

# Highlands Newspaper

Volume 21, Number 46

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Thurs., Nov. 14, 2024

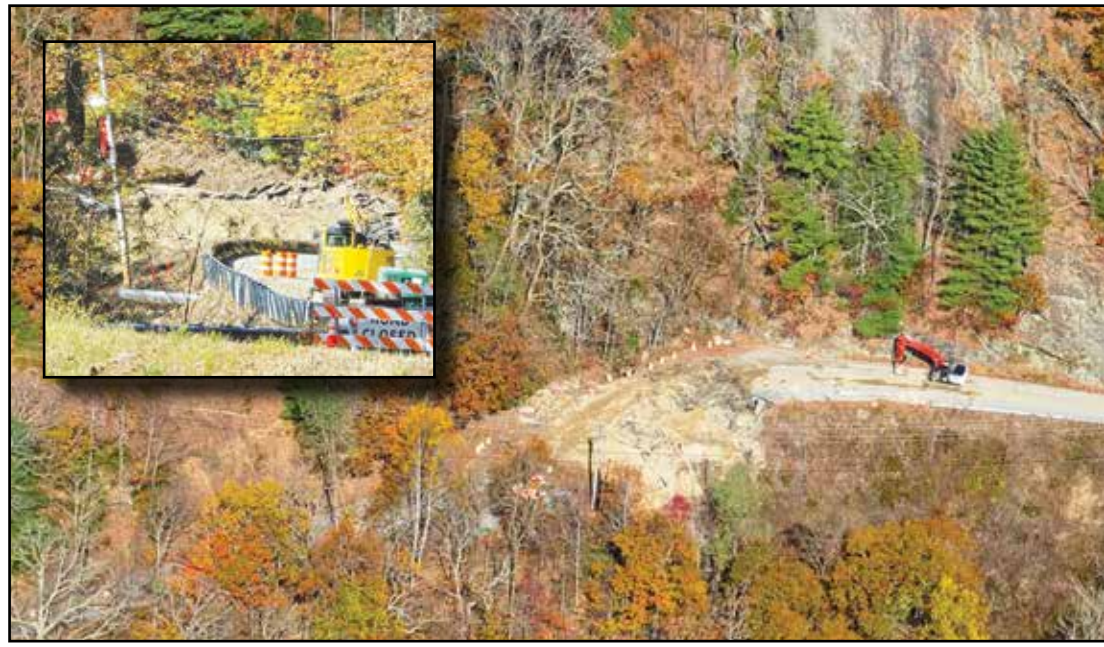
## Planning Board OK's two subdivisions; meets new Code Enforcement Officer

**Kim Lewicki**  
A long-awaited code enforcement officer has been hired by the town.

At the October Town Board meeting, Town Manager Josh Ward – Highlands original Code Enforcement Officer decades

ago – briefly introduced Code Enforcement Officer Robert “Bobby” Henry saying he was highly  
• See **OFFICER** page 19

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The road left of the crane is gone.

– Submitted

## The end is in sight

**By Kim Lewicki**  
Work on the washout on NC 106 (Georgia Road) is set to begin Friday, Nov. 15.  
According to Mayor Pat Taylor, Bryson's Grading and Paving was awarded the contract after bids were circulated at the end of

October.  
NC DOT did the engineering design work and put the specs in the bid.  
“Bryson's will be doing the underpinning and the paving,” said the mayor. “Several experienced highway contractors put in bids,

but Bryson's got the job.”  
The finish date in the contract is Jan. 3, 2025 – depending on weather and any unforeseen issues.  
Bryson's said they will begin mobilizing Friday and are hopeful the job will be completed prior to Jan. 3.

## MC Housing Needs Assessment makes its debut

**By Kristin Fox**

It's been almost a year in the making. First the county heard it, then Highlands heard it and now it's up to someone to take the reins and run with it.

Tuesday and again Wednesday evening, the county and the town, consecutively, were presented the Housing Needs Assessment for Macon County, a comprehensive study by Bowen National Research funded by Dogwood Health Trust and hosted by the Highlands Chamber of Commerce/Visit Highlands, NC.

With over 25 years of experience in housing assessments and real estate feasibility studies, Bowen brings a wealth of expertise to the discussion. He has worked extensively with city, county, and state agencies on housing developments across the United States, advising on both affordable and market-rate housing for rental and for-sale properties. Bowen also serves as Chairman of the National Council of Housing Market Analysts.

The purpose of the Macon County Housing Needs Assess-

ment presentation was to: Provide an overview of the county's demographic and employment characteristics; Examine the housing market, with detailed data on rental and ownership options; Highlight potential housing priorities and strategies that local officials, stakeholders, and advocates can explore to meet current and future needs.

The presentation provided insights into the evolving housing needs within Macon County, with a detailed focus on Highlands and The Flats.

The study illuminated through painstaking research and statistics what everyone already knows ... there isn't enough affordable housing for workers – whether through ownership or by renting – to properly sustain the county's economy.

Tourism continues to be a driving force of the economic development of Macon County. A strong workforce is vital to the continued growth and success of the an economy heavily dependent

• See **HOUSING** page 11

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# • THE PLATEAU'S POSITION •

## • MAYOR ON DUTY •

### The Highlands utility story - Part 2

I get this idea presented to me almost every month. It goes like this. Mayor, if the town reduced residential garbage service to one day a week, operating costs and rates could be reduced. Never do I get the suggestion to cut daily commercial service, which is the source of those recurring sanitation deficits.

My response is always the same. Would the cost saving by going to one-day-a-week residential service be because worker hours would be reduced, or would it be a reduction in staff size, which is already at a bare-bones level, or a combination of both?

So, because of implementing the suggestion, a worker on the low end of the town wage scale, a person who is expected to have a CDL driver's license, would work for the town 32 hours on a 4-day work schedule while other town workers would get 40 hours on a 5-day schedule. We have a hard enough time hiring sanitation workers as it is. Implementation of that suggested cost-saving measure would be a recruitment deal killer.

Staffing in the Sanitation Department is so low now that the town has to use road



Highlands Mayor  
Patrick Taylor

and electric trim crew workers to run garbage routes when we have sanitation workers out for illness, injuries, when there is a resignation, or a combination of all these situations. Twice a week, residential pickup also helps with removing trash in a timely manner in coping with our hungry bear friends.

Within our budget structure, there are the enterprise fund and the general fund budgets. A department in the enterprise fund category is expected to make enough money from service fees to pay for its operation and maintain a reserve fund, as in the case of the electric department. In recent years the sanitation department was running yearly deficits. At the advice of the town auditors, the board decided this past year to move the sanitation department to the general fund, where these self-sustaining measures are not in place. In short, when there is a deficit in sanitation costs, it is now covered by general tax revenues. That is not to say that sanitation rate increases are off the table in the future. I anticipate rate increases or property tax increases to help offset the deficits in the coming years.

Another idea is that the town should sell the sanitation department to a private company. Many metropolitan areas have already privatized garbage collection. It is an interesting idea, but the town is a small market with about 3,000 collection accounts. Also, there is that expectation of continuing commercial collection, even on weekends, which is a unique practice for such a small town.

The Town Board and manager studied the possibility of privatization two years ago. Potential providers were contacted, but the decision was to continue as is. The concern was that if the town went out of the sanitation business, it would be for good, with the elimination of all those expensive vehicles and equipment. The concern was that as a small, isolated market a private provider might pull out of the area after a few years of deficits like the ones the town has incurred. In a private provider scenario, to cover the losses, rates might dramatically increase while service would be reduced. If the company stopped service, what would be the alternative? All the factors cited

• See **MAYOR** page 4

## • SNAPSHOTS •

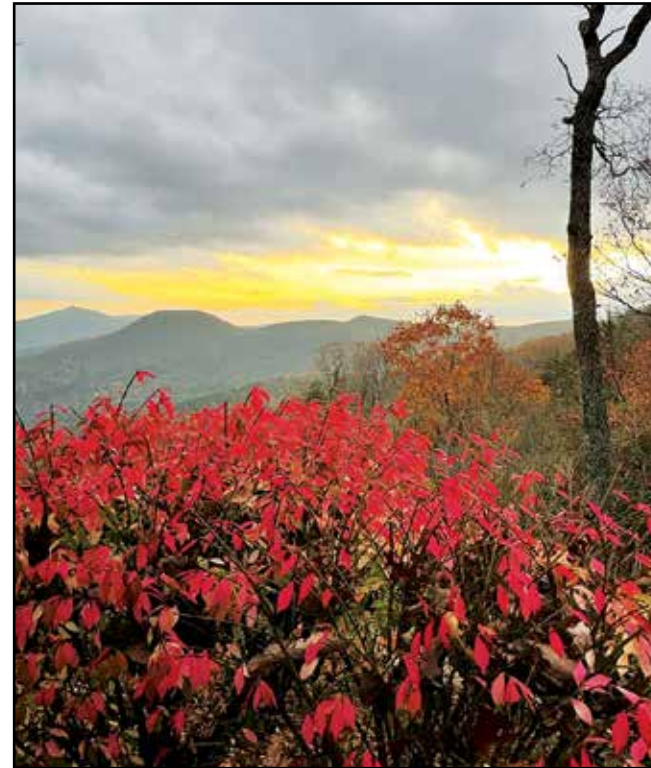


Photo by Marilyn Barrett

### Fire on the mountain

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

## • WEATHER •

Thu, 14-Nov	Fri, 15-Nov	Sat, 16-Nov	Sun, 17-Nov
51°F 41°F	58°F 38°F	63°F 41°F	65°F 42°F
Periods of rain	Mostly sunny and mild	Sunny and mild	Mild with plenty of sun
RealFeel® High: 49° Low: 39°	RealFeel® High: 60° Low: 37°	RealFeel® High: 69° Low: 34°	RealFeel® High: 69° Low: 39°

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### Highlands Newspaper

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From left: Nancy Delahaye; Tom Delahaye, speaker and Rotary member; Randy Foster, President, Rotary Club of Highlands.

## Insight into the business of affordable housing with Rotarian Tom Delahaye

At a time when the lack of affordable housing is among the top greatest needs on the Plateau, insight into the business itself was an informative topic for the Rotary Club of Highlands in a recent presentation by Rotarian Tom Delahaye.

A native of Louisiana, in 2005 Delahaye saw firsthand the devastating effect of Hurricane Katrina on people who lost their homes and couldn't afford new housing.

In 2006 Delahaye and his partners founded CST Multifamily Real Estate Services, LLC headquartered in Denham Springs, LA. To date the company has developed 13 apartment complexes in Louisiana, nine of which are considered workforce housing. Four more developments are in the pipeline, including two senior affordable developments. Households with income between 20% and 80% of the area's median income qualify to live in workforce

or senior housing.

Delahaye illustrated his talk with capital and operating cashflow spreadsheets over the 15-year compliance period required by the IRS for Affordable Developments. He also explained sample financing strategies that utilize typical sources of equity like Federal and State Tax Credits, private investment and sale of Federal Energy Credits. CST is unusual among developers of workforce housing because it manages its properties thereby insuring long-term upkeep and quality of living.

Surveys show that approximately 63% of Americans currently cannot afford to buy a home. Younger generations like Gen Z and Millennials face the most difficulty, with 87% and 62% unable to afford a home.

For more information see: [CSTMultifamilyRealEstateServices.com](http://CSTMultifamilyRealEstateServices.com)

## ...MAYOR continued from page 2

above caused the board to decide garbage collection was an essential service that the town must continue operating.

Finally, another recurring notion is that garbage, water and sewer, and electricity services should be fee-based services. Translated, a customer pays for only what is used, so a seasonal resident would pay for service only when in town. The problem is that Highlands, a very small town and market, requires the operation of these services at a general level all year long. The town has to charge a minimum fee regardless of how much power and water is used and how much garbage is collected. Our utilities are very akin to a co-op

model in that everyone has to contribute to the continuous operation of the services. This plan works well now as many former seasonal residents can be described as back-and-forth transitional residents throughout the year.

The challenge facing the town currently is how to maintain these systems and expand services as demand constantly increases. Investments through grants are a major vehicle for meeting these challenges. In the past three years, we have received about 8 million dollars in state grants to improve our water department and water lines.

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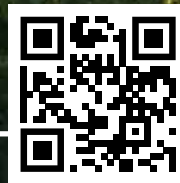
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# • OBITUARIES •

## W. Stell Huie

William Stell Huie, age 93, of Highlands, NC and formerly of Atlanta, GA, died peacefully in his sleep on the 4th day of November 2024. Stell was born in College Park, GA, the son of William McEver Huie and Nan Stell Huie.

He is survived by his daughters, Helen Huie Ashenfelter (John), Sarah Huie Coleman (Joseph), his grandson William Andrew Ashenfelter (Margaret), his two great-grandchildren, his grandson, David Huie Ashenfelter, his sister, Barbara Huie Hinds and his brother, Jerry Huie. He was preceded in death by his wife of 64 years, Madaline Johnson Huie.

Stell practiced law in Atlanta for 50 years after serving in the Army Judge Advocate Corps during the Korean War. He attended Emory University and Emory University School of Law. He served as President of the Emory student body, President of the Emory Glee Club, President of the Emory Alumni Association, and President of the Emory Board of Visitors. He was also recognized on the occasion of Emory Law School's 100th anniversary as one of the 100 outstanding graduates of the law school.

Stell was most proud of his service as General Counsel of the Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority [MARTA]. His representation spanned 18 years, "from the time it was a gleam in the planners' eyes, until trains were running." Other representative clients were the Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church USA, the Atlanta Chamber of Commerce, the Georgia Bankers Association, and American Business Products, Inc. [NYSE].

He was active in his communities and in his profession: President of the Atlanta Bar Association and President of The State Bar of Georgia; President of the Old Warhorse Lawyers Club and member of the Judicial Nominating Committee of the State of Georgia; Vice President of the Atlanta Chamber of Commerce; Elder, Trinity Presbyterian Church; President of the State YMCA of Georgia; Trustee, The Westminster Schools. In Highlands, he served as Chair of the Community Foundation; Member, Board of Governors of Highlands Country Club; Trustee of the Board of the Rabun Gap-Nacoochee School in North Georgia; Chair, the Music Committee of the Presbyterian Church, and Member of the Board of the Performing Arts Center. Stell was also a leader in getting a legal aid office established in Highlands-Cashiers by Pisgah Legal Services, Asheville.



Nationally, Stell served on the Board of the White House Preservation Trust Fund; President of the National Conference of Bar Presidents; Delegate at Large in the House of Delegates of the American Bar Association; Chair of the Legal Affairs Committee of the American Public Transit Association, and a Fellow of the American Bar Foundation.

Stell loved music, hunting, and fishing. He studied voice, and after retirement, shared his talents in church, recitals, and musical productions.

He was an excellent shot, and particularly enjoyed quail hunting with friends in South Georgia. There were also special shooting trips to Scotland and Ireland. Best of all, he was an avid fly fisherman and loved the streams around his retirement home in Western North Carolina. He also loved to travel to fish: Alaska, British Columbia, Labrador, Ireland, Scotland, many states of the USA, and especially the Patagonia area of Argentina where he fished more than 20 times, always organizing a trip with friends to enjoy the unique characteristics of fishing there.

A celebration of life will be held on November 18, 2024, at 11 am at the First Presbyterian Church of Highlands, 471 Main Street, Highlands, NC 28741

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to:

Rabun Gap Nacoochee School Stell Huie Scholarship, 339 Nacoochee Drive, Rabun Gap, GA 30568 <https://www.rabungap.org/support/endowment-legacy>

First Presbyterian Church of Highlands for the Bowman Endowment, PO Box 548, Highlands, NC 28741, [https://www.paypal.com/donate?hosted\\_button\\_id=33QSWU5WA53YS](https://www.paypal.com/donate?hosted_button_id=33QSWU5WA53YS)

• See OBITUARIES page 16

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## • INVESTING AT 4,118 Ft. •

### Cultivating the love of connections

Hurricane Helene serves as a stark reminder of life's fragility—how quickly everything we hold dear can be swept away. The devastation and loss resulting from this recent disaster are challenging to fully grasp. The unexpected impact of a “mountain tsunami” reinforces the lesson that we must never take anything for granted, including our loved ones and our homes.

It is a profound privilege to reside in this beautiful part of the world and to have had the opportunity over the past twenty-five years to meet incredible clients who have become friends. Assisting them in their journey to find homes and properties where they can create cherished memories for generations brings me immense joy. I am deeply grateful to all of you who visit this precious area and those who choose to establish a home here to share with friends and family.

Real estate transactions can be highly emotional. Sellers often face life changes that lead them to part with a beloved asset that has been the backdrop for many years of memories. Even when the decision to sell is made, there can be sadness over closing this chapter. Buyers, on the other hand, frequently grapple with anxiety about whether it's the right time to buy, if the location suits their needs, and if the price is fair. This tension can easily lead to misun-



Jody Lovell  
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derstandings between both parties. Our role as real estate agents is to be the calming presence that fosters rationality and objectivity throughout the transaction. Living in such a close-knit community allows us to be trusted advisors to our clients and friends, which is a true honor.

As life accelerates, we often forget to express our love and appreciation for those around us. Recent events remind us of the importance of showing our

affection through acts of kindness and genuine concern. I want to take this opportunity to thank each one of you for trusting me to assist you in your real estate endeavors. When my mother was in hospice, there came a moment when she softly said, “There’s nothing more to say.” After a lifetime filled with expressions of love and gratitude, those words hung in the air, reminding me of the importance of connection. Until that time comes for all of us, please know how grateful I am to have you in my life and for the privilege of knowing you.

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## • LETTERS •

### Does 'love they neighbor' include immigrants?

Dear Editor,

There are 29 churches and one synagogue listed among the “Places to Worship” in your print publication. Donald Trump has promised to send militia, National Guard, FBI and even the Army to root out the immigrants that he and Steven Miller decide are poisoning the blood of the country, stealing jobs, eating pets and other unproven claims.

Yet, the religious communities that this paper serves didn't appear to give a damn as they fell all over Trump in casting their votes for him. The radio station out of South Carolina that uses the moniker “Voice of the Carolinas” employs some talking heads that spew derogatory and often untrue insults to-

ward immigrants as a whole. It's Trump's crass talking points 24/7.

Does the “Voice” speak for Jackson and Macon counties's people of faith?

I never hear any pushback from the listeners who no doubt are member's who attend the 29 Christian houses of worship. I would love to know what the men and women who minister to their “flocks” have been saying from their pulpits about “love thy immigrant neighbor.” Have they been cheerleading for bigotry, racism and culture war of Trump? One wonders.

**David Kahn**  
**Cashiers, NC**  
 • See LETTERS page 9



...LETTERS continued from page 8

## Giving our power away? It is what it is

Dear Editor,

This is the first time ever I am directly mentioning politics here but got to call a spade a spade and let the chips fall where they may.

The day after the election some of us woke up to a grand feeling of success ... others to a nightmare.

Disclaimer. Though I'm not a good example of being a disciple of Christ, I aspire to be one ... sporadic as it may be. Never have I mastered an even temperament. Like John the Baptist, some things just piss me off quite a bit -- most recently the election results.

Like many others I'm attracted to Christ-like qualities in others. I'm an independent in politics; I have voted both ways. I've always looked for these qualities -- which are not hard at all to see when considering candidates -- qualities like love, patience, virtue, honesty, humility, forgiveness, compassion, mercy, charity and more.

So, I ask myself which of these do I see in our newest president-to-be ... and can someone who is absent of most or all of these qualities, truly shepherd our nation?

Oxford definition of decency; "behavior that conforms to accepted standards of morality and respectability."

Someone please enlighten me -- how does Trump measure up to the definition of decency, or is decency even important anymore?

Look no further than his spoken words on the access Hollywood tape.

After he won, I said my first prayer asking that God guide him and his administration. It was not easy, but it was a sincere prayer.

My fear is that it's in vain since scribes and Pharisees have their ears and hearts

shut to divine guidance.

I pray that I'm wrong; remind me down the road if I am.

The majority wanted back who I view as a very wounded man who leans as a fascist leader ... and they got him. He won fair and square, and we have to respect the process and accept the outcome.

Brace yourselves. I suspect in time that we may regret aiding in and unleashing the terrible storm that this administration may very well bring ... which will be of our own making.

Do we really want Elon Musk and RFK to potentially be making decisions that will affect our health and wellbeing?

I pray that I'm wrong, that I'm overreacting, remind me down the road if I am. This event may very well prove to be one of the most tragic and consequential times in this country's history ... or perhaps not.

What's most critical to me is the importance of not being divided. Let the politicians hate each other. It's not a time for violence and hatred between "we the people."

I will continue to love my Republican friends and family members. I will continue to fish with my Republican fishing.

Perhaps I am naïve, but I still believe in the power of love, the tenant of doing the right thing in each next moment and with each next person in our path.

This letter's intent is not to offend anyone.

I'm writing this for myself, because I'm moved to write, as I sometimes do. I'm writing this to counter the sinking feeling in my gut, one that I have rarely experienced in my lifetime ... writing just to expel the fear that wants to creep in. Peace out friends.

**Robin Piscitelli**  
Highlands NC

day music, Christmas crafts, seasonal treats, and a cozy fireside gathering, where visitors of all ages can make s'mores and raise a cup of holiday cheer.

Tickets are available on the Cashiers Historical Society website: \$30 for adults, \$10 for children ages 6-12, and free for children under 5.

Deck the halls and experience the timeless magic of an Appalachian Christmas at the Cashiers Historical Society.

# HOLIDAY MARKET

Through Dec. 28th

Join us for The Bascom's Holiday Market, where our space transforms into a festive wonderland! Explore a curated selection of unique, handcrafted gifts for both children and adults, perfect for everyone on your holiday list.

In addition to shopping, enjoy holiday-themed workshops, a Santa Letter Writing Station, Kids Make-and-Take Ornaments, Fun in the SmART Space, and a holiday photo selfie station. There's something for everyone to enjoy!

## Save the Dates!

**Nov 23** Holiday Market Reception  
Wine tasting | 2-4 pm | Free

**Nov 29** Gingerbread House  
(Intergenerational Workshop)  
Register at [TheBascom.org](http://TheBascom.org)

**Dec 7** Holiday Market Reception  
*Following the Highlands*  
*Christmas Parade* | 2-4 pm  
Hot Chocolate, Music, and  
Festive Treats | Free

**Dec 14** Photos with Santa, 2-4 pm  
(Donations Appreciated)  
Hot Chocolate & Festive  
Treats



Scan for More  
Information

Gingerbread Houses

Holiday  
Shopping  
Holiday  
Classes

Santa Letter  
Writing Station

Photos *with* Santa  
Clay Fun  
and More!

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[TheBascom.org](http://TheBascom.org) | 828.526.4949

Funding is due in part to a Tourism Grant with Visit  
Highlands, NC.



HIGHLANDS  
NORTH CAROLINA

— ELEV. 4118 —

## Holidays at the Cashiers Historical Society

On Friday, Dec. 6 Join the Cashiers Historical Society for Holidays at the Historical Society from 4 to 7 pm, and experience a magical evening that captures the warmth and wonder of the season.

Enjoy a candlelit tour of the historic Zachary-Tolbert House, beautifully decorated for the holidays, and step back in time to explore festive traditions unique to Southern Appalachia.

In addition to the tour, enjoy live holi-

# • INK PENN •

## Two tried and true mystery series

Quite often I hear from readers that they've enjoyed a book they discovered in my columns. Recently, though, I received an email from a reader with a request:

*"Please consider reviewing books that take place elsewhere. Not everyone is infatuated with the dark, dreary, depressing world of the UK. It's a big world out there! Maybe try a sunny destination with great food, like Italy."*

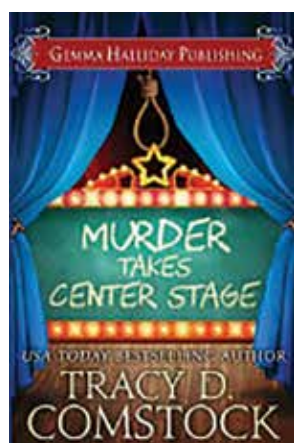
My reply?

*"Thanks for taking the time to drop me a line. I'm not sure whether to laugh or be defensive—perhaps a bit of both. Let's just say I consider myself very fortunate to be able to write about books I enjoy. Are they more often than not books set in the UK? Yes, though I do, on occasion, branch out."*

*"My most recent haul from the library includes one book set in Washington, DC, one set in California, and another in some coastal town. Perhaps reviews of them will show up in the paper down the road."*

It's quite often the luck of the library draw as to what I read. Do I put mostly British mysteries on my Hold list at the library? I must confess I do, so those show up in the paper more frequently than anything else. It's pure chance that three of my last four reads were set elsewhere, and now I'm returning to my favorite locale.

**Murder Takes the Stage**  
by Colleen Cambridge



This is Book IV in the Phyllida Bright Mystery series, and it's the best one yet. Of course, I'm biased because it's set in London in the 1930s and Phyllida is Agatha Christie's housekeeper—everything I could want in a murder mystery.

The author did a masterful job of dropping hints about Phyllida's back-



Kathy Manos Penn

ground in the first three books, and finally readers get some answers—not everything by any means, but enough to keep us coming back for more. We know she and Agatha were nurses together in the Great War. We know Phyllida's not happy about being in London. She'd much prefer to be in the Devon village where Agatha Christie and her husband Max Mallowan spend most of their time. What we don't know is why Phyllida is concerned about visiting the city.

The plot centers on murders at three London theaters, but the subplots are as intriguing as the main one. Nearly the entire household shifts to London for a few weeks, so the usual cast of characters is back. The maids, the butler, and the chauffeur enjoy London to varying degrees, but as always, it's Phyllida who gets involved in solving the murders.

I suspect Book V won't come out for another year, so I'll be champing at the bit to get my hands on it. I have to know what the future holds for Phyllida.

**The Detective Inspector Skelgill Mystery Series**  
by Bruce Beckham



I discovered this series when a Crier reader wrote to thank me for introducing her to the Ruth Galloway mysteries, and she told me about this one. These Brit-

ish mysteries are set in the Lake District, an area I visited last year. I try to read books set where I'm vacationing, so the Skelgill mysteries fit the bill for my trip. The two of us met for coffee as she was planning a trip to the Cotswolds, where I'd spent a week in 2018, and subsequently set my mystery series.

She tells me she's jealous that I'm still working my way through the Skelgill stories since she's long since finished them. I'm on fourteen of twenty-four and have a ways to go.

Skelgill is a rough around the edges detective inspector who's an outdoors guy. He can spend endless hours fishing and that solitude on the water is often where he works out puzzles in his cases. He's also a fell runner and a member of the mountain rescue squad. A fell is a hill or mountain with steep slopes and rocky terrain. And believe it or not, fell runners run up and down the mountains in the Lake District.

Part of the fun in reading these books is learning a new language. It may be British English, but the Lake District has its own dialect, so much so, that there's a glossary in the front of the books. The author also does an outstanding job of bringing the setting to life—the water, the mountains, the weather. I feel as though I'm there as I read.

These are police procedurals, not cozy mysteries, so if you don't care for cursing, steer clear. The cast of characters includes Skelgill's two detective sergeants—one a married man with kids, the other a young woman in her 20s—both of them from London. Of course, he has a nemesis too—a sharp-dressed DI from Manchester—who would like nothing better than to get the best of Skelgill.

Though the books are described as standalone mysteries, I suggest you start at the beginning with "Murder in Adland." As in any good series, you learn more about Skelgill and his team as the books progress. I only just found out his first name, but I'm not telling.

Happy reading.

• 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](mailto:inkpenn119@gmail.com), and follow her on Facebook, [www.facebook.com/KathyManosPenn.Author/](http://www.facebook.com/KathyManosPenn.Author/).



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On the corner of 3rd & Spring

# ...HOUSING continued from page 1

PSA (Macon County) Housing Gap Estimates (2023 to 2028) - Number of Units Needed		
Housing Segment		Number of Units*
Rentals	Extremely/Very Low-Income Rental Housing (< \$916/Month Rent)	174
	Low-Income Rental Housing (\$917-\$1,466/Month Rent)	209
	Moderate-Income Rental Housing (\$1,467-\$2,169/Month Rent)	181
	Higher-Income Rental Housing (\$2,170+/Month Rent)	65
Total Units:		629
For-Sale	Entry-Level For-Sale Homes (< \$122,167)	65
	Lower-Income For-Sale Homes (\$122,168-\$195,467)	160
	Moderate-Income For-Sale Homes (\$195,468-\$289,200)	670
	Higher-Income For-Sale Homes (\$289,201+)	596
Total Units:		1,491

\*Number of units assumes product is marketable, affordable and in a marketable location. Variations of product types will impact the actual number of units that can be supported. Additionally, incentives and/or government policy changes could encourage support for additional units that exceed the preceding projections.

on tourism.

According to Bowen, very few tourism-related occupations pay sufficient wages to enable the workers to reasonably afford to rent or buy a home in Macon County or Highlands. This places financial challenges on the local tourism-based employers due to employment turnover and their ability to attract workers.

Macon County saw the greatest increase in visitor spending compared to surrounding counties in 2023. Visitors spending in Macon County totaled \$350 million, increasing by 3.8 % from the prior year. Food and lodging comprise the county's largest share of expenditures.

An estimated 1,706 persons are employed within the tourism-oriented occupations in the county representing over 14% of the persons employed overall, which exemplifies the influence this workforce sector has in the county.

Nearly 4,000 individuals from surrounding areas – 36% of the workforce – commute into Macon County for employment. Close to half (47.9 %) of in-commuters are between ages 30 to 54 and 39.4% earn over \$40,000 annually.

Were housing available, these workers would be potential new residents/households for Macon County.

The presentation addressed demographic trends, housing needs and strategic recommendations.

The report states that Macon County has experienced positive household growth since 2010 and is projected to continue within each study area (Macon County, Franklin, Franklin ETJ and Highlands/Flats) between 2023 and 2028.

Macon County is projected to experience an overall household growth rate of 3.2% with the addition of 548 households. The Highlands/Flats areas are projected to add 0.9% with the addition of 16 households. This growth rate is similar to the

projected 3.5% growth rate for the state during this same time.

Macon County projections through 2018 indicate the greatest growth of household heads by age will occur among seniors ages 75 and older. Other notable growth will also occur among households between the ages of 35 and 44 and ages 65 to 74. These trends will drive demand for family- and senior-oriented housing products.

The assessment found that approximately 57.5% of county renter households earn less than \$40,000 annually, while most of the renter household growth within the county will be among those earning \$60,000 to 99,000. Over 50% of renter households will continue to earn less than \$40,000 annually through 2028.

Obviously, housing affordability is a significant challenge for a large number of area households. Approximately 322 Macon County households live in substandard housing with 227 overcrowded housing units and 95 housing units with either incomplete plumbing or kitchens. Nearly 1,900 households in Macon County live in severe cost-burdened housing, paying over 50 percent of their income toward housing, with 891 renters and 990 owner households experiencing this financial burden.

The presentation offered an in-depth look at Macon County's current demographic and economic landscape, housing trends, and future projections. In addition to evaluating current housing conditions, the report provided valuable insights on employment trends, housing gaps by income segment, and community input gathered from area stakeholders, employers, and residents.

Avenues to solve or alleviate the workforce housing crisis differ for Highlands and areas in the county.

Within the Highlands corporate limits, it would mean considering loosening zoning

• See HOUSING page 21



*Oh What Fun!*

Celebrate the joy and beauty of the season in Highlands.

### *Ice Skating in the Park*

Opens Thursday, November 21

#### Winter Hours

Thursdays, 3:30-8pm, Fridays, 3:30-10pm, Saturdays, 1-10pm, Sundays, 1-5pm

#### Thanksgiving Week

11/25-11/27, 1-8pm, Closed Thanksgiving Day, 11/29-11/30 1-10pm, 12/1, 1-5pm

#### Christmas Break

12/23, 1-8pm, 12/24, 1-5pm, Closed Christmas Day, 12/26, 1-8pm, 12/27-12/28 1-10pm, 12/29, 1-5pm, 12/30, 1-8pm, 12/31, 1pm-1am, 1/1, 1-8pm

Kelsey-Hutchinson Founders Park | \$8, with or without skates.

### *Light up the Park & Main*

Saturday, November 30 | 6-8pm

Kelsey-Hutchinson Founders Park

### *Highlands Christmas Parade*

Saturday, December 7 | 10am-12pm

Main Street

### *Santa in the Park*

December 7, 14 & 21

Kelsey-Hutchinson Founders Park

### *Lighting of the Menorah*

Wednesday, December 25 | 5:30pm

Kelsey-Hutchinson Founders Park



HOLIDAYS IN  
HIGHLANDS

HIGHLANDS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE/VISIT HIGHLANDS, NC

All events, other than Ice Skating, are organized and hosted by the Highlands Chamber of Commerce/Visit Highlands, NC.

# Highlands Food & Wine Festival • Nov. 7-10



# Grand Tasting • Truckin' • Main Event • A Shot at Redemption



Photos by Jim and Kim Lewicki



# • HIGHLANDS EVENTS •

## WINTER POOL SCHEDULE

Lap Swim: Mon.-Fri. 6am-9:45am, and Saturday 10am-11pm - 6 lanes.

Water Aerobics: 18 y+ Mon.-Fri. 10-11am with Karen Chambers.

Adult Swim: 18y+ Mon.-Thurs. 11am-3:30pm, Friday 11am-1:30pm

Public Swim: Mon. thru Thurs. 3:30-7pm, Saturday 11am-6pm and Sunday 1-6pm

## 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. Women's Group 5:30, Tuesdays. 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](http://www.aawnc80.org) or to speak with a member of AA 24/7 at 828-349-4357.

## MOVIES

• Movies at the Martin Lipscomb Per-

forming Arts Center at PAC on Chestnut Street See adjoining ad.

## PICKLE BALL

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

## 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.

• Balance, Stretch & Strengthen Class at the Rec Park 8:30-9:30am. The cost for the class is \$30 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.

## 1st Tuesdays through Dec.

• HUMC's Community Table Dinner at the Community Building at 6 p.m. Sept. 3, Oct. 1, Nov. 5 and Dec. 3.

## 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](mailto: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 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.

• 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](mailto:info@maconncliteracy.org)

## 2nd 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.

## Mon., Tues., Thurs.

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

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

## Thurs.-Sat.

• Mountain Findings Hours: 10a to 1p.

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

## Fridays

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

## 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 Bascom 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 [ncpost370@gmail.com](mailto:ncpost370@gmail.com) for more information or just join us at 9 AM.

## 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).

## Through Nov. 12

• Macon county youth basketball registration is open. For youth Girls ages 5-15 years old go to [maconcountygirlsbasketball.com](http://maconcountygirlsbasketball.com) for boys ages 5-18 years old go to [maconcountyboysbasketball.com](http://maconcountyboysbasketball.com).

## Through Dec. 28

• At The Bascom, Holiday Market is open.

## Thurs., Nov. 14

• At the Community Building, Bingo for Hurricane Relief 6:30-8:30p. Sponsored by Pat Allen and the Rotary Club of Highlands.

## Friday, Nov. 15

• First Senior Lunch of the season will be at 12 noon at the Highlands Rec Dept in the Meeting Room. The menu will be Roasted Pork Loin, Mashed Potatoes, Green Beans, Spiced Apples and Roll.

## Sun., Nov. 17

• Celebration in honor of Mary Adair Trumbly as she steps into retirement. 2:30-4p at the Highlands Performing Arts Center. Refreshments, heartfelt stories and company.

## Nov. 18-25

• Operation Christmas Child shoebox gift drop off at First Baptist Church in Highlands noon to 4p and Cashiers Baptist Church. Find a step-by-step guide on the How to Pack a Shoebox webpage, [www.samaritianspurse.org/occ](http://www.samaritianspurse.org/occ).

## Mon. Nov. 18

• Lunch with the Doc at HC Hospital from noon to 1p. Free program on chronic pain management. Registration is available online at [www.missionhealth.org/calendar](http://www.missionhealth.org/calendar) or by calling 844-630-5295. Attendance is limited to 50 people, and a buffet-style dinner will be provided.

## Thurs., Nov. 21-March

• The Highlands Parks and Recreation-managed Ice Skating in the Park kicks off Thursday and runs through early March, weather permitting. The hours are Thursdays, 3:30-8pm, Fridays, 3:30-10pm, Saturdays, 1-10pm, Sundays, 1-5pm. The price is only \$8, with or without skates. Coffee and

## MOVIES

### at PAC's MLPC

507 Chestnut St. Highlands



**Fri. & Sat.,  
Nov. 15 & 16  
2 & 5:30p**

## Tickets:

**Adults: \$13.20 • Children: \$11**

[boxoffice@](mailto:boxoffice@highlandsp Performingarts.com)

[highlandsp Performingarts.com](http://highlandsp Performingarts.com)

828-526-9047

# • HIGHLANDS EVENTS •

hot chocolate are available for purchase.

## Sat., Nov. 23

- At The Bascom, Holiday Market Reception 2-4p. Free.
- At PAC, Darren Nicholson Band with special guest Kristin Scott Benson at 7:30p. For tickets, (828) 526-9047.

## Tues., Nov. 26

- Community Thanksgiving Dinner at the Highlands Civic Center/Rec Park at 6 p.m.

## Holidays in Highlands!

The Highlands Chamber of Commerce/Visit Highlands, NC has an exciting line-up of holiday events in store. The schedule boasts a diverse range of activities, including:

### Ice Skating in Park –

**Thur., Nov. 21, 3:30-8pm  
in Kelsey-Hutchinson  
Founders Park**

The Highlands Parks and Recreation-managed Ice Skating in the Park kicks off Thursday, Nov. 21 and runs through early March, weather permitting.

The hours are Thursdays, 3:30-8pm, Fridays, 3:30-10pm, Saturdays, 1-10pm, Sundays, 1-5pm.

Thanksgiving Week: 11/25-11/27, 1-8pm, Closed Thanksgiving Day, 11/29-11/30 1-10pm, 12/1, 1-5pm.

Christmas Break: 12/23, 1-8pm, 12/24, 1-5pm, Closed Christmas Day, 12/26, 1-8pm, 12/27-12/28 1-10pm, 12/29, 1-5pm, 12/30, 1-8pm, 12/31, 1pm-1am, 1/1, 1-8pm.

The price is only \$8, with or without skates. Coffee and hot chocolate are available for purchase.

### Light Up the Park –

**Sat., Nov. 30, 6-8pm in Kelsey-Hutchinson  
Founders Park**

Anticipation will fill the mountain air as the community gathers in the park to enjoy treats and a program that includes live music and carols led by the Foxfire Boys, a display of children's artwork and a reading of the Christmas story. Then, Santa arrives atop a firetruck to usher in the lighting of the park and Main Street. Watch the park come alive with thousands of holiday lights that will remain throughout the season, along with ice skating and photo-op fun.

**Santa in the Park – Sat., Dec 7, Sat., Dec. 14, Sat. Dec. 21 and Tues. Dec. 24 in Kelsey-Hutchinson Founders**

## Fri., Nov. 29

- At The Bascom, Gingerbread House Workshop. Register at TheBascom.org.
- At PAC, Mark O'Connor's An Appalachian Christmas Featuring Maggie O'Connor at 7:30p. For tickets, (828) 526-9047.

## Sat., Nov. 30

- Light Up the Park – 6-8pm in Kelsey-Hutchinson Founders Park. Live music and carols led by the Foxfire Boys, a display of children's artwork and a reading of the

### Park

Santa Claus himself will make special appearances on Saturdays in the park to listen to the wishes of children, both young and young at heart. On Christmas Eve, Tuesday, December 24, Santa is extremely busy prepping for gift delivery so appointments are required and can be booked at [www.highlandschamber.org/event/santa-in-the-park/1306/](http://www.highlandschamber.org/event/santa-in-the-park/1306/)



HOLIDAYS IN  
HIGHLANDS

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE/VISIT HIGHLANDS, NC

Additionally, he will make periodic visits to collect letters placed in a designated mailbox within the park.

**Highlands Christmas Parade – Sat.,  
Dec. 7, 10am-12pm  
along Main Street**

As part of this longstanding tradition, expect to witness a delightful procession along Main Street featuring marching bands, llamas, camels, imaginative floats, and, of course, the star of the show, Santa Claus. Those who wish to participate in the parade must submit a completed application to the Highlands Chamber of Commerce/Visit Highlands, NC no later than 12 noon on Nov. 15. To apply and for more information, email [events@highlandschamber.org](mailto:events@highlandschamber.org) or call 828-526-5841.

**Lighting of the Menorah – Weds.,  
Dec. 25, 5:30pm, Kelsey-Hutchinson  
Founders Park**

Hanukkah is an eight-day winter festival of lights, celebrated to mark the triumph of light over darkness. One candle of the giant menorah will be lit on the first night of Hanukkah and an additional candle each successive night. This will be done until the eighth night when the Menorah is fully illuminated.

For more information about the Holidays in Highlands, call the Highlands, NC Welcome Center at 828-526-2112 or visit [www.visithighlandscnc.com](http://www.visithighlandscnc.com).

Christmas story. Then, Santa arrives atop a firetruck to usher in the lighting of the park and Main Street. Ice skating and photo-op fun.

## Fri., Dec. 6

• Join the Cashiers Historical Society for Holidays at the Historical Society on Friday 4 to 7 pm, and experience a magical evening that captures the warmth and wonder of the season. Enjoy a candlelit tour of the historic Zachary-Tolbert House, beautifully decorated for the holidays, and step back in time to explore festive traditions unique to Southern Appalachia. In addition to the tour, enjoy live holiday music, Christmas crafts, seasonal treats, and a cozy fireside gathering, where visitors of all ages can make s'mores and raise a cup of holiday cheer. Tickets are available on the Cashiers Historical Society website: \$30 for adults, \$10 for children ages 6-12, and free for children under 5. Deck the halls and experience the timeless magic of an Appalachian Christmas at the Cashiers Historical Society.

## Sat., Dec. 7-24

- Santa in the K-H Founders Park for pictures.

## Sat., Dec. 7

- Highlands Christmas Parade 10am-12pm along Main Street.

• At The Bascom after the parade, Holiday Market Reception, hot chocolate, music and festive treats. Free.

## Sat., Dec. 14

• At The Bascom, photos with Santa 2-4 p.m. Hot chocolate and festive treats.

• At Rabun Gap Nacoochee School, Lux Nativitas" a beautiful new tradition that brings the nativity story to life. Through Scripture readings, classic Christmas music, and mesmerizing performances in dance and circus arts, Lux Nativitas walks us through the Gospel account of Christ's birth, celebrating the light and joy of the season. Performances at 7 PM in the Rearden Theater at RGNS. Tickets are available at [rabungap.org/tickets](http://rabungap.org/tickets)

## Tues., Dec. 17

• At Rabun Gap Nacoochee School, Lux Nativitas" a beautiful new tradition that brings the nativity story to life. Through Scripture readings, classic Christmas music, and mesmerizing performances in dance and circus arts, Lux Nativitas walks us through the Gospel account of Christ's birth, celebrating the light and joy of the season. Performance is at 7 PM in the Rearden Theater at RGNS. Tickets are available at [rabungap.org/tickets](http://rabungap.org/tickets)

Join us as we honor the remarkable Mary Adair Trumbly for her 14 years of dedication, vision, and passion at the Highlands Performing Arts Center. As she steps into her next act of retirement, let's come together to celebrate her incredible contributions and career!

Enjoy an afternoon filled with refreshments, heartfelt stories, laughter, and great company.

Sunday, November 17, 2:30 - 4:00 PM  
Highlands Performing Arts Center



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## ...OBITUARIES continued from page 7

### Carole Oxford

Carole Oxford was born on September 23, 1942, in Cuthbert, GA to Myrtle Greene and Curtis Dixon Oxford. She graduated from Terrell County High School and attended Stephens College.

She is survived by her sister, Kay Oxford Singletary, two daughters, Ivy Ullery Stubbs and Eve Jones (Phil), four grandchildren, Kevin Stubbs, Caroline Stubbs Hitchcock (Alex), Jacob Dugger and Benjamin Dugger, great grandson, Henry Hitchcock, nephew Dick Lawson, and her precious canine companion, Little Bit.

For 26 years, she enjoyed an impressive career in residential construction/development and real estate in Dunwoody, Georgia. In 2003, after this great success, she relocated to Highlands, NC, where she and her family had spent many wonderful seasons. As a part of this new journey, she took a risk and founded Oxford Properties (real estate



brokerage) and enjoyed 18 years of acclaimed success.

From the moment of her arrival in Highlands, she felt a deep connection with the people and community. Her genuine interest and care of her neighbors was evident with her service in and around the area. She wasn't a famous athlete, politician, or musician, but she was extraordinary, and the community and world has lost a truly incredible woman.

She was active in the Highlands Child Development Center (Board Member), the Highlands-Cashiers Hospital (Board Member), Rotary Club of Highlands as a member and devoted time to fundraising activities and supported The Town of Highlands Scholarship Fund and The Cashiers Highlands Humane Society.

A Celebration of Life will be held Sunday November 24, 2024, 3p at First Baptist Church-Highlands, officiated by Pastor Donnie Seagle. In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations be directed to the Town of Highlands Scholarship Fund and The Cashiers Highlands Humane Society.

Online condolences can be left at [www.bryantgrantfuneralhome.com](http://www.bryantgrantfuneralhome.com)

Bryant-Grant Funeral Home & Crematory is honored to serve the Oxford family.

## .BIZ/ORG NEWS.

### The Bascom launches its first-ever Holiday Market with festive shopping and creative workshops

The Bascom Launches Its First-Ever Holiday Market with Festive Shopping and Creative Workshops in Highlands, NC

This holiday season, The Bascom announces the debut of its first-ever Holiday Market, a festive shopping and creative experience in the heart of Highlands. Running from November 2nd through December 28th, The Holiday Market will transform The Bascom's retail space into a seasonal destination, showcasing a stunning collection of handcrafted items from both local and regional artists. Visitors will find a unique selection of artful gifts spanning ceramics, textiles, jewelry, woodworking, and more, featuring work by Frank Vickery, Christine Smith, Olga King, Virginia Fisher, Jo Hill, Corbin Tucker, Eva Hoke, Highlands Bolivian Missions, Backyard Bees, Priscilla Galloway, Madison Minus, Gwen Greenglass, Anna Scarpa McCauley, members of The Bascom Clay Studio, and more.

The Bascom's Holiday Market is designed to offer something for everyone, from thoughtful gifts for adults to playful items for children. Highlights include beautiful ceramic pieces crafted by Bascom studio members and seasonal touches that will inspire holiday cheer throughout the event. Shoppers will also enjoy festive activities like photos with Santa, hot chocolate, and holiday sweets, making this a true celebration of the season.

In addition to shopping, The Bascom will host a series of holiday-themed workshops. From the beloved Gingerbread House Workshop to new creative experiences for all ages, these workshops invite the community to come together, make art, and create lasting holiday memories.

Join The Bascom for its inaugural Holiday Market—an experience where you can shop, create, and celebrate the season like never before. The Holiday Market opens November 2nd and runs through December 28th.



Fall in love with your skin this November with our ThreeforMe laser treatment at 20% off!



December brings savings on all Injectables. A Holiday gift for you or someone on your Christmas list!

Call today for more information.

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Franklin - 828-349-1280



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Life Market



# • BIZ/ORG NEWS •



From left: Ruth Claiborne, Cain Haley, Minnie Bob Campbell, Peggy Boruchow-Arnette, Ann Flynn, Rachel Fraser, Elizabeth Rodgers, Kim Daughtery, and Glenda Bell

## New officers for a new year

The Laurel Garden Club recently elected new officers for 2025 and also accepted four new members this year.

New members are Kim Daughtery, Mary Catherine Council, Cain Haley, and Michael Burel. Officers for 2025 will be: Glenda Bell, President; Ruth Claiborne and Michael Burel, 1st Vice Presidents; Peggy Boruchow-Arnette and Laura Ames, 2nd Vice Presidents; Ann Flynn and Kyle Roberts, Corre-

sponding Secretaries; Rachel Fraser, Recording Secretary; and Minnie Bob Campbell and Elizabeth Rodgers, Treasurers.

The Laurel Garden Club is dedicated to aiding the protection and conservation of our natural resources, encouraging civic beauty and roadside beautification, stimulating the fine art of gardening, and cooperating with other organizations furthering the interest of horticulture and conservation.

As of 2024, the Club has given back to the community a total of \$240,702 in grant awards to non-profit organizations to further their goals.

A new grant year will begin in January 2025 and applications will be available at that time. Please watch for notifications of the new grant cycle.



## Presents an OBAGI Event Wed., Nov. 20 10a to 3p

Consult with our Obagi representative to learn about the latest releases that will turn back the hands of time.

Book a facial using the newest Skintrinsic IOS systems.

Afterwards, have a make-up consult to complete your look.

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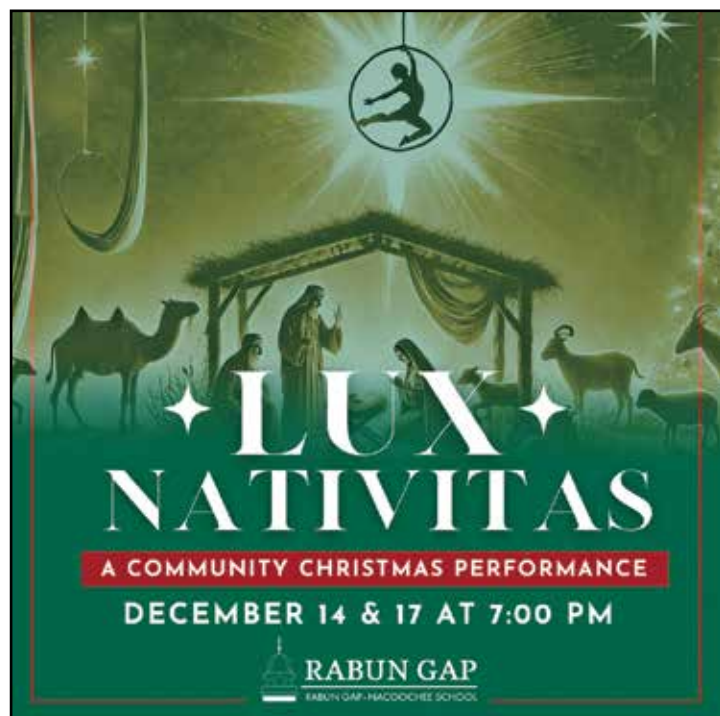
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# SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING



## It's all about timing

**Pastor Dan Robinson**  
Highlands Central Baptist Church

The timing was remarkable as well as overwhelmingly obvious. It seems that in one moment the television political ads ended and in the next moment we were inundated with Christmas advertisements. Timing.

National and state-wide elections, setting our clocks back one hour and Veteran's Day have consumed our November calendars. And all of that before the month was barely one third over! And then there's Thanksgiving, only some two weeks away. Timing.

Someone has said that the three most important words in real estate are Location! Location! Location!

If we were to nominate the three most important words in Scripture, then those words might be Timing! Timing! Timing!

The Bible says, But when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, and made under the law to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. (Galatians 4:4-5 KJV).

Or we could say that Jesus Christ came to the earth in the form of a little baby some two thousand years ago for the purpose of showing the human race the way to know God through His death, burial and resurrection in order that those who follow Him could and would become the adopted sons and daughters of God.

Jesus Christ came to the earth right on time. But then He left. But not for good.

The next thing on Heaven's calendar is the Lord's return to the earth. And that will happen right on time.

I don't know of anyone, anytime or anywhere who has denied that Jesus Christ lived on the earth. His Messiahship has been denied. His claims to be the Son of God have been denied. But the figure and person of a man named Jesus Christ have been acknowledged as a fact of history.

The question then is a simple one, namely, since He came the first time in fulfillment of Scripture am I ready for His return which is also promised in Scripture?

There are some predictable responses to that question:

- Some will scoff and regard the whole thing as nonsense. In the last days scoffers will come. They will say, "Where is this coming He promised?" (2 Peter 3:3-4).

- Some will try and cram in all the living they can. As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. For in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark (Matthew 24:37-38).

- Some will do nothing. Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die (I Corinthians 15:32).

- Some will be prepared, waiting and ready. Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come (Matthew 24:42).

Timing.

Most of us are preparing for Thanksgiving and Christ-

• See SPIRITUALLY page 19

# • 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

## CHAPEL OF THE SKY

Sky Valley. GA • 706-746-2999  
Sundays: 10 a.m. Worship; Holy Communion 1st & 3rd Sundays

## CHRIST ANGLICAN CHURCH

The Rev'd Dr. Michael Matlock, Rector  
464 U.S. Hwy. 64E, Cashiers, NC  
CAC@christanglicancashiers.org • 828-743-1701

Sunday: 9a Fellowship; 9:30a Adult Christian Ed; 10:30a  
Holy Eucharist Wed: 6p Bible Study and Prayer

## CHRIST CHURCH OF THE VALLEY. CASHIERS

Pastor Brent Metcalf • 743-5470 www.cashiers.church  
Sun. S.S 9:30a, 10:45a; Tues. Guys study 8am. Gals 10am.;  
Wed. 6pm supper and teaching.

## CLEAR CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH

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

## COMMUNITY BIBLE CHURCH

www.cbchighlands.com • 526-4685  
3645 Cashiers Rd. Highlands. NC • Sr. Pastor Gary Hewins  
Sun: Service 10:45am, Children's 10:30am  
Wed.: Youth 5:30-7pm; Women's Bible Study: Mon. 4:30pm, Tues.  
10am; Men's Bible Study: Wed. & Thurs. 7am @ Zookeeper 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, Kelley Connelly Asso. 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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909a Bluegrass and 11a Traditional  
www.highlandsmethodist.org

## HOLY FAMILY LUTHERAN CHURCH: ELCA

2152 Dillard Road • 526-9741  
Rev. Ken Langsdorf  
Worship/Communion: 10:30 All are welcome.

Visit our website: Holy Family Lutheran Highlands NC

## MACEDONIA BAPTIST CHURCH

8 miles south of Highlands on N.C. 28 S in Satolah  
Pastor Zane Talley  
Sundays: School: 10 a.m.; Worship: 11. Choir: 6 p.m.  
Wed: Bible Study and Youth Mtg.: 7 p.m.

## MOUNTAIN SYNAGOGUE

Franklin • 828-634-1312 • mountainsynagoguenc.com.  
Services: 1st Fri. and 3rd Sat.; Rosh Hashanah & Yom Kippur.

## MOUNTAIN BIBLE CHURCH

743-2583 • Independent Bible Church  
Sun: 10:30 a.m. at Big Ridge Baptist Church. 4224 Big Ridge  
(4.5 miles from NC 107)

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

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

## UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP

85 Sierra Drive. Franklin • ufranklin.org  
Sunday Worship - 11 a.m.

## WHITESIDE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Rev. Sam Forrester/Cashiers • 828-743-2122  
Sunday School: 10 am. Worship Service: 11 am

## ...OFFICER continued from page 1

qualified for the position and was already on the job.

At the October Planning Board meeting, Henry sat at the table alongside Planning Director Michael Mathis to hear the cases on the agenda; Mathis agreed with Ward about Henry's capabilities.

Mathis said as Code Enforcement Officer, Henry will be monitoring what's outlined in the Unified Development Ordinance mostly regarding land use – erosion control, building codes, setbacks, sign violations and more.

In addition, he will be working with the Planning Department monitoring complaints and issues that come through the 24/7 STR hotline.

“During the week he will be work-



**Bobby Henry**  
Highlands Code  
Enforcement Officer

ing with department on those things, and in the evenings and on the weekends those issues will likely be handled by the police department as they are now,” he said.

So, who is Bobby Henry and how qualified is he?

Henry has worked with Cullasaja Gorge Fire & Rescue since 1998, serving as a volunteer, career firefighter, Lieutenant, Captain, and Chief.

In addition he has previously worked for Macon County Planning, Permitting, and Development as a Fire Inspector, Building Inspector, and Code Enforcement Officer.

Throughout his career, he's obtained quite a few certifications and licenses, which include Building Inspector, Level I; Fire Inspector, Level II; Plumbing Inspector, Level

I; Electrical Inspector, Level I; Mechanical Inspector, Level I; Hazardous Materials Certification, Level I; IFSAC Technical Rescuer: General, AG, Confined Space, Structural Collapse, Trench, Vehicle, Water; NCOEMS EMT; IFSAC Firefighter, Level I, II (NC); FEMA NIMS, 100, 200, 300, 700, 800; IFSAC General Instructor; IFSAC RIT Crew; IFSAC Driver Operator Pumps; SSI Advance Open Water Diver; and IFSAC Fire Officer II.

Henry lives in the Ellijay community, which allows him to work in Highlands, continue as a volunteer firefighter, and serve as the Chief for Cullasaja Gorge Fire & Rescue, which boasts 39 volunteers and two full-time employees.

“I'm thrilled to have the opportunity to work with the Town of Highlands and contribute to such an incredible community,” he said.

As to business, the two preliminary and final subdivision plats for development on Holt Circle were OK'd unanimously by the Planning Board.

The first was a 2.27-acre plat in the R1 district that will be subdivided into two lots – Tract 1 will be 1.14 acres, and Tract 2 will be 1.13 acres. Macon County approved the septic permit, and the town is discussing getting electricity to the property.

The second subdivision, also on Holt Circle, is the 5.42-acre Woodruff property zoned R1 which is being subdivided into two lots – 1.57 acres and the other 3.85 acres.

The county has signed off on the septic permit and electricity is already available to the parcel.

Specific details regarding housing and placement on the lots in both cases, was not available at the time of the meeting.

## • POLICE & FIRE REPORTS •

**Highlands Police entries from Nov. 5. Only the names of persons arrested, issued a summons/citation, issued a Class-3 misdemeanor or those of public officials have been used.**

### Nov. 5

• At 6 p.m., officers responded to a 2-vehicle accident at US 64 west (Franklin Road) and Holt Knob Road.

### Nov. 9

• At 8:15 p.m., officers responded to a one-vehicle accident on NC 106 (Georgia Road).

**The Highlands Fire & Rescue log from Oct. 26.**

### Nov. 5

• At 8:49 a.m., the dept. provided public assistance on US 64 east (Cashiers Road).

• At 11:58 a.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a location on Oak Street.

• At 6 p.m., the dept. responded to a motor vehicle accident on US 64 west (Franklin Road).

### Nov. 6

• At 10:33 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a location on Pierson Drive.

• At 9:34 p.m., the dept. provided mutual aid to the Cashiers FD.

### Nov. 7

• At 12:05 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Morewood

Road.

• At 4 p.m., the dept. provided public assistance at a residence on Morewood Road.

### Nov. 8

• At 12:14 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a location on N. 4th Street.

### Nov. 9

• At 11:37 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Cullasaja Drive.

### Nov. 10

• At 7:22 a.m., the dept. responded to a fire at a residence on Pearl Drive.

• At 2:48 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Holt Knob.

• At 10:49 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Honeysuckle Lane.

### Nov. 11

• At 8:25 a.m., the dept. provided public assistance at a residence on Big Bear Pen.

• At 9:45 a.m., the dept. provided public assistance at a location on Spruce Street.

• At 8:35 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Pinewood Lane.

### NOTE:

“Public Assistance” responses can mean various things: keys locked in vehicles, batteries in a smoke detector and more.

## ...SPIRITUALLY continued from page 18

mas. These holidays have been on our calendars since the day we were born.

So it is with His return to the earth. That date has been on His calendar since before we were born.

Make sure you're ready, OK? No one knows you better and no one loves you more than Jesus Christ. You can give your

life to Him right now through a simple prayer which may go something like this; Lord Jesus, I am a sinner. I now repent of my sins and ask you to forgive me. I ask you to help me live the rest of my life for you.

Timing,

There's no better time than now to pray that prayer.

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**TINY HOME LOTS FOR SALE**, \$55k-\$85k ea. Each lot comes with water, power, and sewer run to each lot. www.TinyMountainEstates.com for more info. (st. 11/22/24)

**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. \$195,000. For more info call 828-421-1709 or email bobnancync@gmail.com. (st. 1/25)

**FOR RENT**  
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## ...HOUSING continued from page 11

	Total Population									
	2010 Census	2020 Census	Change 2010-2020		2023 Estimated	Change 2020-2023		2028 Projected	Change 2023-2028	
			Number	Percent		Number	Percent		Number	Percent
Franklin ETJ	5,611	6,134	523	9.3%	6,210	76	1.2%	6,332	122	2.0%
Highlands/Flats	3,216	3,788	572	17.8%	3,896	108	2.9%	3,919	23	0.6%
Balance of County	25,105	27,104	1,999	8.0%	28,143	1,039	3.8%	29,060	917	3.3%
Macon County	33,922	37,014	3,092	9.1%	38,235	1,221	3.3%	39,297	1,062	2.8%
North Carolina	9,535,419	10,439,314	903,895	9.5%	10,765,602	326,283	3.1%	11,052,082	286,480	2.7%

Source: 2010, 2020 Census; ESRI; Urban Decision Group; Bowen National Research

regulations – changing minimum acreage lot sizes in the R1 and R2 zones to something less, allowing multi-family units in more than the R3 and business districts, etc.

Allowing developers outside the town limits to hook on to town water and sewer might entice workforce housing development, is another idea, but such requests have been shot down in the past.

Outside the town limits in the county, anything is possible.

Bowen listed several housing strategies that could be used as a guide by town and county governments, stakeholders, developers and residents to help them make informed housing decisions.

**Set Realistic/Attainable Short-Term Housing Goals, Outline Long-Term Objectives and Monitor Progress**  
Using the housing needs estimates and recommenda-

tions provided in this report as a guide, the county could set realistic short-term (two to three years) housing development goals along with long-term (five years or longer) objectives to support housing. Short-term goals could focus on establishing an Action Plan that outlines priorities, such as broad housing policies, initiatives, and incentives that support the preservation and development of residential units

**Consider Implementing/Modifying Policies to Encourage or Support the Development of New Housing and the Preservation of Existing Housing**

One of the key findings from this report is that there is limited availability among the existing housing stock in the county and limited residential development currently in the development pipeline. Local governments could consider

• See HOUSING page 22

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## ...HOUSING continued from page 21

Available For-Sale Housing by Price (As of As of March 8, 2024)								
List Price	Number Available	Percent of Supply	Number Available	Percent of Supply	Number Available	Percent of Supply	Number Available	Percent of Supply
	Franklin ETJ		Highland: Flats		Balance of County		Macon County	
Up to \$99,999	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2	2.2%	2	1.1%
\$100,000 to \$199,999	3	23.1%	1	1.3%	11	12.4%	15	8.4%
\$200,000 to \$299,999	5	38.5%	0	0.0%	14	15.7%	19	10.6%
\$300,000 to	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	23	25.8%	23	12.8%
\$399,999 \$400,000+	5	38.5%	76	98.7%	39	43.8%	120	67.0%
Total	13	100.0%	77	100.0%	89	100.0%	179	100.0%
Availability Rate	0.7%		6.0%		0.9%		1.4%	

Source: Redfin.com & Bowen National Research

supporting housing policies such as expanding residential density to allow for more units, modifying unit size requirements (allowing for smaller units), incentivizing or leveraging developer incentives (e.g., Qualified Opportunity Zones, TIF districts, tax abatements, etc.), waiving/deferring/lowering government fees, and exploring other measures specifically targeted to the types of housing.

### Explore Efforts to Encourage the Development of Senior-Oriented Housing to Enable Seniors to Transition into More Maintenance-Free Housing

Macon County has a large and growing base of seniors. There are no non-subsidized age-restricted rental properties in the county as the one senior property in the market operates under the HUD Section 8 and 202 programs. As a result, seniors in the county who wish to downsize into smaller, more maintenance-free independent rental housing will have difficulty finding housing that meets their needs, allowing them to age in place. It is recommended that the development of senior-oriented housing be supported, with possible incentives to encourage such development. This pertains to traditional senior rental product (e.g., independent living) as lower occupancy rates among senior care facilities, particularly nursing care, demonstrate limited demand for such product in the county at this time.

### Formulate Education and Outreach Campaign to Help Support Housing Initiatives

Based on stakeholder responses, community collaboration and educating the public on the importance of and need for housing

should be areas of focus in Macon County. Using both existing and newly created housing education initiatives, local stakeholders could develop an overarching education program with a more unified objective that ultimately supports local housing efforts. The program could, for example, include educating landlords on the Housing Choice Voucher program, informing potential homebuyers about homebuying requirements and assistance (credit repair, down payments, etc.), and advising existing homeowners on home repair assistance.

### Explore and Encourage Development Partnerships

Government entities within the county and town may want to establish formal relationships with other entities to support housing development efforts. This may include relationships with nonprofit groups (e.g., Community Action Agency, Habitat for Humanity, etc.) local businesses and private sector developers. The involvement of the Macon County Housing Department and/or the council of government serving Macon County (Southwestern North Carolina Planning and Economic Development Commission) could also contribute to future housing development opportunities within the county. The consolidation of the public and private sectors for certain housing initiatives can lead to improved efficiencies, larger financial capacities, and more cohesive residential development efforts.

### Market Macon County's Housing Needs and Opportunities to Potential Residential Development Partners and Develop a Centralized

### Housing Resource Center

Using a variety of sources, the county should attempt to identify and market itself to the residential developers (both for-profit and nonprofit), real estate investors, housing advocacy groups and others active in the region. Identification could be through trade associations, published lists of developers, real estate agents or brokers, and other real estate entities in the region. Marketing of the county through trade publications, direct solicitation or public venues (e.g., housing and economic conferences) should be considered. The development of an online residential resource center (website) should be considered that includes or directs people to development and housing resources such as: Potential Residential Sites, Local Housing Assistance Programs, Building & Zoning Regulations, Local Housing Supply Data, Development Incentives, Government & Advocate Contacts, Demographic & Economic Data, Infrastructure & Public Works Information.

The information presented to both the county and town was accepted as "food for thought" for now.

Highlands Chamber of Commerce President Kaye McHan said they are working on additional plans to make workforce housing and perhaps some of the suggestions a reality – at least in the Highlands and Flats areas.

"We will do follow-up presentations with those ideas," she said. "We are hoping to get the Town Board and the Planning Board involved."

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