current ordinance grandfathering STR creates an unequal status within neighborhoods. They make good points.

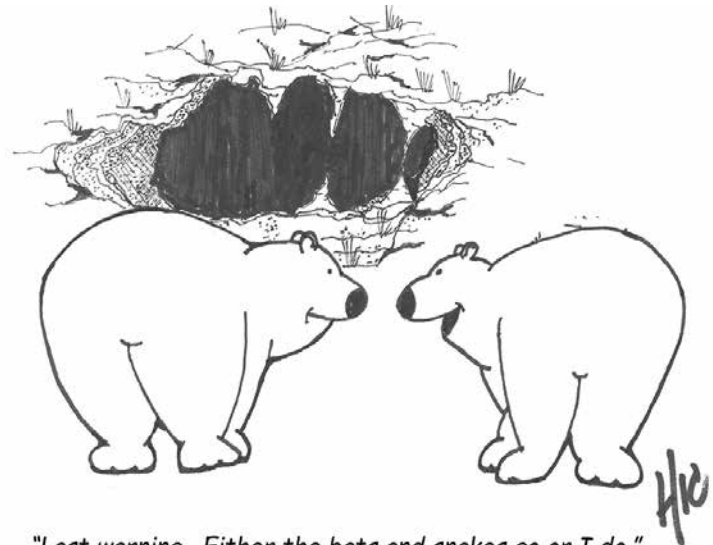
My views on amortization have evolved in the last several years to where I think the town should think long and hard about pursuing such a course.

First, several years ago, I thought neighborhoods were being inundated with STRs. Our staff had no way of knowing how many STRs were in operation until software was purchased that was very effective in tracking the number of STRs in Highlands. It turns out that within the town about 285 STRs are in operation. Put in perspective, there are about 2,219 residences in areas zoned residential. When I heard those figures, I was pleasantly surprised that there were not as many STRs as I had once feared.

In short, using tracking software, our administrative staff knows who is operating under the grandfather clause of the ordinance. If someone attempts to start a new STR, the software informs our zoning administrator, and a cease-and-desist order is issued. Also, if a homeowner has the STR grandfather status but stops operating the property as an STR for 12 months or more, that grandfathered use is then made null and void. Instead of STRs increasing in residential zones, I believe they will diminish over time. I believe the current ordinance will be a better option to manage STRs rather than going to amortization.

I encourage the board to be very deliberate. See MAYOR page 9

• HIC'S VIEW •






"Last warning. Either the bats and snakes go or I do."

• CORRECTION •

In the May 16 edition in the article entitled "MC Library meetings are still contentious" Diann Catlin's name was spelled wrong.

We regret the error and are happy to set the record straight.

• WEATHER •

Thu, 23-May	Fri, 24-May	Sat, 25-May	Sun, 26-May
 71°F 55°F	 71°F 57°F	 80°F 56°F	 75°F 60°F
At-storm around in the p.m.	A heavy t-storm in the p.m.	Some sun with a thunderstorm	A thunderstorm possible
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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:

We do not charge for obituaries at this time, but we reserve the right to edit as needed for space.

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• INK PENN •

Cozy and calm except for the murders

By now, you know mysteries are my favorite reads, and, yes, I prefer those set in England. For a slight shake-up, this week's selections include one set in France, and another in a coastal town in the US. Never fear, you'll also get a taste of a third cozy mystery set in England.

The Armstrong Assignment by Diana Xarissa

One of my Facebook followers recommended this author, and I'm so glad she did. I loved Janet and Edward, the newly married couple who are the main characters.

There are a few indicators that they're a "mature" couple. She retired from teaching and opened a B&B with her sister, and he's retired from a government job.

On their honeymoon in Paris, he suddenly disappears, called back to an assignment in his old world. Before you know it, they're both involved in trying to prevent a murder. The dialogue is witty, and the mystery requires understanding the potential suspects and what their likely motives could be.

I'm delighted to know that this is #1

in the series and that there's a series that precedes this one—involving Janet and her sister opening their B&B. I may have to find that one and read it before proceeding to book #2 in the Janet Markham Bennett cozy thriller series.

Boardwalk Betrayal by Wendy Ledger

I discovered this cozy mystery through my subscription to Amazon's Kindle Unlimited program, which allows readers to download a vast selection of books for a monthly fee. If you're an avid reader, you may want to check it out. Because so many of the books that interest me are not available in my local library, I read quite a few mysteries this way.

The black cat on the cover of "Boardwalk Betrayal" caught my eye. After all, there's a black cat on the cover of my books, too. When I read the first line in the blurb, I had to give it a try. How could I resist, "A chatty feline and a tragic murder. Can this loyal wife solve a heartbreaking crime?" This



Kathy Manos Penn

is the first in Ledger's Black Cat Cozy Mystery series set in Harmony Beach.

Maggie is a journalist, and Pepper is her cute cat, and together they solve murder mysteries. Having a smart cat as a sidekick is an asset to any amateur sleuth. (Admittedly, I may be a bit biased in my opinion.) As a cat lover, I agreed with this review: "I really enjoyed the

talking cat. Sometimes I wish my pets could talk to me; it would make things a lot easier!" If you're an animal lover who enjoys mysteries that don't give you nightmares, give this one a try.

Murder by Candlelight by Faith Martin

And now, back to England. When I saw that Faith Martin had started a new series, I was eager to read it. I enjoyed both her Hillary Greene and Ryder & Loveday series, though I've not read either all the way through. I was especially interested in this new series because it's set in the Cotswolds,

my favorite spot in England and the setting for my mystery series. The setting for Martin's latest series is the 1920s.

Its two main characters are younger than those in Faith Martin's earlier series. Arbuthnot 'Arbie' Swift is a bit of a diletante, though he has written a surprisingly popular book, "The Gentleman's Guide to Ghost-Hunting." That activity was great fun for him. His sleuthing partner, Val, is the daughter of the local vicar and much more action-oriented than he is. Their relationship forms an entertaining subplot.

Together, they solve a locked room mystery, uncovering plenty of suspects, motives, and puzzles. If you're looking for a light, entertaining read—complete with a visit to the picturesque Cotswolds, this is the book for you.

• Award-winning author Kathy Manos Penn is a Georgia resident. Find her cozy mysteries at Franklin Office Supply & Gifts, and on Amazon. Contact her at inkpenn119@gmail.com, and follow her on Facebook, www.facebook.com/KathyManosPennAuthor/.

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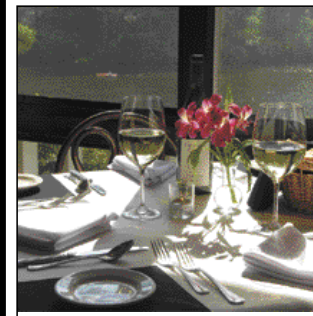
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• LETTERS •

Men like Lincoln are but history in America today

Dear Editor:

In 1838 (22 years before the Civil War) a 29-year-old Abraham Lincoln received his first notable speech invitation. At the time Lincoln had been practicing law for two years and serving as a state legislator for four years. He was one of what was known as the “Long Nine” (referring to a group of young Whig Party activists all of whom were over six feet).

The killing of abolitionist editor, Elijah Lovejoy, in Alton, Illinois, inspired Lincoln to prepare an address that denounced mob protest and upheld the rule of law. This would differ from his more distinguished form of writings during his presidential years. Here, you could say, Lincoln indulges in some passionate rhetoric to impress an upscale audience. It's known as the “Young Men's Lyceum (an institution for popular education) Address” given on January 12th, 1838.

“Let every American, every lover of liberty, every well-wisher to his prosperity, swear by the blood of the Revolution, never to violate in the least particular, the laws of the country; and never to tolerate their violation by others. As the patriots of seventy-six did to the support of the Declaration of Independence, so to the support of the Constitution and Laws, let every American pledge his life, his property, and his sacred honor; -- let every man remember that to violate the law, is to trample on the blood of his father, and to tear the character of his own, and his children's liberty.

Let reverence for the laws, be breathed by every American mother, to the lisping babe that prattles on her lap -- let it be taught in schools, in seminaries, and in colleges; -- let it

be written in Primers, spelling books, and in Almanacs; -- let it be preached from the pulpit, proclaimed in legislative halls, and enforced in courts of justice. And, in short, let it become the political religion of the nation.”

At age 29, Abraham Lincoln, already committed to our national well-being and prosperity, with statesman-like bearing, evoked the memory of those patriots who had gone before, knowing instinctively what was expected of him and his countrymen.

Fast-forwarding nearly two centuries, we find the loyalty and devotion of the men of Lincoln's time are but historic events for men to read about and ponder.

Entrusted to us by the “Greatest Generation,” the men and women who fought, won, and following, rebuilt this beautiful land, we were forced to watch in horror, an armed, deadly invasion of our Capitol incited by our own president and enabled by members of our own elected Congress.

And as if that wasn't enough, we must now look on helplessly as a one-sided Supreme Court unnecessarily debates whether this same former president is subject to or immune from the same Constitution and rules of law the rest of us are subject to.

The Constitution would have included a grant of presidential immunity had the Framers wanted one. I do believe the Supreme Court should leave the rewriting of the Constitution to Congress.

David L. Snell
Franklin, NC

Help us R.E.A.C.H. others in desperate need

Dear Editor,

As some of you may know, REACH of Macon County provides counseling, housing and support to the victims of domestic and sexual abuse and human trafficking for our plateau and beyond. I have been on the board for the past 13 years and it has been the most meaningful work I have ever done. With much gratitude that I have never been a victim of domestic or sexual abuse, I find the work our social workers do absolutely amazing and the experiences of our clients beyond my imagination. And yes, human trafficking does occur even in our beautiful mountains.

REACH is primarily funded with state and federal funds (fees felons are charged, marriage license fees, etc.) but that does not cover capital projects. My first experience in fundraising was finding funds for the construction of our new shelter. It has been in operation for seven years and serves both Macon and Jackson county victims. We also have a pet kennel, courtesy of Church of The Incarnation, since abused people often are hesitant to leave their pets behind with abusers. We are often showcased by the federal agencies for our shelter and kennel. We also are the only agency in Western North Carolina to care for human trafficked victims. In other words, this organization provides very meaningful services for our community.

That said, it currently operates in a 125-year-old, 1,700 sq ft farmhouse that has a leaky roof and no privacy for our clients. After an assault, victims are often transported to Asheville where they are sadly not treated with the compassion

they deserve. Plus, they are often treated by staff untrained to handle sexual assault victims. In addition to addressing the desperate need for more and private space, the new facility will also provide care and support for the victim and her/his family. We have trained sexual assault nurses to provide the care needed.

OK, enough of my story, but happy to share more information with anyone that has any questions. This capital campaign is rather small under \$2 million for a 5,000 sq. ft. office with space for counseling, training, food pantry, and medical care. We are getting updated quotes and think the number will drop even more. We need a little more to start construction. And once again, this facility is 100% being built by the community. So far no tax or federal funds are available.

And for the best news, this gala is a one-and-done. We will not do another gala once we have the funds. Due to the generosity of Ray and Diane McPhail in covering the band, Bourbon Revival, and other sponsors, 100% of every ticket will go for the construction of this desperately needed facility in Franklin. (15% of our clients, though, either work or live in Highlands).

Tickets can be purchased on the PAC website. (link is <https://www.highlandsp Performingarts.com/special-events>). Dinner, open bourbon and wine bar, and a great band with a dance floor.

Cindy Trevathan
Highlands

• See LETTERS page 8

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...LETTERS continued from page 7

Thank you for the facts

Dear Editor,

I wish to congratulate your reporter, Ms. Lewicki, on her well-written, coherent, and truly fact-based article about the most recent Macon County Public Library (MCPL) board of trustees meeting. The article in the May 16 edition entitled "MC Library meetings are still contentious." It was a great counter-point to the letter disparaging our libraries and staff.

Sadly, there is still a small group of people within our county who are unable to distinguish between fact and fiction when it comes to our libraries. Some of them even sit on the library board.

Swain and Jackson counties understand the truth and refuse to be bullied. Why can't Macon County do the same?

Jennifer Germain
US Army Veteran
Franklin, NC

Whose values do you cherish?

Dear Editor,

It is both interesting and puzzling to me that people who identify with "family values" agendas can support a man who throughout his life has flaunted so many of them. I think his irreverence may give them permission to find expression for things they would otherwise find unacceptable because he is endorsed by religious figures they respect.

Those religious figures seem to have "followed the money" in a Machiavellian, utilitarian way, ignoring what might otherwise seemingly be deal-breakers to endorsement. This seems to be happening in

other countries as well.

Is it a function of fear of scarcity due to dramatic increases in population? The religious values of generosity, care for the less privileged, help for those struggling to survive seem to be now less foreground. What has supplanted these religious values is a self-protective, demeaning and "othering" stance towards people viewed as less successful.

I hope people consider carefully whether following political endorsements of some of your religious leaders is violating your own higher values.

Carole Light
Scaly Mountain

Some subjects should always and only be approached through a parent.

Dear Editor,

As a school librarian or media specialist, as we are commonly called, I feel a need to respond to the recent "Ban your own book" letter-to-the-editor in the May 2 edition of Highlands Newspaper because the writer included school libraries. Some comments you made are simply not true.

I graduated from the University of Florida with a BA from the College of Education in Library Science. I worked in one of the largest school districts in the U.S. Actually, Broward County, Florida is the 6th largest school district in the nation. My certification in Florida included Kindergarten through 12th grade. It had to be updated every 5 years with college courses in

• See LETTERS page 10

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Memorial Day Weekend: Honoring heroes and embracing well-being in Real Estate

Memorial weekend, Mental Health Awareness Month, and real estate are all intertwined through the themes of reflection, appreciation, and well-being. This weekend, we honor our fallen heroes and celebrate the unofficial start of summer—a poignant reminder of those who made the ultimate sacrifice, urging us to cherish every moment and live life to its fullest. Amidst this reflection lies an opportunity within real estate: protecting the American Dream of homeownership. Ensuring that everyone has the chance to create secure, nurturing homes not only fosters mental well-being but also builds lasting memories and stability for future generations.



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For buyers, imagine escaping the hustle and bustle of city life to find solace in a mountain retreat—a place where the air is crisp, the views are breathtaking, and the pace of life slows to a tranquil rhythm. Picture yourself waking up to the sound of birds chirping, and sipping coffee on your private deck as the morning mist rises from the valleys below. The dedicated real estate agents on the Highlands-Cashiers plateau, are here to help you turn this vision into reality, guiding you through the process of finding your perfect mountain sanctuary on the plateau.

Here are some tips to keep in mind: Define your priorities and budget before starting your search, explore different neighborhoods on the plateau to find the one that best suits your lifestyle, and

...MAYOR continued from page 2

ate before adopting an STR amortization ordinance. Such an ordinance could negatively impact the town.

First, as our town attorney has stated, Highlands will be sued over amortization, maybe by several organizations. I know the STR industry will be strongly interested in challenging the ordinance.

Second, I do not think Highlands would have a good chance of defending the amortization ordinance in the courts. The cost of mounting a defense could be very sizable, including our attorney fees and, if we lost, the

work with a local agent who understands the market intricacies. Get pre-approved when working with a mortgage or show proof of funds to strengthen your offer. Be prepared to act quickly in a competitive market, and consider future resale value when evaluating properties.

And for sellers, this is an opportunity to showcase your home as more than just a property, but as a refuge for the soul—a place where tranquility abounds. With strategic marketing and meticulous staging, we can highlight the unique features of your mountain retreat, capturing the hearts of buyers seeking

a haven from the stresses of modern life. Preparation is key. Prepare your home for sale by decluttering, depersonalizing, and enhancing curb appeal. Price your home competitively and work with your agent to create a comprehensive marketing strategy. Be flexible with showings and carefully review offers with your agent to make informed decisions.

Together, let's turn Memorial Day weekend into a celebration of new beginnings in the realm of real estate, where every transaction is infused with meaning and purpose. Here's to those who gave us our freedom to enjoy the gentle moments of love, memories, and the comforting presence of those closest to our hearts. I challenge you to do one act of kindness today to honor those who lost their lives in the service of our country. Cheers to Memorial Day weekend, prioritizing mental health, and your real estate journey!

fees of the opposing side.

As a final note, I return to Senators Moffitt and Hanig's SB 667 bill. Our move to amortization could be the trigger to propel the senators' legislation forward into law. Some legislators who currently support local governments setting their own STR rules might think our actions to enact an amortization law would go against individual property rights. The state legislature may preempt municipalities with a sweeping state law that would limit local STR controls. In short, Highlands might lose what authority we currently have

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...LETTERS continued from page 8

my major. I worked in 3 elementary schools and in a middle school.

We were not obligated to serve all members of a community but rather the students in a specific school. Yes, each school is very different based on location and population of the students. Each Principal was too. That is our boss and the only person I had to answer to daily. That conversation could include any subject deemed appropriate or inappropriate for a school.

First, every librarian's goal is to always promote a love of reading. We were not obliged to order any books based on gender, sexual orientation, health or ability or any other subject. Each school library had a 5-year school accreditation, so we already had a core collection, which was originally purchased by the county when the school was built. Our job was to keep a balanced collection of books yearly. We did not order books or media based on an agenda someone may have created.

Second, choosing books and media is very complicated and base on the budget the principal allots for each school library. Librarians do order books based on our common sense.

We also order through approved websites, periodicals and some other sources. We always ordered the common award-winning books and the runners-up. That is a must have for any school library. Ordering also included books that have to be replaced because they are well loved and show too much wear. Keeping up with a balanced collection is a must including all Dewey numbers, picture books for K-2nd grade and what they call chapter books, instead of novels now, for 3rd-5th grade. We were also responsible

for ordering different types of media for the classroom teachers that can be checked out through the library.

Finally, as a librarian and parent, I believe that some subjects should always and only be approached through a parent. Any current subject can be bought through many book websites by a parent. I strongly believe that is the only way to handle sensitive subjects and if I had been forced to purchase books on topics, I thought were inappropriate for the students of the school, I would have sacrificed my job.

Cathy Hermanson
Highlands

Thank you for making the Annual Three Rivers Fly Fishing Tournament fundraiser a success

Dear Editor,

May 2 through May 4, we held the 14th Annual Three Rivers Fly Fishing Tournament here in Highlands. With over 20 teams participating, we were able to raise over \$23,000 for the Town of Highlands Scholarship Fund.

The Winners in the Guided Division were "The Bobbers" Bob Wade and Sloan Howard with over 120 fish caught and almost 1,300 inches of fish. In the Unguided Division, the team "Realtors on the Fly" made up of John Muir and Brooks Kittrell posted similar numbers with over 100 fish

• See LETTERS page 14

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Turtle Pond Road. Lovely 2/bd, 2 ba, with guest room. Recently renovated Rentable for income or perfect for year-round living. Comfortable layout with a massive outdoor porch-deck area. Modern kitchen and living room with fireplace. Offered at \$699,000. mls #104147



In Brushy Face Subdivision, this 4/ bd, 6/ba is fully renovated. Designer finishes, usable lot, and spectacular view! 2 -car garage and 2-car carport. A large great room with masonry fireplace and huge screen porch. Kitchen and dining room is open to the great room, Primary suite plus an office with bath on the main level. Primary suite, and 2 guest bedrooms, each with baths upstairs. Sitting room, with guest area downstairs and the 2-car garage. Offered at \$2,950,000. mls #104351



3/bd, two and 1/2/ba home on 1.15 acres. Main level has an open kitchen and dining area with a 1/2 bath. Large living area with primary bedroom, ensuite bath with garden tub. Upstairs are two bedrooms, large hall bath and extra storage. Permitted to be short-term rental. All for only \$595,000. mls #103549



Lovely cabin located on the Highlands side of Franklin on Mountain Laurel Drive. Sits high on a ridge with some mountain view. Home features a great room, fireplace, dining room and kitchen, one bedroom and bath on the main level, upstairs has two loft bedrooms and a bath. Terrace level has a family room with a full bath, laundry room and additional storage. Detached carport. Offered at \$595,000. mls #103751



Stunning 4/bd, 4 1/2 ba sits on over 3.3 acres with ridgeline view and water feature. Huge cathedral living room, Real fireplace, screened porch with an open porch with fireplace. Cook's kitchen. 2 main floor bedrooms with baths. Lower level has 2/bd, 2/ba with a full living room and opens to a porch. A 2-car garage with a covered breezeway. Offered at \$1,575,000. mls #102601



Beautifully resurrected from 2 log homes dating back to the early 1800s. Between each log is spray foam insulation ensuring an energy efficient structure. The kitchen, dining and hallways are lined with River reclaimed cypress. Ceilings are painted pine and antique tobacco poles. Interior windows are trimmed with reclaimed wormy chestnut. Reclaimed heart pine flooring, custom made chandelier from South Africa, reclaimed wormy chestnut accents on walls. Primary bathroom: heated travertine tile flooring, custom made cabinetry and mirrors. Guest cabin suite: separated from the main cabin by a covered breezeway. Offered at \$2,495,000. mls # 103597



A well built, low maintenance house on 2-acre parcel surrounded by 24+ acres of Conservation Land. Black Rock Mtn. is the backdrop. Pasture land out front. Just 3 miles from of Main Street. Cathedral ceilings, interior wood is reclaimed wormy chestnut and black walnut. 3/bd, 3/ ba with Great room/ kitchen open to loft area. Covered porches and open decks. Attached carport. Offered for \$1,695,000. MLS# 103379



Lovely year-round living with this 3/ bd, 3/ba with small yard. Living room and open dining and modern kitchen. Split bedrooms each with baths. rear deck and covered side porch. Lower level has a bedroom and bathroom, 2-car garage, workshop with storage. Offered at \$695,000. mls#103898



Lovely setting with the 2 bedrooms, 1 bath plus a large loft on Dendy Orchard Road. Move in condition with good light and updated kitchen appliances. Starlink internet service. Close to the Cullasaja River, Cliffside Lake, Dry Falls, Bridal Veil Falls and 6 miles to the center of Highlands. Great rental potential. State maintained paved road scraped/salted when it snows. Usable lot with chicken coop and workshop. Dog lot. Adjoins USFS. Offered at \$474,000 mls #103620



On Upper Lake Road in-town Highlands with great entrance hall, large living room, dining room and gourmet kitchen. The screened porch and spacious deck open to the living room and dining room for great flow. Primary suite with office and laundry room, as well as very large walk in closet and large bath. Upstairs has 3 bedrooms, each with its own bath. Large den with built-ins and a bunk room upstairs. Porch, gardens and a fountain at the front of the house. There are 2 guest parking spaces on the street. Offered at \$2,400,000 mls #102744



A 2-bd, 1.5/ba townhouse in town. Ready for personal touches. Offered at \$699,000 mls#103846



2 blocks from Main Street, this totally renovated home features 3/ bd and 2/ba within the main house, Guest suite has full bath over the 2-car garage. Large entertaining porch and deck. Priced significantly less than the neighboring new homes in the area. Offered at \$1,750,000. MLS #103079



Sidewalk access only 3 blocks from the center of town, this historical home was built in 1903 off Horse Cove Road, but has been updated for modern living. 4/bd in the main house 3 1/2 baths. Plus a 1-bd, 1-ba guest house with kitchen and living room. Kitchen has recent appliances with natural marble tops and a small butler's pantry. Main floor primary with bath. Upstairs has 2 bedrooms with a hall bath and an additional primary plus bath. The rear deck has a view of Satulaha mountain on over 1.4 acres. Offered at \$3,200,000. mls#103809



Located in the gated community of VZ Top. This upper level unit offers one level living with views from every room with large covered deck. 2/bd, 2/ba, an open kitchen with breakfast bar, living room with a wood burning fireplace, and custom built-ins. Cozy front porch with a large exterior storage closet. Offered at \$530,000 mls #104136

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• HOSPITAL NEWS •

Thanks to our dedicated nurses and committed team members, the community can count on H-C Hospital and the Eckerd Living Center

May is a month during which healthcare facilities have much to celebrate. We recognize and honor our healthcare providers during National Nurses Week, National Skilled Nursing Care Week, and National Hospital Week. In May, we extend gratitude to the host of caring and compassionate nurses, as well as to the other clinician and support staff who make Highlands-Cashiers Hospital (HCH) and Eckerd Living Center (ELC) incredible places of comfort and healing.



**Tom Neal CEO, CNO
Highlands-Cashiers
Hospital**

When we look at everyone on our team, there are many to acknowledge. Nurses are at the front and do everything from provide sensitive bedside care to finely monitor and meet every patient's unique needs as they move through their hospital stay. They gather, interpret, and convey detailed information, and effectively communicate to both patients and providers. A nurse does all of this with sensitivity and compassion — trust me when I say this is often not easy. Their duty can call for them to support someone during the most challenging moments of their life. Often, this comes at a personal cost, since it's very difficult to leave your emotions at work when you clock out after becoming so attached to your patients and their families.

Conversely, this can come with extreme elation. We have had so many beautiful stories of lives restored here, and each of them is touching. Recently, we sent a man home who had been admitted to our Swing Bed program (a special program that allows us to use our hospital beds for rehab services). This gentleman had been a victim of a tragic accident when he was struck by a car while working on the side of the road. He came into the program completely bedbound, with his leg held together by external metal rods. This man was very depressed, as he thought he would never walk again. Over the course of 60 days, we saw him return to walking, and also watched as his spirit was restored. He walked out of our hospital a jubilant man. Witnessing his journey was pure joy, and he returned the encouragement he had received in his early

days back to our staff.

As we recognize the extraordinary talents of nurses each May, I also like to call out the other team members who support our providers and make critical contributions to support our patients. Other professionals who provide care include imaging, laboratory, respiratory therapy, and therapists. Each of these departments is staffed by competent, caring professionals.

There is also a full complement of support staff who work behind the scenes to assure our hospital operates efficiently. Their services are important to our mission as they keep our facility clean and sanitary and assure our hospital ranks as one of the cleanest in HCA Healthcare. They too, are compassionate and caring. This list also includes staff from environmental services, the dietary department, patient registration, building and equipment maintenance, supply services, not to mention the multiple off-site team members who support us.

These are dedicated employees invested in helping and supporting the healing of our patients. They do so many things — and all go toward making HCH and ELC extraordinary, a fact borne out by our outstanding patient experience scores. Their efforts are also undoubtedly a major contributor to our exceptional record of no patient CAUTI (catheter-associated urinary tract infections) or CLABSI (central line associated blood infections) infections for an entire decade. Simply put, every team at our facilities is essential to our success.

There is one last group that needs to be recognized — our volunteers. They put their hearts into supporting our hospital in multiple ways that enrich our patients' and residents' lives or support our mission without pay, unless you count smiles from our staff and patients as payment. You can see them visiting with our patients to help pass the time with activities, assisting our team on the units, or supporting us in

...BUDGET continued from page 1

ble leadership on the Macon County Board of Commissioners and the hard work and dedication of Macon County employees.”

Roland’s budget proposal totals \$63,704,651 with revenues and expenditures balanced and no change to the county’s ad-valorem tax rate.

“The most significant year of capital expenditures in the history of Macon County can be accomplished with no increase to the ad-valorem tax rate, without maxing out the county’s debt capacity (currently at \$22.4M outstanding principal and interest) and our fund balance will not fall below \$25M,” said Roland

The budget presentation highlighted Macon County’s credit rating and a substantial \$48.7 million fund balance, which generated \$3.1 million in interest for FY 2024. Under conservative financial assumptions, the county is poised to support \$70.1 million out of \$133.65 million in education-related capital projects for the coming fiscal year, leveraging its Capital Reserve Fund without increasing the ad-valorem tax rate. The remaining funds will be sourced from a \$62 million Needs Based Capital Grant received in 2024, alongside Repair and Renovation funds and reserves.

Reflecting on the fiscal journey, Roland recalled the FY 2015 revaluation that followed the 2008 recession, leading to a 19% drop in the ad-valorem property tax base and resulting in an FY 2016 tax rate of .349 per \$100 of assessed value. At that time, the fund balance was approximately \$16 million with \$44 million in outstanding debt, starkly contrasting today’s fiscal health. The county has seen a transformation with the fund balance growing by 50% and debt halving over the last decade.

According to Roland, a cornerstone of the budget is its commitment to capital improvements and employee welfare. The FY 2025 budget earmarks \$1.9 million for annual capital expenditures, a 27% increase from pre-pandemic averages. This includes critical upgrades to emergency services fleets, educational infrastructure, and planning for the Dorothy and John R. Crawford Senior Center.

“Real estate development and property values remaining at all-time highs will again lead to FY 25’ ad-valorem tax base growth albeit not at levels experienced over the past few years,” said Roland. “This additional revenue combined with revenue made available following a reduction in annual capital expenditures will be directed to those areas of operations the organization needs it most, allowing us to overcome the challenges of today as we literally “build” the future of tomorrow.

The distribution of expenditures in

the operating budget will result in a second year of increased operational funding to the Macon County School System, (13% in 2 years) a second year of increased funding to Southwestern Community College, (76% in 2 years) a 7% increase to the Fontana Regional Library System, add two positions in Environmental Health, provide a 2% Cost of Living Adjust for all Macon County Employees and a 1-step increase in the pay-plan for all full time employees.”

The FY 2025 budget reflects conservative revenue assumptions, anticipating a

“leveling out” of the dramatic economic growth experienced during the pandemic. While overall revenues have decreased slightly due to a reduction in intergovernmental funding and investment interest, the county’s operational and capital needs remain met.

“The anticipated decline in interest on investments comes following a reduction in principal to fund proposed capital improvements,” Roland explained. “This budget sustains a ‘new and enhanced’ level of spending with respect to annual capital improvements, ensuring critical upgrades and maintenance continue.”

Roland concluded by emphasizing the critical role of Macon County employees in achieving and maintaining fiscal health. “Year after year, these men and women have implemented annual budgets effectively and with a degree of efficiency that is unprecedented for a small rural county. As we move forward, we must never forget that these men and women are the organization’s most valuable asset and should forever remain its top priority.”

During Tuesday night’s meeting, after Roland completed his budget presentation, Commissioner Josh Young asked how

• See BUDGET page 22

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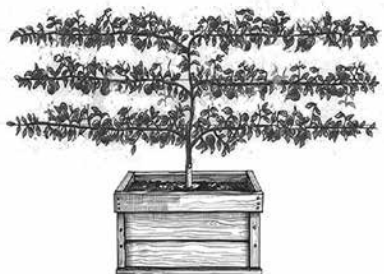
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...LETTERS continued from page 10

caught and almost 1,100 inches of fish. The teams were awarded their trophies the evening of May 4 at an awards dinner held at a private residence.

The tournament is a large undertaking and so many in our community help put this on. First, I'd like to thank Melissa Delaney and her staff at Old Edwards Inn who put on the opening night welcome party. This was a top-notch experience and so much fun for all our teams and their guests.

Next, I would like to thank Rachel Lewicki at The Secret Garden for providing lunches for all our teams out on the river both days. A big thank you to Berkshire Hathaway for sponsoring the lunches on Day 1, and The Highland Hiker for sponsoring the lunches on Day 2.

On both mornings our teams had hot coffee and bagels provided by Calder's Coffee as they checked in at the Highland Hiker Cabin location.

We had so many people donate prizes and auction items: Janie Bean Jewlery, Jeanie Edwards Art Gallery, Trey Miller of Southern And Iron & Tool, Yeti, Reddington, Sage, Pat Taylor Pottery, and Dana Toole for his generous gift of a Tenkara Rod and a River Quiver rod tube, and Reid and Laura

Jackson of Christie's Realty for their generous donation to the Scholarship Fund

A special shoutout to Jim Aschmeyer and his group from Coca Cola and Citibank whose companies match 2 to 1 for every \$500 entry fee and their loyalty to the tournament year after year.

To Brian Lewis and the Highlands Smokehouse for hosting the night one meet up and check in and to Rankin and Jill Smith for hosting us for the awards dinner and auction at their lovely home. And the folks at NC Living and Laurel Magazine for covering our tournament in the lead up to and postgame.

Thank you so much to the winners and participants in our fly-fishing festival. You make it possible for us to keep this going year after year. We will see you all on the first weekend in May next year. Register anytime by emailing Chris Wilkes at chris@highlandhiker.com or online at 3riverflyfish.com.

Thank You all so very much,
**The Three River Fly Fishing
Festival Board**

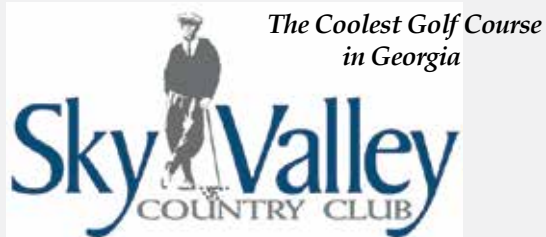
...HOSPITAL continued from page 12

the community at community events. One of these volunteer groups is the Mountain Garden Club. They tend our gardens in ELC to assure our residents can enjoy beautiful flora. I remember how amazed I was the first time I saw our dahlia blooms, which of course attracted feathered visitors. They are breathtaking.

I could not be prouder of all the hardworking, caring HCH and ELC team members. Thanks to them, we can serve our community with confidence.

A favorite part of my job is being able to check in with patients and families as I walk through the hospital and ELC. Not only do I hear about the great job and compassion the team brings, but you can feel it in the smiles, warm comments, and gentle touches that are shared by our team every day during countless encounters. Not be cliché, but it is our culture, and it shows. This is at the heart of caring and compassion.

• Tom Neal, RN, MBA, MHA, is the Chief Executive Officer and Chief Nursing Officer (CNO) of Highlands-Cashiers Hospital. Neal is a proven leader with more than 30 years of progressive healthcare experience.



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...HOUSING continued from page 1



The site plan in relation to the hospital campus, Buck Creek and the Cashiers roads.

Highlands Cashiers Hospital that will be attainable to all healthcare workers within Macon and Jackson County. In March 2024, HCHF and Lee Ventures Group presented a conceptual community plan of approximately 80 units to the Highlands Cashiers Health Foundation to build a consensus of support within the community.”

Highlands has long been a sought-after destination for tourists and second-home buyers, however its popularity has driven up housing costs to unaffordable levels for many, particularly those in essential roles like healthcare. The high living costs, combined with a limited supply of long-term housing due to the prevalence of short-term rentals and seasonal demand, have created a dire situation.

During his presentation to commissioners, Kean explained that healthcare workers in the region face the dual challenge of high housing costs and long commutes, with some traveling up to 1.5 hours to reach their jobs serving the residents of the Plateau. This not only puts a strain on their personal lives but also impacts the local healthcare system’s ability to attract and retain staff. Kean said that Highlands Cashiers Hospital CEO Tom Neal highlighted the urgency of the issue, noting that Highlands-Cashiers Hospital (HCH) currently has 18 open full-time and part-time positions. Despite a favorable turnover rate of 12%, the region still requires 24 new hires annually to maintain current operations, with an additional need for 15-20 employees to support growth.

The resolution passed by the Macon County Board of County Commissioners outlines a strategic approach to mitigate the housing crisis. The key elements of the initiative include:

Affordable Housing: Ensuring that no healthcare worker spends more than 30% of their income on rent by providing affordable housing options close to healthcare facilities.

Diverse Housing Types: Offering a variety of housing types to cater to the different needs and lifestyles of healthcare workers.

Community and Amenities: Building a neighborhood with amenities that foster a strong sense of community and make it a desirable place to live.

Proximity to Work: Ensuring that healthcare workers can walk to the hospital, reducing the need for long and potentially hazardous commutes.

Sustainable Development: Designing housing that respects the natural beauty of the Highlands Plateau and allows for future expansion.

The resolution marks a proactive step by local authorities to support their healthcare workforce and ensure the sustainability of local healthcare services. By providing a stable and affordable living environment, the initiative aims to attract and retain the talent necessary to meet the region’s healthcare demands.

As Highlands continues to grow in popularity, the success of this housing initiative will be crucial in maintaining the health and well-being of both the local community and the healthcare workers who serve it.

According to Kean, the resolution, which was passed unanimously by the Macon County Board of Commissioners will be a crucial first step in securing funding and necessary approvals from the town of Highlands to move forward with the project.

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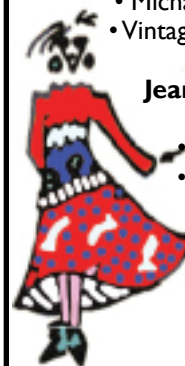
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...STRs continued from page 1

for GovOS's software. According to company representatives, it should be up and running within 12-16 weeks.

The new platform will include an interactive map, a complaint form and a 24/7 complaint hotline – something promised by

the Granicus company that never launched.

The information already garnered by Granicus can be integrated into the GovOS platform and then some. With it the town and the company can catalogue everything about a parcel that houses an STR including photos, parcel diagrams, compliance issues as outlined by the town's ordinance as well as complaints logged about the particular parcel while ensuring complaints don't negatively skew data, and it even tracks chronic complainers.

The company also offers a "human eye" component to verify compliance checklists for each property and will follow up by contacting the host or management company which will take a lot of pressure off the town.

Representatives said by using information gleaned from the advertising platforms they can determine if illegal activity is taking place at a STR based on current ordinances.

"For instance, if they are advertising the allowance of 10 occupants, based on the information about the property, we could drop them into a status of non-compliance and notifications will go out unless they have four bedrooms where two occupants are allowed per bedroom plus two," said Noah Wilson with GovOS.

Of the 800 municipalities using GovOS, 98% of all STR properties are identified and

achieve a compliance rate of over 90% on average, basically because GovOS does the work for the municipality.

Neighborhood Committee

At the Worksession, commissioners also tried to come up with a template for the Neighborhood Committee requested several times by both Cathy Henson and Lila Howland of the Highlands Neighborhood Coalition which is against STRs but who would also like to see a decrease in tourism and events.

Two committees are in the works.

The Business Committee over which the Chamber of Commerce presides is made up of representatives from various business sectors in town – construction, services, hoteliers, restaurateurs, retail, etc. The plan is for the committee to meet once every quarter. Currently, Commissioners Brian Stiehler and Jeff Weller are the town liaisons.

But the formation of the Neighborhood Committee is a bit more problematic.

Commissioner Stiehler opened the discussion about its formation saying members should be full-time and part-time residents of Highlands but drew the line at residents who own STRs.

"I want to give residents identifying from each neighborhood a voice but no STR owners," he said.

The premise being that an

STR owner/resident – whether full-time or part-time -- will likely not agree with members from the various neighborhoods who don't own STRs, which means only people with "like" minds will be accepted on the committee.

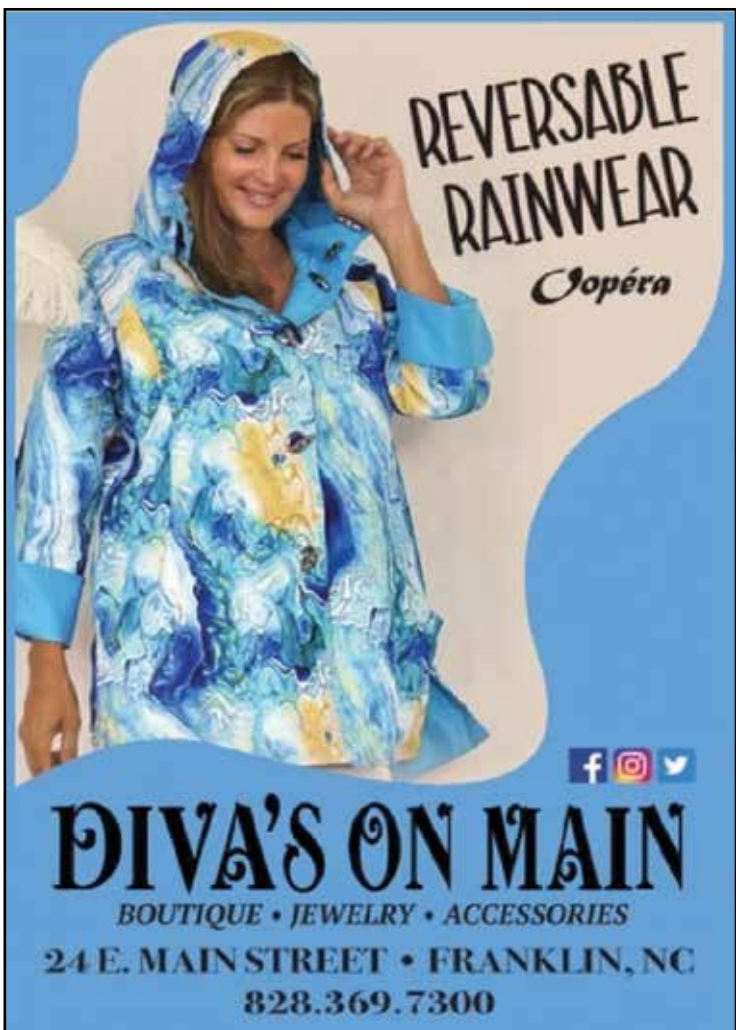
Though Stiehler's criteria will likely establish a "lobbying" group – one with a definite agenda -- he said he didn't want the Neighborhood Committee to be a lobby group or become a complaint-driven committee.

"What I'm stressing here is I don't feel that the community group should turn into a lobby, and I think that's something we need to be careful of with the Chamber of Commerce Business Committee, too," he said. "The point is the flow of communication. I don't think the point of the Neighborhood Committee or the Business Committee should be to come back to the Town Board and complain."

Commissioners envision a broad spectrum of residents from Highlands' neighborhoods – Mirror Lake, Holt Knob, Little Bearpen, Big Bearpen, the Bowery, Satulah, Shelby Place, etc.

Commissioner Amy Patterson said it should be about a group of concerned citizens who get together from wherever, and the Town Board is the liaison to that group.

• See STRs page 19



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- PicoSure Focus Laser
- Sclerotherapy
- Vitamin Infusion Therapy
- Vitamin Injections

...STRs continued from page 18

Talk involved an initial meeting to which people are invited.

"I think that there needs to be a group of citizens to get together and come up with the game plan about who they are and what it is, then we can have people appointed to it from this board," said Weller. "If they have an interest in this, they come forward and participate."

But Stiehler said he was still afraid it would end up being a lobbying group and the Town Board will be talking about the same thing over and over again.

Commissioner Patterson said that was inevitable.

"I don't see how you're not going to get a lot of that. They're coming with their ideas. They have a commonality, whether their businesses or the residents, that's their commonality," she said. "The businesses have their perspective, and the neighborhood people have their perspectives about what Highlands should and should not be, and that's what they are going to tell us, but I don't see how it's not going to be a lobbying group."

No decisions were made. The discussion will continue at a later date.

STR Amortization

Despite a cloaked warning from Town Attorney Bob Hagemann, Commissioners Stiehler, Patterson and Dotson pushed for the town to prepare for amortization of STRs by clarifying what already stands in the Unified Development Ordinance – basically by a certain date owners have a certain number of years to recoup their investment at which time STRs cease.

Commissioner Stiehler brought up the issue of amortizing STRs – which he and Commissioner John Dotson campaigned on.

However, it should be noted that of the 1,000 + registered voters in Highlands only 420 bothered to vote with Commissioner Jeff Weller – who is against amortization – getting the most votes.

NC Senate Bill 667 – a bill that allows STRs with zoning

and other regulations was sponsored by Senators Moffitt; Hanig and McInnis. It passed on the first reading and is now in the Rules and Operations Committee.

Commissioner Stiehler said since the issue at the state level hasn't made much progress it may be time to move forward with plans to amortize STRs in Highlands.

"It's heavy-handed legislation that seems like it was written by the short-term rental companies, but I think the legislators now realize it is more of a complex issue," he said. "We have assumed it won't be passed in this short-session which ends in July, but it's not clear."

Town Attorney Bob Hagemann said he didn't have any inside information about what may or may not happen in the short session, but said the pending lawsuit with Save Highlands was stayed until October pending the outcome of the bill but regarding the legislation there is a chance nothing will happen, and it will die, but if so, it could be reintroduced next year.

"This may not be moving at the moment, but it's still an active proposed bill," he said.

Nevertheless, Stiehler said he wanted the wording in the amortization provision in the town's Unified Development Ordinance finalized.

"Let's look at this in the coming months so all the options are on the table; to at least have the verbiage in front of us," he said.

Commissioner Patterson agreed with Stiehler.

"I say we go ahead and do what we think is best for our community," she said. "We are spending money enforcing things and are getting this new software. We haven't lost anything, but if they don't pass the bill, we can continue on our schedule, and we actually have the verbiage in the ordinance already in case the bill doesn't pass. And if the legislature decides to do something then we just stop."

Weller said he's not for moving forward with amortization regardless of what happens in the legislature.

"I'm not in favor of continu-

ing to push this train down the track. The bleeding has stopped and the system that's in place is working. The new software can help us clean up the gaps. I think cooler heads have prevailed and I am not in favor of amortization. STRs are controlled now. We can improve the control with the complaints and the community involvement, but I'm not in favor of going down this road."

Attorney Hagemann said he's not opposed to looking at language, but the board must consider the potential of what could happen.

"If you amortize there are going to be lawsuits and the odds of both sides being successful are there," he said.

But Commissioner Patterson said the board has to do what is best for the town and its citizens because there is a class of properties that are privileged because they are STRs compared to the neighboring properties.

"We have elevated their property value because we have allowed non-conforming uses in residential areas. So, I think that it is worth the discussion of not how much we're going to spend on a lawsuit or even on enforcement or anything else, it's what is best for the citizens because they should all be treated equally and fairly. And what's wrong with having a traditional neighborhood?"

The truth is vacation rentals have been a Highlands "tradition" for about 40 years and it's far from clear if all Highlands citizens consider amortizing STRs what's best for them.

Commissioner Weller said there are lots of disparities in communities including watershed restrictions which determine allowable development percentages which can also elevate a property's value compared to another.

"To me, not doing anything was not the right decision but doing what you all did was the right decision. And over the past few years, the bleeding has stopped; you controlled it," he said.

According to the Granicus software 9% of the homes in Highlands are on the STR market

and Weller said he's sure GovOS will determine the same thing.

Attorney Hagemann warned of not only triggering a response from the legislature if Highlands pushes amortization -- something no other governing body in North Carolina has attempted -- but the dollars that will be spent.

"We have stopped the bleeding, it's not expanding, it's diminishing. And if you amortize there is a 99.9% chance there will be not one but many lawsuits even though it's not considered a constitutional taking of property. But you need to be ready to lose because it's not a slam dunk by any means."

"I am not telling you not to do what you feel you must do, but if the lobbying group for STRs see amortization as a possibility the bill in committee could come alive very quickly. It's something you should think about," he said.

Commissioner Stiehler said the board wasn't deciding tonight. "So, I don't think we're going to trigger a lawsuit tomorrow," he said.



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UNC Chapel Hill



Alexis Turner
Full-Time Employment



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Athens Technical College



Annamaria Silverthorn
Georgia Southern U



Caitlin Tingen
Auburn University



Catelynn Couch
NC State University



Cooper Hall
NC State University



Daggar Owens
Full-Time Employment



Darby Templeton
WCU



Evelin Rios Gopar
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Harrison Gates
University of Alabama

Highlands School Class of 2024



Henry Garcia Lopez
Full-Time Employment



Inman Ahrens
NC State University



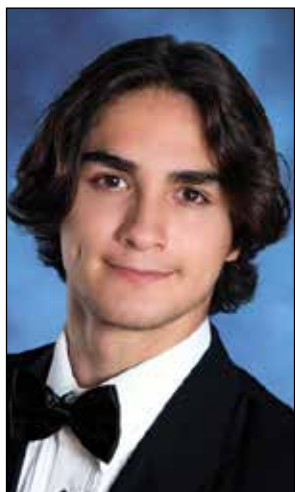
Jasmine Oakley
Southwestern CC



John Head
Norris Mechanical



Landon Green
Southwestern CC



Luke Ramos
Full-Time Employment



MacKenzie Woods
University of Mississippi



Madison Smith
Full-Time Employment



Nicolas Cotton Arteaga
Full-Time Employment



Peyton Naron
Delta Community College



Sara McDonald
Shelton State CC

Not pictured is graduate
Danny Mendoza Cortez
Full-Time Employment



Class of 2024 Mascots from left: 1st graders Paisley Keener and Maverick Ramey.

The graduation ceremony is Saturday, May 25 at 10a in the new gym.

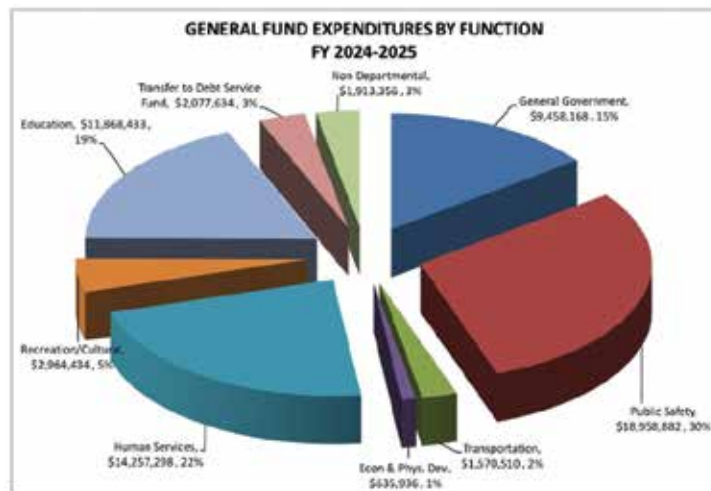
...BUDGET continued from page 13

it could be possible for the county to be able to complete historic investments in infrastructure, while spending less money than ever before. Roland explained that it is able to be accomplished due to a decade of leadership from past and current commissioners being fiscally responsible with county tax dollars.

“The FY ‘25 Budget has been a decade in the making,” said Roland. “It is representative of years of conservative budgeting and tough decisions, guided by fiscal responsibility. The cumulative effect of these decisions, and all the work performed to carry them out brings to the point we are at today. This organization is as financially solid as it has ever been and positioned perfectly to move

forward with capital improvements that will impact Macon County for generations to come.”

Roland’s budget presentation is the first in a series of steps during the annual budget planning process. Budget work sessions and joint meetings are scheduled with partner organizations such as the Macon County BOE in the coming weeks leading up to a vote on the final budget. The new budget year is slated to start on July 1



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• BIZ/ORG NEWS •



The community gathered for the official opening of the Boys & Girls Club on the HC Hospital campus Tuesday evening.
-Photo by Johanna Fein

The Boys & Girls Club is officially open!

The Boys & Girls Club of the Plateau’s mission is to enable all young people, especially those who need the organization the most, to reach their full potential as productive, caring, responsible citizens. They offer afterschool and summer camp programs to the youth of Jackson and Macon County and provide a safe and welcoming environment for the youth of our community.

Carmen Waite, CEO of the Boys & Girls Club of the Plateau, emphasizes the importance of this expansion: “We recognize that Highlands has a shortage of out-of-school care and we are excited to support the youth and hard-working families of the Highlands area.”

The new Boys & Girls Club Highlands location on the HC Hospital campus is Monday through Friday, offering summer camp from 7:30am to 6pm and after-school programs from 3pm to 7:30pm. For more information, visit www.bgcplateau.org.



Mountain Garden Club poster winners!

Three Highlands School students were the winners of the Mountain Garden Club poster contest promoting its annual plant sale on Saturday, May 25 from 9a to noon at the town ball field on US 64 east. We especially thank their art teacher, Jessica Mouchouris. The posters have been placed in businesses all over town. From left is Nataly Figueroa Cruze 5th grade, 1st Place, Sophie Taylor 5th grade, 2nd Place, Bryan Munoz 4th grade, 3rd Place and art teacher Jessica Mouchouris.

• BIZ/ORG NEWS •



Rotary Golf Tourney was better than ever

The Rotary Club of Highlands Golf Tournament held Monday, May 13, was a top-flight success. Treated like royalty by the Highlands Country Club, Ken Mattis, PGA, and his staff, along with 25-year HCC Club Manager Greg Crawford, provided an exceptional experience filled with friendship and fellowship. This year's charitable annual event, which attracts Rotarians from across the country, included the most generous donor-sponsors in Rotary's 33-year tournament history.



Highlands School Academic All-American Swimmers - 2024

From left: Freshman Chase Kenter,
Sophomores Tate Wilson and Aniah McKim.



ANNOUNCING: CHRISTIE'S OPEN HOUSES THIS WEEKEND! (Open to the Public)

Friday, May 24, 11a-1p
LAKE OSSEROGA (MLS#104272 - 4BR/4.5BA - \$1,949,000)
64 Boathouse Lane, Highlands, NC

Friday, May 24, 11a-1p
HIGHLANDS COUNTRY CLUB (MLS#104332 - 4BR/4.5BA - \$2,650,000)
16 S. Sassafra Court, Highlands, NC.

Saturday, May 25, 11a-1p
HIGHLANDS COUNTRY CLUB (MLS#103803 - 4BR/4.5BA - \$1,779,000)
1290 Dillard Road, Highlands, NC.

Saturday, May 25, 11a-1p
IN-TOWN HIGHLANDS (MLS#103795 - 3BR/3.5BA - \$1,299,000)
114 Talley Road, Highlands, NC.

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

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

Friday Night Live

Town Square | 343 Main St.

*Showcasing traditional
mountain music and local talent*

MAY 17
Silly Ridge

MAY 24
McClain Family Band

MAY 31
Byrds & Crows

JUNE 7
The Foxfire Boys

JUNE 14
Spare Parts Bluegrass Band

JUNE 21
Curtis Blackwell Band

JUNE 28
Johnny Webb Band

Saturdays on Pine

Kelsey-Hutchinson Founders Park
Pine St.

*Featuring a variety of popular,
regional bands and musicians*

MAY 18
Continental Divide

MAY 25
Southside Station

JUNE 1
High 5

JUNE 8
Bill Mattocks

JUNE 15
Back Porch Orchestra

JUNE 22
The HC Oaks Band



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• HIGHLANDS AREA EVENTS •

POOL SCHEDULE

• Lap Swim: Mon.-Fri., 6.-9:45a, and Sat., 10a-11p - 6 lanes. Water Aerobics: 18 yrs plus, Mon.-Fri. 10 -11am with Karen Chambers. Adult Swim: 18 years old+, Mon.-Thurs 11a-3:30p and Fri., 11a-1:30p. Public Swim Mon.- Thurs. 3:30-7p; Sat. 11a-6p and Sun.

1-6p. For info, call 828-526-1595.

PICKLE BALL

• At the Recreation Dept. every Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday 10:00am-1:00pm indoors for the winter (notice the days and time has changed), everyone is welcome meetings

ALL WEEK

• Alcoholics Anonymous: "Open Meetings" are for anyone who thinks they may have a drinking problem or for anyone interested in the A.A. program of recovery. Highlands Mountain View Group holds open meetings in Highlands at the First Presbyterian Church, 471 Main St., on Monday at 5:30 PM and Wednesday and Friday at noon. The Cashiers Valley Group holds open meetings at the Albert Carlton Cashiers Community Library Monday at 8:30 AM, Tuesday at 7 PM, Friday and Sunday at 5 PM, and Saturday at 9 AM. For more information, please visit www.aawnc80.org or to speak with a member of AA 24/7 at 828-349-4357.

Mountain Findings Hours

May: Fri. and Sat. 10a to 1p. **June:** Thurs.-Sat., 10a to 1p.

Mon.-Fri.

• Nantahala Tennis plays at the Highlands Rec Park 9a-1p.

Mon-Wed-Fri

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

• Heart Healthy Exercise Class at the Rec Park 8:30-9:30am. The cost for the class is \$25 a month. The class is led by Cathy Hodgson. Contact the Recreation Department at 828-526-3556 for more information.

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. More meeting places call president Paula McDonald at 706-372-3004

• Indivisible Highlands from 5:15-6:15pm at the Hudson Library Meeting Room.

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 information contact Bud Katz at either 828-526-3190 or at budandlynn@me.com

Tuesdays

• Strength Training at the Rec Park 8:15-9:15 am. Aim for strong, lean muscles using light weights, body weight, and high repetition to shape and tone. Learn proper form and range of motion to safely target all muscle groups for a metabolic boost and feel great.

• At Hudson Library, Nature Kids on selected Tuesday mornings, For more info call the Hudson Library at 828-526-3031

• At Wayfarers Chapel, Workshop for Writers – Tuesdays from 5-6:30 PM. Facilitated by Sam Renken, this group has a simple mission: to foster and provide consistent community for local writers thereby giving writers of all ages and genres the opportunity to write, read, revise, and present their work to the group.

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HIGHLANDS

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Highlands Volunteer Fair

Are you looking to get involved?
Join us to learn more about volunteer opportunities in Highlands!

Thursday, June 6
11 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Highlands Recreation Center
600 North Fourth Street

Light refreshments will be served.

This event is hosted by the
Highlands Chamber of Commerce/Visit Highlands, NC.

For more information:
highlandschamber.org
828-526-5841

visithighlandsncc.com

• HIGHLANDS AREA EVENTS •

• ESL classes are held at the Presbyterian Church in Highlands from 6:30-7:30pm. No registration required – just show up and participate. Questions? call 828-526-0863 or email info@maconncliteracy.org

3rd Tuesdays

• Free Community Stretch & Yoga in the Park Summer Series, sponsored by the Highlands Chamber of Commerce-Visit Highlands NC, will be offered by Certified Instructors/ Yoga Highlands on the 3rd Tuesday of the month @ 6pm beginning May 21. Please bring a mat and water; dress comfortably, and let's celebrate health and relaxation. No experience necessary! (next dates: 6/18, 7/16 and 8/20)

Wednesdays

• Hudson Library, in partnership with VAYA Health, is hosting an educational series on adult mental health topics, held on the first Wednesday of each month at 11 AM. This series is aimed particularly at older adults and will focus on mental health topics of particular interest to them, but all ages are welcome to attend. The November 1 program is Dementia: A Deeper Understanding. Reservations are required for this free event. To register, stop by the library or call 828-526-3031.

2nd & 4th Wed.

• Digital Navigators will be at the Hudson Library the second and fourth Wednesdays 1PM - 3PM of each month to help patrons with their tech needs. Bring a smartphone, laptop, or other digital device to receive free assistance and support. No appointments are required - all are welcome.

• Pickle Ball inside and outside at the Rec Park. 10am-1pm, everyone is welcome so come out and enjoy a game of Pickle Ball.

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 combination class with different types of exercise. Contact the Recreation Department at 828-526-3556 for more information

2nd & 4th Thursdays

• Dementia Caregivers Support Group, Moderators Chris and Fred ensure that the group is a safe place for judgement-free discussion. The next meeting of the Dementia Caregivers Support Group is February 22 at 10:15 AM at Hudson Library. For more information about the group, contact Chris at 772-473-1088.

Thursdays

• Kickboxing 8:15-9:15 am. at the Rec Park. An exhilarating and fun mix of martial arts for a calorie-burning workout. No martial arts background necessary Contact the Recreation Department at 828-526-3556 for more info.

• At Hudson Library, Family Storytime continues throughout the year on Thursday mornings at 10:40 AM.

• At Hudson Library, Kids Zone at 3:30 pm with a wide variety of STEAM, nature, and craft activities. For more information about any of these summer activities, contact Hudson Library at 828-526-3031.

Saturdays

• Story Ballet - a gentle ballet & creative movement class for Children 3-4. The flow of class follows a story or theme that changes each month, engaging imaginations! Saturday 5:30-6:30pm. 828-421-6720

• Adult Ballet - crafted for beginners, but mindfully taught for all levels. Ballet is an excellent way to move, grow stronger, improve balance, flexibility and coordination while having fun. 6:30-7:30pm. 828-421-6720.

2nd Saturdays

• The Western North Carolina Woodturners Club meets in Highlands at The Basement at 10 a.m. thru Nov.

3rd Saturdays

• The American Legion Post 370 meets at the First Methodist Church at 315 Main St. in their community room/909 chapel. We serve breakfast at 9 AM and hold our monthly meeting at 10 AM. We invite ALL veterans to attend - email npost370@gmail.com for more information or just join us at 9 AM on the 3rd Saturday of the month.

Sundays

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

Thurs., May 23

• Highlands American Legion Post 370 and Highlands Wreaths across America will put out flags at Highlands Cemetery on Thursday at 4:30pm in observance of Memorial Day. The public is invited to help. Weather permitting.

Fr., - Sat., May 24-25

• To honor the tradition of Airing of the Quilts, Cashiers Historical Society will have quilts on display from local quilters, Appalachian artisans, children's activities, campus tours, and an educational nature tour led by Highlands-Cashiers Land Trust. Opening day is Friday, May 24th from 12-4 p.m. A full day of activities will be held on Saturday from 10a-4p. For a detailed schedule, call 828.743.7710 or email info@cashiershistoricalsociety.org.

Fri., May 24

• Hudson Library welcomes Alabama author Terah Shelton Harris on Friday at 12:30 PM for Books & Bites to talk about her new novel "Long After We are Gone." Books will be available for purchase and signing at this free event.

• Friday Night Live in Town Square 6-8:30 p.m. – McClain Family Band.

Sat., May 25

• Mountain Garden Club Annual Plant Sale. Saturday 9a until Noon. There will be an array of native and local plants along with 25

items up for bid in a silent auction.

• Highlands Historical Society presents Mountain Music & Moonshine for their season opening celebration at 524 N. 4th Street 11a to 1p. Come for music, storytelling and exhibits. There will be free hotdogs and refreshments while they last.

• Cashiers Historical Society will hold a book signing for "Keep a Good Backlog on the Fire...Memories of a Cashiers Valley Boyhood. Written by Author Robert W. "Bud" Hyatt. Bud Hyatt grew up in Cashiers and has vivid memories of his childhood here. He is a descendant of Barak Norton, one of Whiteside Cove's earliest settlers, the grandson of High Hampton Inn's longtime caretaker, Doug Bradley, and related to many of Cashiers' oldest families. The event will take place Saturday, from 4-6 p.m. Introductions will begin at 4:30 p.m. Join us to learn

more about Bud's memories and to share your own stories of Cashiers in the old days! To RSVP or for more information, please call 828.743.7710 or email info@cashiershistoricalsociety.org.

• Saturdays on Pine at KH Founders Park features Southside Station 6-8:30 p.m.

• Highlands American Legion Post 370 will sponsor the annual POPPY DAY. "Poppy" distribution sights will be at Bryson's Food Store and Highlands United Methodist Church. Post 370 legionaries will be manning these locations from 10am until 3pm. Please proudly wear your "Red Poppy" in support of our freedom.

Sun., May 26

• Church in the Wildwood opening hymn singing Sunday, 7-8 p.m. All are welcome. Horse

• See **EVENTS** page 30

Join Resources Education Assistance Counseling Housing of Macon County Inc.

FRIDAY, JUNE 28
6 PM BUFFET + BAR
7 PM CONCERT

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• SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING •



An update on OLM's Capital Campaign to build a new church

Fr. Jason Barone
Our Lady of the Mountains
Catholic Church

Our Lady of the Mountains Catholic Church (OLM) has been a visible presence in Highlands since the cornerstone of the original church on N. 5th Street was laid in 1950. At that time, very few Catholics lived in the area, but as time progressed, their number grew. In 1964, the church was expanded, nearly doubling the length of the building, and in the late 1980s, a wing was added that doubled the seating capacity.

Over the next four decades, the town of Highlands continued to grow, as did the number of its Catholic residents and visitors. The church served the OLM community well for many years, but as the current decade dawned, it became clear a capital campaign was long overdue. In early 2022, the decision was made to move forward with plans to build a new church. That spring the capital campaign commenced and by mid-fall OLM had raised over \$8 million dollars in pledges – a record for any single Catholic parish in the western North Carolina Diocese of Charlotte.

A monumental amount of work then began. The focus on design development intensified, accompanied by various cost estimations and slight architectural redesigns in order to meet the budget. OLM also needed to go through the Town Board's process of obtaining a conditional rezoning, which was approved on April 18th. All of this seemingly glacial but important work took place through 2023 and early 2024. Now, at last, we are ready to begin construction!

The final architectural designs are on schedule for completion at the end of May. Earlier in the month we moved the church offices from the south-facing wing of the current building into the former rectory, a small house on OLM's property. After a couple of weeks of preparation, that office wing will be demolished, followed by site work beginning in mid-June. While the site is being prepared, our Greenville, SC-based general contractor, J. Davis, Inc., will finalize its figures on the projected cost to build our new church. Construction is estimated to take well over a year, so we hope to consecrate OLM's new home in the fall of 2025. As we look forward to breaking ground, we are very excited to announce that the Diocese of Charlotte's newly ordained Bishop Michael Martin will come to OLM to celebrate the occasion with us on Sunday, July 14th.

A final note... In order to meet the budget during the design development phase, OLM had to scale back some architectural features shown in early renderings. For instance, a more elaborate stone facade proved to

• See SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING page 27

• PLACES TO WORSHIP •

BLUE VALLEY BAPTIST CHURCH

Rev. Oliver Rice. Pastor (828) 421-1315
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
Wednesday night Dinner and Service 5:30

CHAPEL OF THE SKY

Sky Valley, GA • 706-746-2999

Sundays: 10 a.m. Worship; Holy Communion 1st & 3rd Sundays

CHRIST ANGLICAN CHURCH

828-743-1701 • 464 Hwy 64E. Cashiers, NC 28717
www.christanglicancashiers.com

9:30am Sunday School; 10:30am Worship Service. Mon. Night
Bible Study & Dinner, 6pm, call for details.

CHRIST CHURCH OF THE VALLEY, CASHIERS

Pastor Brent Metcalf • 743-5470

www.cashiers.church

Sun. 10:45am. S.S. 9:30am. Wed. 6pm supper and teaching.

Tues. Guys study 8am. Gals 10am.

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE CHURCH

283 Spring Street - Sunday Service: 10:30 a.m.
Testimony meeting: 3rd Wednesday at 5:30 p.m.

CLEAR CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH

Pastor Jim Kinard

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

1st & 3rd Sunday night Service: 7 p.m.

Wednesdays – Supper at 6 p.m.

COMMUNITY BIBLE CHURCH

www.cbchighlands.com • 526-4685

3645 Cashiers Rd. Highlands, NC • Sr. Pastor Gary Hewins

Sundays: Service 10:45am, Children's 10:30am

Wednesdays: Youth 5:30-7pm; Women's Bible Study: Mondays

4:30pm, Tuesdays 10am; Men's Bible Study: Wednesdays &
Thursdays 7am @ Zookeeper Bistro

COMMUNITY BIBLE CHURCH OF SKY VALLEY

706.746.3144 • 696 Sky Valley Way #447

Pastor Steve Kerhoulas

Worship: Sun. 10:30 a.m. Holy Communion 2nd Sunday

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

Emily Wilmarth, pastor

828-526-3175 • fpchighlands.org

Sun.: Adult Ed.: 10 a.m.; Worship 11 a.m.

Tues: Men's Group 10 a.m. Wed: Bell Choir 4 p.m. Choir: 6p

GOLDMINE BAPTIST CHURCH

(Off Franklin/Highlands Rd)

Sunday School: 10 am. Worship Service: 11 am

GRACE COMMUNITY CHURCH OF CASHIERS

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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. Wednesday Worship is 6:30p

HIGHLANDS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Rev. Dr. Randy Lucas. Pastor 526-3376

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www.highlandsmethodist.org

HOLY FAMILY LUTHERAN CHURCH: ELCA

2152 Dillard Road • 526-9741

Rev. Ken Langsdorf

Worship/Communion: 10:30 All are welcome.

Visit our website: Holy Family Lutheran Highlands NC

MACEDONIA BAPTIST CHURCH

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

Pastor Zane Talley

Sundays: School: 10 a.m.; Worship: 11. Choir: 6 p.m.

Wed: Bible Study and Youth Mtg.: 7 p.m.

MOUNTAIN SYNAGOGUE

Franklin • 828-634-1312 • mountainsynagoguewnc.com.

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 Road (4.5 miles from NC 107)

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

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CATHOLIC CHURCH

Rev. Fr. Jason K. Barone – 526-2418

Tues. - 9:30am; Thurs. - 9:30am; Sat. 4pm; 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. Andy Cloer

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

Wednesdays: Prayer & Bible Study: 6 p.m.

ST. JUDE'S CATHOLIC CHURCH

Mass: Tues. noon (Latin). Thurs. 9a.; Fri.: noon;

Sat. 5:30p; Sun. 9a

THE CHURCH OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD

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

Sunday Services: 8a. 9:30 & 11a

Visit our website www.goodshepherdofcashiers.com for

schedules of activities.

Our Bazaar Barn is open Fri. & Sat. 10a -2p.

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP

85 Sierra Drive. Franklin • ufranklin.org

Sunday Worship - 11 a.m.

WHITESIDE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Rev. Sam Forrester/Cashiers

Sunday School: 10 am. Worship Service: 11 am

• POLICE & FIRE REPORTS •

Highlands Police entries from May 9. Only the names of persons arrested, issued a summons/citation, issued a Class-3 misdemeanor or those of public officials have been used.

May 9

• At 2:30 a.m., officers responded to a call of a simple assault at a residence on Hickory Street.

• At 7:45 a.m., officers responded to a 2-vehicle accident on The Franklin Road (US 64 west) between Webbmont and Walden Way.

May 11

• At 11:03 p.m., Kyle James Henderson, 25, of Moore, SC, was arrested for DUI, Speeding and Driving left of center on N. 4th Street. He was issued a \$1,000 secured bond. His trial date is June 5.

May 15

• At 1:50 p.m., officers responded to a 2-vehicle accident on at the Georgia Road (NC 106) and Spring Street.

• At 2 p.m., officers responded to a 1-vehicle accident in Highlands Plaza.

May 19

• At 4:47 a.m., Mackenzie Elizabeth Hackler, 22, of Cullowhee, NC, was arrested for simple assault. She was issued an unsecured bond.

The Highlands Fire & Rescue log from May 14.

May 14

• At 9:24 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Hemlock Lane.

• At 10:22 a.m., the dept. responded to a Co2 alarm at a residence on Magnolia Drive.

May 15

• At 2:51 p.m., the dept. responded to a Co2 alarm at a resi-

dence on Randall Road.

• At 4:25 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Cowee Ridge Road.

May 17

• At 12:45 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a location on Main Street.

• At 5:21 p.m., the dept. responded to a Co2 alarm at a residence on the Dillard Road.

May 19

• At 5:47 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Flat Mountain Road.

May 20

• A little past midnight, the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Sassafras Court.

• At 8:24 a.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Satulah Road.

• At 11:51 p.m. the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Split Rail Row.

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...SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING continued from page 26

be an expensive element, so a simplified alternative was incorporated into the latest plan. The preferred stone façade and other elements in previous renderings can be added back either during or after construction as ad-

ditional funds become available. Soon we will be seeking donations through opportunities to memorialize a loved one by funding sacramental objects, furnishings, or architectural features for the new church.

Excitement is growing at Our Lady of the Mountains as the season begins! Stay tuned regarding updates on our progress, and find information on making a pledge or a memorialization gift, by visiting our website at olmhighlands.org.

• BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NEWS •

Highlands Food & Wine tickets to go on sale today, Thursday, June 13

Tickets for the 8th annual Highlands Food & Wine (Nov. 7-10), are now available..

Prices are the same as 2023 and all four signature events include food, beverage and live music.

Ticket prices for all-inclusive food, beverage and live music entertainment options will range from \$295 for single-event tickets to \$1,600 for VIP Weekender tickets.

A portion of proceeds from ticket sales will be donated to The Bascom, Highlands Performing Arts Center, Friends of Founders Park, as well as to support the Louis Osteen Legacy Scholarship.

“We are looking forward to celebrating eight years of the fabulous food, wine and music that makes Highlands Food & Wine Festival one of the hottest tickets in town,” said David Bock, president of the Highlands Festivals, Inc. board. “This year’s festival promises to be another premier culinary experience with an exciting array of musical performances to top it off. Mark your calendars now to get your tickets on June 13th!”

Highlands Food & Wine features world-class food from renowned local and regional chefs from across the Southeast, as well as fine wine and spirits, specialty dinners and more. Signature events

include the popular Grand Tasting, Truckin’, Main Event and Sunday’s A Shot at Redemption brunch.

The chef and music talent lineups will be announced in the coming weeks. Tickets are projected to sell out quickly.

For more information about tickets, interested patrons should visit <https://highlandsfoodandwine.com/>.

Highlands Food & Wine Festival is proudly presented by Highlands Festivals, Inc. and presenting festival sponsor, Visit Highlands. Presenting event sponsors include: Berkshire Hathaway Home Services Meadows Mountain Realty and Old Edwards Inn & Spa.

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• CLASSIFIEDS •



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HIGHLAND EXCURSION, an Active Tour Company is for sale. Call 864-373-4022 for details. Serious offers only. (st. 4/18)

SEASONED FIREWOOD - Any size load. call 828-342-6806. (st. 1/25)

• See CLASSIFIEDS page 30

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...CLASSIFIEDS continued from page 29

LAND FOR SALE - 3 tracts, 7.5 miles south of Highlands, 8.64 acres with spring, by far the best view in the area at \$200,000; 6.12 acres with spring (already subdivided into 2, 3-acre lots) \$140,000; 3.99 acres with southern exposure, \$70,000. 828-974-1137. (5/16)

TINY HOME LOTS FOR SALE. \$30k-\$55k/ea. Each lot comes with water, power, and sewer run to each lot. www.TinyMountainEstates.com for more info. (st. 11/22)

RV SITE - class A only - in Wildflower Creek RV Resort. Just minutes from Highlands and Sky Valley. Full hook-up, concrete pad, landscaped and storage shed. Reduced \$192,500. For more info call 828-421-1709 or email bobnancync@gmail.com. (st. 1/25)

FOR RENT
DREAM SUMMER GETAWAY IN KEY LARGO FLORIDA. Newly remodeled 2 bed 3 bath condo on the bay. Amazing sunset views, great amenities and more. CasaPalmaKeyLargo.com. (st. 5/23)

LONG TERM FURNISHED ONE BEDROOM APT. in Highlands, Full Kitchen with Elec. Stove/Oven, full-size fridge, bath, sm deck. Single Adult only, no pets. Private entrance, W/D access, Internet, Hulu TV. Six-month minimum lease, utilities included. \$1,250/mth. 828-482-2613. (st. 5/9)

2 BDRM/2 BATH FURNISHED APT - living room with fireplace, dining area, full kitchen- huge covered porch - W/D - 1.5 miles from Main St. \$3,000 month utilities included - avail. June 1. 561 310-5085. (st. 5/9)

1 BEDROOM, 1 BATH free standing furnished cottage for rent. Single level house has new washer/dryer, new heat pump, new bed, covered deck, back up gas heat. Two miles from center of town. Water and sewer included. \$1,200 per month. Available for one year lease. Call or text 828-342-4819. (st. 5/2)

SEASONAL NEW LOG CABIN ON SAGEE DRIVE. 2 bedroom & 2 bath suites on Creek. 1 1/2 mile to downtown. Monthly or seasonally \$8,700 (1) month \$7,200 (3) Months. email: renee7726@gmail.com (st. 5/2)

LIKE NEW 1/BED APT. downtown Highlands in Village Square. Walk-in closet and balcony. One year minimum lease. Unfurnished. \$3,500/mth. Call Rob-in at 828-200-0044. (st. 3/21)

COMMERCIAL BUILDING DOWNTOWN HIGHLANDS - Retail with office space upstairs. Aprox.

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ESTABLISHED CUSTOM HOMEBUILDER IN HIGHLANDS/CASHIERS area looking for project superintendent to manage multiple sites and subcontractors. Please send resume to: JW Underwood Construction LLC P.O. Box 147, Highlands NC 2974. Or email: john@jwunderwoodconstruction.com (st. 5/2)

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HIGH COUNTRY PHOTO/KEY-IN VINSON: scanning photos, slides & negatives to CD or DVD for easier viewing. Video transfer to DVD. Everything done in house. Leave message at 828-526-5208.

...EVENTS continued from page 25

Cove Road, Highlands. 828-506-0125.

Mon., May 27

- Please join the Highlands American Legion Post 370 for the annual Memorial Day Ceremony at 10 am at Highlands Veterans Plaza (Across the parking lot from the Highlands police department at flagpole)

Thurs., May 30

- At The Bascom, Artist Talk with Paula Smith. 4-5 pm | Free

- OEI's The Orchard Sessions with Highbeams, a trio of brothers and best friends who offer a high-energy performances and rich three-part harmonies. Light bites, a cash bar 6-8 p.m. \$40. Book Online: <https://www.simpletix.com/e/highbeams-orchard-sessions-at-the-farm-tickets-149352>

Fri., May 31

- At Hudson Library, Community Coffee with the Mayor at 11a in the Meeting Room. The topic will be: "Highlands-Cashiers Hospital Update from CEO Tom Neal." This month's refreshments are provided by The Counseling Center.

- Friday Night Live on Main Street's Town Square 6-8:30 p.m. - Byrds & Crows

Sat., June 1

- Kid's Fishing Day at Cliffside Lake from 7:30a to noon for children 15 years and under. Some fishing equipment will be available if needed. Children must be accompanied by an adult at all times.

- At The Bascom, Trunk Show with Elizabeth Walton of Red Ren Jewelry. 12 - 5 pm | Free

- Pop-Up Bag Pipers are scheduled from 4:30 p.m. to 5 p.m.

- Saturdays on Pine features High 5 at 6-8:30 p.m. - High 5

Sun., June 2

- The Literacy & Learning Center's spring fundraiser at The Farm at OEI, 336 Arnold Road in Highlands, from 6 - 9 pm. Open Bar. Heavy hors d'oeuvres, dancing. Free shuttle service looping from 200 Main. Tickets are \$150 per person.

Wed., June 5

- Josh Stein, the Democratic candidate for NC Governor, will be in Cashiers (Village Green) at 5 PM. Tickets for the event are \$125 and larger donations are accepted. You may purchase a ticket at www.joshstein.org/cashiers

Thurs., June 6

- Highlands Motoring: "One Lap of the Mountains- Grande"- Driving Tour 8:30am-4pm

Fri., June 7

- Highlands Motoring: "One Lap of the Mountains - Speciale" Driving Tour 9:30am to 4pm. Main Street Parade of Classic Cars 5:30pm to 6:30pm

- Friday Night Live on Main Street's Town Square 6-8:30 p.m. - The Foxfire Boys

Sat., June 8

- Highlands Motoring: "Classics in the Park" Invitational Judged Car Show in the Kelsey-Hutchinson Park 9:30am to 4pm "Cel-

ebration Gala" 6pm to 9pm.

- HOT SPRINGS POOLS and Spas will be hosting its first Arts & Crafts Fair in Franklin at 556 Highlands Road, on Saturday from 10a to 3p. Interested crafters, please email khowell@hspools.com to reserve you spot today!

- Saturdays on Pine features Bill Matlocks 6-8:30 p.m.

Sun., June 9

- Highlands Motoring: "High Octane" Social and Car Gathering in Kelsey-Hutchinson Park. 8:30am to 11am.

Fri., June 14

- With CLE, Award-winning Appalachian author Ron Rash will be joining us at High Country Wine and Provisions on Friday from 2-4pm for an exclusive reading and Q&A for his new novel, The Caretaker. Wine and charcuterie will be provided. Books for sale and signing.

- Friday Night Live in Town Square 6-8:30 p.m. - Spare Parts Bluegrass Band

Sat., June 15

- At The Bascom, Artist Talk with Erik Mace. 3-4 pm | Free

- Low Country Shrimp Boil to benefit KH Founders Park. Doors open at 5. Dinner at 6. \$85 per ticket. Includes dinner, dessert and 3 drinks. Live music Tickets available at www.fouondersparkhighlands.org and The Dry Sink on Main Street.

- Saturdays on Pine at Kelsey-Hutchinson Founders Park 6-8:30 p.m. - Back Porch Orchestra

Thurs., June 20

- OEI's The Orchard Sessions with Andrew Wooten. Ear-catching vocals and genuine lyrics. Light bites, a cash bar 6-8 p.m. \$40. www.oldedwardshospitality.com/orchardsessions.

Fri., June 21

- Friday Night Live s on Main Street's Town Square 6-8:30 p.m. - Curtis Blackwell Band

Sat., June 22

- Saturdays on Pine features a variety of popular, regional bands and musicians at Kelsey-Hutchinson Founders Park 6-8:30 p.m. - The HC Oakes Band

Mon., June 27

- At The Bascom, Artist Talk with Kelly Oden. 4-5 pm | Free

Fri., June 28

- A Bourbon & Bluegrass Concert Fundraiser for REACH. Buffet and bar at 6p and concert at 7p. Tickets are \$250 per person available at highlandsp Performingarts.com/special events.

- Friday Night Live son Main Street's Town Square 6-8:30 p.m. - Johnny Webb Band

- OEI's Chef Dinners at The Farm. Chef to be announced. Book Online at OldEdwardshospitality.com/ChefDinners

Fri., July 5

- Friday Night Live on Main Street's Town Square 6-8:30 p.m. - Nitrograss

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