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Highlands School newspaper INSIDE

FREE

Highlands' Newspaper

Volume 1, Number 24

Locally Owned & Operated

Friday, Dec. 26, 2003

The week of Dec. 24-Jan. 8

Dec. 24

• **CHURCH SERVICE** – Highlands United Methodist Church Christmas Eve Service will be held at 5:30 p.m. It is a family-friendly service including Holy Communion and candlelight.

• **HOLIDAY HOURS** – The Hudson Library will be closed December 24-26 and the Bookworm will be closed December 24 through January 2.

Dec. 25

• **HOLIDAY DINNER** – The third annual Christmas Day Buffet benefiting Habitat for Humanity is at the Main Street Inn. Seating begins at noon. The cost is \$24.95 per person. MasterCard, Visa or American Express accepted. Call 526-2590 for reservations. Seating is limited.

Dec. 31

• **NEW YEAR'S EVE PARTY** – The Highlands Wine and Cheese Shop is sponsoring a New Years' Eve concert at the Martin Lipscomb Performing Arts Center on Chestnut Street. The evening of romance will include music by singer Cy Timmons and pianist Keith Phillips. It includes fine wines and food catered by chef Holly Roberts and champagne and party favors at midnight. Festivities begin at 8:30 p.m. and continue until 2004! The all inclusive event is \$95 per person or \$179 for two persons. Call 526-5210 for more info or to purchase tickets.

Jan. 4

• **GROUP HIKE** – The Nantahala Hiking Club will take an easy 3-mile hike on the Craig Mountain trail. Meet at the Smoky Mountain Visitor Center on Highway 441 (near Otto) at 2 p.m. Call leader Kay Coriell, 369-6820, for more information

Jan 6

• **FREE MOVIE** – The Train – A suspenseful WWII adventure about the French Resistance's attempt to stop a train loaded with fine art, seized from French museums from reaching its destination in Nazi Germany. The time is 7 p.m. at PAC on Chestnut Street. It's free.

Highlands prepares for changes in 2004

By Kim Lewicki

Over the past year, all eyes have been on growth and development in Highlands. Now as 2004 approaches, officials are looking at the next step – preparing for the changes new businesses are bound to generate.

"Growth is not a negative thing as long as you prepare for it," said Macon County Commissioner Ricky Bryson.

Growth usually means more employment – hopefully more year-round employment, says Mayor Buck Trott. "But growth also impacts our schools, childcare and hospital facilities, and our ability to enforce the law." And it's not just about what's within our town limits, but what's on the fringes, too, he said.

Business growth in Highlands over the past two years is unprecedented," said Zoning Administrator Larry Gantenbein. "Between January 1, 2000 and January 1, 2002, the town issued 190 zoning permits. In 2003, January 1 through Dec. 22, the town issued 267 zoning permits." Seven-

ty-seven more in less than a year.

Those permits represent small businesses — businesses state officials hope will keep the economy in Western North Carolina afloat.

"Western North Carolina's future is going to be based on the success of small businesses," said Mayor

Buck Trott. "As textile industries and other manufacturers pull out of North Carolina, small businesses are going to be the source of employment."

Since the spring of 2002 the Highlands Zoning Board of Adjustment granted several special use permits (SUP) to either start-up businesses, changing businesses or expanding businesses.

SUPs have

•See 2004 pg 7

Angel in the snow



Jessica Law, granddaughter of Highlands School Band teacher Kathryn Teem, revels in the snow that caused the last day of school before Christmas break, December 19, to be called off.

Highlands community heeds call for help

By Kim Lewicki

During this season of giving, people have come through for those in need in a big way.

"The response has been great," said Teresa Speed, president of the Highlands Emergency Council. "It's the best I've seen in years."

As winter winds begin to howl and temperatures begin to fall, need always becomes more evident. But this year, the need has been greater than in years past. Speed said people have been go-

ing to the Highlands Emergency Council on Poplar Street by for everything — wood, food, everyday necessities. "A lot of people have been coming in for a winter coat," she said.

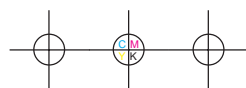
Even though the need has been greater this year – about 215 people have requested help – the response from the community has been higher than normal, too.

To qualify as a recipient for emergency council help, people must meet N.C. poverty guidelines.

Guidelines are based on the number of people in a household. For instance, one person must not earn more than \$11,647 per year; a two-member household must not earn more than \$15,756; the weekly gross pay per week for a family of four must not exceed \$460 a week.

The emergency council collects and distributes food all year long – dried and canned goods mostly, but

•See HELP page 7



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• Editor's Message •

State of the paper

It's been a whirlwind five months. Highlands' Newspaper hit the streets July 18, 2003 with its first issue and thanks to the community's support, it's been going strong ever since.

Highlands' Newspaper is a free, weekly paper about Highlands - her residents and her visitors. It's locally owned and operated. We live here; vote here, our kids go to school here.

Highlands' Newspaper is free and will always be free just like the Laurel Magazine and the Real Estate Buyers Guide. No one has to buy the paper to learn what's going on in Highlands.

The Highlands School newspaper, Mountain Trail, will continue to be published each month school is in session - August through May - by Highlands' Newspaper.

We publish 51 weeks a year - we take the week after Christmas off. The first issue for 2004 is set for Friday, Jan. 9.

There are a lot of new and exciting things planned for the Highlands' Newspaper in 2004.

A real-time weather station and WebCam will be operating from the Mountain Fresh Center on Main Street with all statistics posted on the Highlands' Newspaper Internet Directory - URL: www.highlandsinfo.com. Statistics such as temperature, humidity, barometric pressure, UV-solar radiation, wind velocity & direction and of course rainfall will be

posted.

A "For Sale By Owner" area for non-commercial ads will begin in 2004. It's fee simple -- a percent of the sale price upon sale. Any items can be for sale - cars, boats, furniture, electronics, etc. - but only "By Owner." This area is for non-commercial ads. All ads will run until the item sells and percentage or fee paid the paper.

The "Service Directory" will continue -- business-card size ads for small businesses.

A "Want Ads" section begins for "help wanted." The price is \$10 a week or two weeks for \$15. There will be a free posting on the Internet site, also.

All annual advertisers, those who advertise regularly, receive a free listing on our Highlands' Newspaper Internet Directory at www.highlandsnewspaper.com. It's one of the best sources of information about Highlands on the Internet. As has been our custom, we won't be requiring advertising contracts from our advertisers.

Our staff is expanding. You will notice new columns, new by-lines and new associates.

As always, we encourage feedback. Please email us with ideas and suggestions. Highlands' Newspaper is about you, your town, and your families.

Happy holidays from all of us at Highlands' Newspaper. Here's to a great 2004!

- Kim Lewicki

• Birth Announcement •

Wyatt Alexander Clark

Stacey and Steve Clark, of Highlands, are happy to announce the arrival of Wyatt Alexander Clark on December 19, 2003. Wyatt's sister is 18-month old Lydia Sage Clark. Maternal grandparents are Lydia Sargent Macauley of Highlands and Hal and Gail Meyer of Pensacola, Fla. Paternal grandparents are Herman and Sara Clark of Highlands and Orlando, Fla. and Betty and Jim Whisman of Orlando, Fla.



• Engagement •

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Potts & Klochkouf

Jan and Dabs Potts of Highlands, N.C., announce the engagement of their daughter Bonnie Ellen Potts to Sergei Sergeivich Klochkouf of Minsk, Belarus.

Sergei is the son of Captain Sergei Klochkouf and Vera Klochkouva of Minsk, Belarus. Sergei has lived and worked in Highlands for the past three years. He attended Minsk State Linguistics University for four years and earned a degree in linguistics prior to his move to the United States.

Bonnie is currently attending Brevard College for her degree in business management.

The couple hasn't yet set a date.

• Town Board Agenda •

The next regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners is scheduled for January 7, 2004, in the Conference Room of the Town Hall. The agenda is as follows:

A. Public Hearing Potts Estate on Spruce Street and Henry Property on Poplar Street.

B. Regular Board Meeting.

I. Call to order.

II. Approve agenda.

III. Approve minutes of December 3 Regular Board Meeting and December 4 Adjourned Session.

IV. Reports.

1. Mayor.

2. Committees.

3. Town Attorney.

4. Engineer/Public Services Administrator.

5. Police Chief

6. Recreation Director.

7. Planner/Zoning Administrator.

8. Treasurer.

9. Town Administrator.

V. Old Business.

1. Discuss Master Sidewalk Plan and sidewalk repairs.

2. Old Edwards Inn request to hang copper/fiber cable.

VI. New Business.

1. Potts Estate rezoning.

2. Johnny Henry rezoning.

3. Appointments to Planning Board and Appearance Commission.

4. Appoint member Chamber of Commerce Occupancy Tax Review Board.

5. Highlands Playhouse Lease.

6. Discuss Land Use Plan Update.

7. Old Edwards Inn--request to encroach on right-of-way with steps at Rib Country property.

8. Preliminary subdivision plat - Colson Subdivision.

VII. Adjourn.



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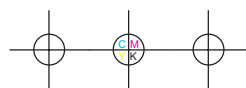
Gift wrap and shipping not available for this sale

Early morning warm up



Photo by Kim Lewicki

For now Triangle construction workers use the fireplace for warmth on breaks. But soon the fireplace of the home that made way for the Highlands Community Child Development Center will become the main entry marquee-signpost of the center on Church Street. It will be free-standing two to three feet from the building but tied in some way for structural stability and safety. The bronze marquee sign will be installed above the mantle and another smaller bronze marker will identify the fireplace and its history on the site.






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Kids built a make-shift snowboard ramp and rutted the fields by driving on them.

Vandals tear up Buck Creek fields

By Kim Lewicki

Sometime during the weekend of Dec. 20, a couple of rough riders tried to make a race track out of the Buck Creek Fields.

An eyewitness said he saw two young men in a white, late-model Toyota 4-runner driving around on the fields.

They emptied garbage on the soccer field, rutted the turf on both the soccer and softball fields, ran over several underground sprinkler heads and built themselves a make-shift snowboard ramp.

"We won't know how much damage is done until the snow is gone and we can turn the water on and try out the sprinklers," said Macon County Commissioner Ricky Bryson.

Bryson spearheaded the

county's Buck Creek Field project which was dedicated early this past fall.

The project took almost three years to complete and represents the collaboration between state, county and local organizations.

N.C. Parks & Recreation Trust Fund matched the county's \$250,000 not to mention the countless volunteer hours it took to complete the project.

"It's terrible when you work for something for so long to have someone with no respect come along and damage it," said Bryson. "This was something we put together for the kids. To have no respect for that is unbelievable."

The Sheriff's Dept. has been notified of the incident and the case is under investigation.



Trash was dumped and left on the soccer field.



• Ask Fred •

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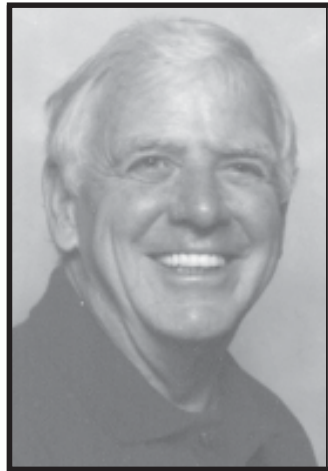
Traveling the Gorge Road

Dear Fred:

You must help me polish my driving manners and at the same time be effective. My problem is how to drive to Franklin and back faster than 25 miles per hour. Every time I go, there seems to be a slow-poke ahead of me. They do not seem to notice the turn outs cut especially for them and I cannot seem to get them to use them. If you are going to suggest blinking my headlights and honking the horn, I have already tried that and the drivers ahead of me get annoyed and slow down. I am not suggesting that I want to drive more than 45 mph, but 20 is just ridiculous.

I certainly realize that the road is very scenic and curvy; but there are those of us who have to make that trip often and cannot dawdle. Help me please....

Sincerely,
Mytee Peeved



Fred Wooldridge

Dear MP:

Ha, if you lived in Miami, where I used to make a living, I could have your problem solved in seconds. Down there they use the "bump and point" system to get pesty tourists out of the way. They lightly bump the car in front of them to get their attention and when the tourists look in their mirrors, they're looking down the barrel of a gun. Works everytime. But if you think you can get away with that up here, better think again. I guarantee you you'll be in the clink before you can say "How much are the tickets to the policeman's ball?"

I am the last person in Highlands to be polishing you up on driving manners. When behind the wheel, I suffer from the "Top Gun" syndrome, which I can't go into right now, but I am on medications for it. I have been driving the Franklin Road since the late sixties. When I used to have a less hazardous job than writing for this paper, my main office was at "Bust Your Butt Falls" where I jumped off of cliffs everyday. I share your frustrations.

Here is a list of things I have suggested in the past to help DOT arrive at a solution. (1) Sedative stations at each end of the road. You pull over, take a mild sedative and resume your travel. You won't get there any faster but you just won't care. (2) Offer free orange juice at pull off areas. That is sure to work because tourists will do anything to get their hands on a 2-ounce cup of free orange juice. (3) Free chauffeur service for tourists. Cars with out-of-town license plates would be required to pull over and have a local person drive them to the other end. Again, sedatives will be offered, only this time to tourists.

The State did not cotton to any of my ideas, so back to the drawing board. Here is my latest idea which they probably won't like either.

Last year I uncovered and reported to our readers the testing of a US Government secret weapon which fires dead turkeys at airplane windshields. Don't ask, just take my word for it. These babies are now on sale from the Pentagon for a mere 1.2 mil, which is a good deal considering you

▪ See DEAR FRED page 7

Want to have some fun this winter? Our very own Contributor/Columnist Fred Wooldridge is ready to answer your questions about Highlands with tongue in cheek. The sky's the limit. All published questions are anonymous and, of course, don't expect a straight answer. E-mail us at askfredanything@aol.com. Put "Dear Fred" in memo line. We reserve the

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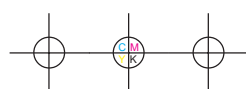
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– Christmas Memories – Making them and keeping them

By **Kim Lewicki**

Christmas memories. We all have them. Some are traditions perpetuated from generation to generation. Others become our traditions in an effort to perpetuate a cherished memory.

Either way, regardless of the hustle and bustle associated with the season, during quite moments Christmas past and present works its way into our hearts.

My favorite Christmas memories revolve around its magic. My father grew up in Hazelwood, N.C., exit 100 off Hwy 74/23. He grew up in a family of seven during the depression when perpetuating holiday traditions was impossible. There wasn't enough money or stability for day-to-day necessities more less Christmas extras.

Consequently, as a father able to offer his family more, holidays were a big deal growing up. But not just the gift-giving, the magic and pomp of it all.

On Christmas Eve, my brothers and I would say good-night to a bare Fraser fir, and walk past empty stockings which were hung from the stairway landing which overlooked the front hall where the Christmas tree stood.

When we awoke at 5 a.m., eager to begin Christmas morning, we were only allowed to venture as far as the landing and our stockings.

From the top of the stairs, in the dim morning light, we could make out stockings bulging with goodies – a candy cane sticking out of the top and the round shape of an orange stuck in the

toe.

Though we weren't allowed to venture past the landing until our parents woke up, we could see what awaited us.

The bare tree had been transformed into a beautiful Christmas bride. Spun-glass angel hair draped her green branches and

glass ornaments precisely placed by my artist-father, hung from every branch.

The night before, while visions of sugar plums danced in our heads, our parents had been busy decorating the tree and wrapping presents.

Under the branches, heavy with ornaments, were stacks of toys – always more than we deserved.

I always thought I'd perpetuate that tradition, but as a working mom, it just didn't fit. But I know the traditions I have started, will be remembered and cherished by my children just as I cherish my childhood memories. I know this because when I suggest doing something a little different, I'm greeted with wails, "But that's not our tradition."

The most important thing is to remember the reason for Christmas. It's a time to celebrate the birth of Jesus and to show and tell they ones we love how much we really do care, even though the everydayness of life sometimes keeps us from showing it.

So, treasure your memories and perpetuate your traditions, but don't let the "act" of that make you forget why you're doing it in the first place. Do it with a kind and peaceful heart.

Merry Christmas from the Lewicki Family.





... HELP continued from page 1

come Christmas the shelves empty fast.

This year community service groups have been busy collecting food items and chopping wood. Rotary and its youth service group Interact have bought presents for all ages — babies to seniors, and chopped wood for folks who need it to fuel wood-burning stoves, heaters and fireplaces. Recently, The Mountain Retreat and Learning Center stocked the pantry on Poplar Street.

Each year, the emergency council decorates trees in area banks with paper angels which represent a person in the community in need. Some were

newborn babies, others 90-year-old seniors. Though names of recipients aren't divulged, pertinent information like sizes and special wishes are written on the angel so items purchased will be useful to the recipient.

The Girls' Clubhouse, the Interact Club, church groups and individuals stripped the trees clean of angels. By December 22 the emergency council was busy making deliveries in time for Christmas. "Though it's true we had more people in need than in recent years, we had more help from the community than ever before, so it all worked out," said Speed.

... 2004 continued from page 1

been granted to the Jerry Pair building at Second and Spring streets — a mixed-use building of office space and apartments; the Chinese restaurant at Highlands Plaza, the First Presbyterian Church for expansion and for the child care center; Reeves Hardware for expansion; the Thomas Craig building on south Fourth Street which will house offices and retail businesses; the La Tea Dah tea room upstairs on Main Street; several Old Edwards Inn buildings including the old Christmas Tree building on Fourth Street, the new cottages located on the lot between Spring Street and Church Street and the Rib Country lot project; Highlands Wine & Cheese, Highlands Quick Mart; Highlands Cable Group's move to Highlands Plaza; and High Country Photo's move to Highlands Plaza.

Much of the development in town involves the Old Edwards Inn project, but the mayor said it's not just about the inn it's also about the businesses the Old Edwards Inn project will spawn.

The mayor said Williams recently purchased the Sassafras Campground on N.C. 28 to house some of his employees and plans to bring in

35 pre-fab housing units.

"This is not a bad thing, but we have to prepare for the influx of people."

Bryson wonders if the school can handle the influx but says the county has worked hard preparing its schools for the future.

If employees in the new businesses sprouting up in Highlands have under school-age children, Highlands childcare facilities will feel it, said the mayor. "We have the Highlands Community Child Development Center, the Highlands Methodist Church school, the Episcopal Church school and the Macon County Program for Progress Head Start and Early Head Start programs. "That sounds like enough, but you don't know," he said.

Meanwhile Macon County continues to grow. Countywide new housing starts continue to increase by 10 percent each year and Gantenbein said zoning permits for new homes, additions and repairs have increased significantly in Highlands over the last two years.

"In a relatively short time, Highlands has changed," said the mayor. "More people are moving here and have year-round jobs. And there's nothing wrong with that."

... DEAR FRED continued from page 5

get six free turkeys with the package. The introduction of this new weapon gives new meaning to the term "shooting the bird."

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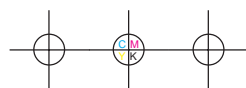
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Saving Grace

The 2000, R rated comedy.
Written by Mark Crowdy,
Directed by Nigel Cole.



Stuart Armor

Like most of the movies I think are terrific, this one was panned by professional critics.

It is light hearted, cute, screamingly funny, and has a little (not much) drama and romance.

The Story Line: In the beautiful setting of Liac, Cornwall, Grace Trevethan (played by the charming Brenda Blethyn) finds herself recently widowed and unexpectedly broke. Her husband has decided to exit an airplane, sans parachute, to avoid a crowd of creditors. With the help of her dope smoking gardener (Craig Ferguson, best known in this country for his role in the "Drew Carrey Show") and her exceptional botanical skills, she tries to find a way out of her growing problems, by starting, well, a whole series of growing problems. These two budding entrepreneurs set out to raise the necessary green to solve both of their financial needs. A terrific ensemble cast, with mostly

small town good guys, and a few big city bad guys, make a laugh till you hurt yourself story. The plot is simple, cute, and silly,

lacking in high art and drama, but containing a lung full of laughs.

The R rating is primarily because of the controlled substance issue, but other than that, it is a fun and light hearted movie.

I am a huge fan of Brenda Blethyn, think she does terrific work in comedy or drama, and this movie shows some of her best comic work. Fans of hers will want to see Little Voice, Secrets And Lies, A River Runs Through It, and The Witches. Other British Isle comedies are Waking Ned Devine, Widow's Peak, American Girls, Brassed Off, and Billy Elliott.

These and about 5000 other titles are available at Movie Stop Video, stop on off and give us a look



• Sports Picks •

My (sort of) Grown Up Christmas List

Dear Santa,

I have been a good boy this year, so if you could grant me these requests I would really appreciate it. Oh yeah, and say hi to the reindeers and elv..er..north pole indigenous little people who make toys. Gotta be PC you know)

I wish for people to understand what being cursed really is. Red Sox fans and Cub fans take note. A real curse is scoring a TD on one of the most amazing plays in NFL history and then losing the game by missing the extra point. That would be like the A-Rod hitting a game 7 walk-off homer for the Red Sox but forgetting to touch home plate-thus giving the win to the (expletive deleted). As a Saints fan, I am convinced that the Lord hath smote the debaucherous city of New Orleans for naming themselves the Saints.

I wish for end zone celebrations on American Idol. Wouldn't that be great? I can just see it. Joe Horn pulls out the cell phone and Simon is all like "That's Wal-Mart on the phone -- the Saints are the perfect salesmen for falling prices." Then Paula is trying to be nice saying "He had a strong presence" and Randy Jackson has just finished his 13th beignet.

I also wish for my bitterness against the Saints to end.

I wish for two Highlands basketball conference championships in 2004.

I wish for both LSU and USC to win their bowl games, thus totally proving the BCS to be about as relevant as Leif Garrett in 2004.

I wish for more games like UNC-Wake Forest. What a fantastic display of basketball by two fine teams.

While I am on the subject, how about an all-ACC final four.

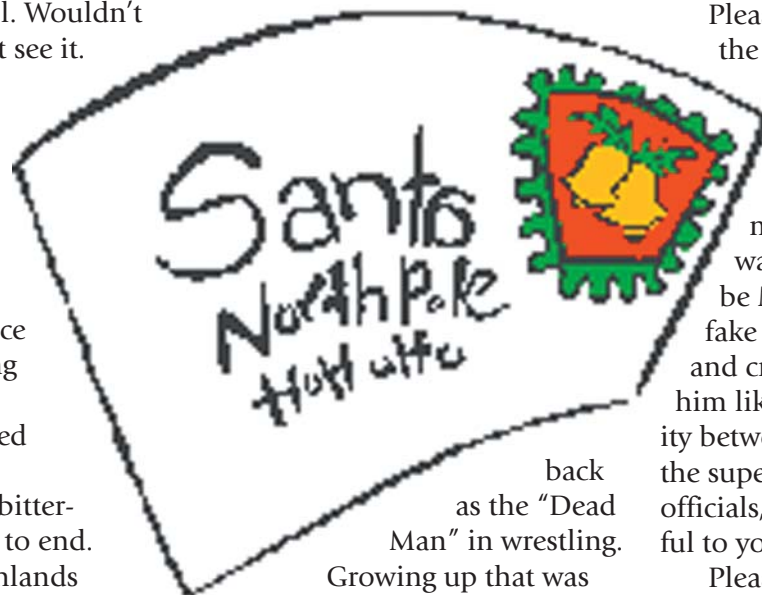
GT, Wake, Duke and UNC all look capable of getting there-how awesome would that be? I also wish for everyone to watch the ACC this year for the tradition as well as the excitement. There aren't many more explosive offenses than the ones in Hotlanta, Chapel Hill and Winston-Salem, and Durham is home to the finest defense in college basketball this year. The ACC is going to be unbelievable all year.

I wish for Joe Torre to run off the field, up into the owner's box and powerbomb Steinbrenner into the Bronx bleachers. Oh yeah, that and for Tim McCarver to finally pop the question to Derek Jeter. I think he has courted him long enough.

I wish to finally have something to say about hockey.....

I wish for the Undertaker to

come



back as the "Dead Man" in wrestling.

Growing up that was the single coolest thing I have ever seen. You couldn't hurt the guy -- he just kept getting up no matter how many times you knocked him down. It's kind of like David Hasselhoff's career -- you think it's dead, but then next thing you know he's on TV singing in Krautland.

I wish for Joe Paterno to retire with dignity. Joe, dude, football coaches are supposed to soak their shirt, not their pants. And Bobby

Bowden, well...dadgumit, I am going to grant ole Bobby a reprieve seeing how it's Christmas and all. Besides, he deserves it after dealing with lawyers all the time. Maybe Bobby should take a cushier job now that he's older. How about the Portland Jail..er..Trail Blazers personnel consultant.

Please send Steve Spurrier to New Orleans...imagine what he could do with Deuce, and Joe Horn, and Stallworth, and Boo Williams, and Pathon. Hey-the guy won football games at Duke-he can work miracles.

Please send Roy Williams three rolls of tissue, and send Dick Vermeil three boxes.

Please enter Ismail Muhammed in the NBA dunk contest.

Please send Bob Knight some prozac.

Please save the Braves from the curse that is Antonio Alfonseca.

Please inform Kobe Bryant that he is not Michael Jordan, and no matter how much he wants to be, he will never be Michael. No amount of fake injuries, tongue wagging, and crocodile tears can make him like Mike. The only similarity between Michael and Kobe is the superstar treatment from the officials, and that whole unfaithful to your wife thing.

Please inform millions of ordinary sports fans that Michael Jordan isn't even one of the top ten college players in history. Also, please introduce said fans to the forgotten David Thompson-who was the greatest ACC player in history. Please also remind younger sports fans that sports did indeed exist before the 1990s.

Please lure Lefty Drisell out of retirement so I can see the "hair-o-meter" one more time.

And finally, please allow me



Ryan Potts

the opportunity to plan Saddam's daily prison schedule. I have already started. Here's a sample.

- 4:30 a.m. – morning wake up call with a duet from Celine Dion and Yanni.

- 4:50 a.m. – breakfast of stale cheetos and water with Kathie Lee Gifford.

- 5:00 a.m. – bathroom break in a replica of the urinals at Lil Cricket in Walhalla

- 5:30 a.m. – personal training with Richard Simmons

- 7:00 a.m. – Give hot oil massage to Delta Burke and Bea Arthur

- 8:00 a.m. – tape vignette for Celebrity Dating show with Tammy Faye Baker.

- 9:00 a.m. – Spar 3 rounds with Andrew Golota

- 10:00 a.m. – Play twister with Inmates #0628, #0502, and #0617 from Cobb County Prison.

- 11:00 a.m.-Shower with above inmates

- 12:00 p.m. – special makeover section with Oprah, Queer Eye for the Straight Guy and Mimi from the Drew Carey Show. Special guest appearance from Dr. Phil with the final Chemical Peel being done by Jack Kevorkian.

On a more serious note. I ask that Santa allow everyone to spend their Christmas with someone special to them and that folks realize the importance of their family and their loved ones.

Show the love of Christ to one another this Christmas, and your joy will be unmatched.

Merry Christmas!

Christmas Eve Service
Highlands United Methodist Church
5:30 p.m.
"A Family Oriented Service"
Candlelight and Communion
315 Main St 526-3376

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Why is New Year's Day on January 1?

By Katie Brugger

I start thinking about sunlight sometime around the end of September.

My backdoor faces southwest towards Fork Mountain which rises 900 feet above our valley. This mountain has a wonderfully symmetrical peak, and unlike the other mountains around us that overlap each other, Fork Mountain stands alone against the sky. The only problem with Fork Mountain is it eats the sun in winter.

As the sun moves south, it hits the rising slope and everyday the sun sets earlier and earlier, until by the winter solstice it is gone at 3:30 pm.

Interestingly, the sun passes the peak three weeks before the solstice, and as it is then traversing the downward slope, there is actually a "lengthening" effect on our day. During those six weeks (three before and three after), the sun sets within 10 minutes of 3:30.

The moment the sun completely moves behind the bare wintry trees on the mountain a blue shadow envelopes the house. No matter where I am in the house, I can tell that moment from the chill. I feel like Fairlight Spencer in Catherine Marshall's novel Christy, who was drawn to her front door every afternoon to watch the needle-shaped shadow of the mountain to her west strike her threshold.

Because I become so obsessed with the return of the light, I feel in many ways like the day after the winter solstice is my new year. This got me to wondering why we celebrate New Year's when we do. Why is it in early winter, 11 days after the winter solstice? For a long time the only logical reason I could come up with for having the New Year in January is that we need lots of celebration at this dark time of year. Christmas, our increasingly pagan festival of

lights, is not enough. We need an all-out orgy of partying to forget just how dark it is out there.

As I started imagining being that first calendar-maker, having the power to decide what day would be the first of the year, a couple of obvious choices presented themselves.

Spring seemed the most logical. When the seasons are compared to life, spring is the time of birth, summer of growth, autumn of fruition, and winter of decline and death. Why not celebrate the birth of a new year with the re-birth of the earth?

The other conspicuous choices would be astronomically based

using the winter and summer solstices. My valley-year starts with the winter solstice. Isn't this the way we name the phases of the moon: the dark shadow-orb is "new," which grows, waxes to full, then dies out again to start anew?

Starting the year with the summer solstice would be akin to the way many spiritual traditions describe the beginning of all things. The creator is total light, and the cycle of being, that is, the universe, is the process of light blowing out into almost complete darkness and then evolving back to total light.

What is the history of New Year's Day? The Babylonians celebrated New Year's in the spring at the vernal equinox. Before the time of Julius Caesar the Romans also celebrated New Year in the spring. Some societies today still celebrate at that time: Thailand celebrates New Year in April and in Iran, the new year begins on March 21. Astrology considers spring the start of a new year. The first sign in the zodiac is Aries, which begins on the spring equinox.

The ancient Egyptians had an

"The month of January was named for the Roman god Janus who had two faces: one looking forward and one backwards. This seems an appropriate symbol for the first month of the year."

■ See NEW YEAR'S DAY page 15



■ Spiritually Speaking ■



Highlands United Methodist Church

"Passionate Faith"
Scripture: Luke 3:1-6
Rev. Eddie Ingram

I. It is not belief that determines how one acts – it is passion.

We all have passions. We can put on body paint at a football game, push another person out of the way for the last shopping cart, or get weak-kneed at a rock star concert because of passion. Most of our action and course of life is determined not by what we believe about something, but by how passionate we are about something..

What are you most passionate about?

II. John the Baptist is calling for a passionate faith that alters life's course.

Many passions in life are acceptable in the eyes of others, but when it comes to faith, to be that passionate is not socially acceptable. God's desire is that our belief about Jesus Christ and our passionate love for Christ to match. Mike Yaconnelli has said that the biggest threat of the church is dullness.

Where has your passion for something in life replaced your passion for Christ?

III. We must have passionate faith to deal with the "wild" in the "wilderness.."

John came from a wild place, and was a wild character. (Mark 1:6) The voice of the Lord came not from the cozy, convenience of the temple, or a Pharisee. It came in the wilderness. In order to love God, we have to be willing to love those people in the wild.

Where does this message cause you to be uncomfortable with God's call in your life?

IV. The baptism of repentance means change.

You can't serve two masters. We are either a servant of Christ, or a servant of the world. There is nowhere to be lukewarm about faith. God is not going to force Himself on you this Advent season. Resurrection means something old has to die in order for something new to be given birth in you.

What passions need to die in order for the passionate love of God to give birth in you?

Where do you need to change your life course so that someone else may win?

■ Places of Worship on the Plateau ■

Blue Valley Baptist Church

Rev. Oliver Rice, Pastor (706) 782-3965
Sundays: School – 10 a.m.; Worship – 11 a.m.
Sunday night services every second and fourth Sunday at 7 p.m.
Wednesdays: Mid-week prayer meeting – 7 p.m.

Buck Creek Baptist Church

Sundays: School – 10 a.m.; Worship – 11 a.m.
First Saturday: Singing at 7:30 p.m.

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints

NC 28 N. and Pine Ridge Rd., (828) 369-8329
Rai Cammack, Branch President, (828) 369-1627
Sundays: Worship – 10 a.m.; school & primary classes – 11 a.m.; Women's & Men's Org. – noon
Tuesdays: Women's Org. – 6:30 p.m.; Library – 6-8
Wednesdays: Boy Scouts of America mtg. – 6:30 p.m.; Young women's activities – 6:30 p.m.

Clear Creek Baptist Church

Pastor Everett Wilson, (828) 743-3379
Sundays: School – 10 a.m.; Worship – 11 a.m.;
Prayer – 6:30 p.m.
Evening Service – 7 p.m.

Community Bible Church

(Evangelical Presbyterian Church
Steven E. Kerhoulas, Pastor, 526-4685
3645 U.S. 64 east
Sundays: School – 9:30 a.m.; Worship – 10:45 a.m.
Tuesdays: Women's Bible Study – 9:45 a.m.
Wednesdays: Supper – 5:30 p.m.; Bible Study – 6:30
Thursdays: Guys Sr. High Discipleship – 6 p.m.

Episcopal Church of the Incarnation

Interim Priest: Stephen Hines, 526-2968
Sundays: Holy Eucharist – 10:30 a.m.; Adult Class – 10 a.m.; Children's – 11 a.m.
Mondays: Women's Cursillo Group @ Church – 4 p.m.;
Tuesdays: Men's Cursillo @ church – 8 a.m.
Wednesdays: Supper and Program @ First Presbyterian Church – 6 p.m.
Holy Eucharist – 10 a.m.

First Baptist Church

Dr. Daniel D. Robinson, 526-4153
Sundays: Worship – 8:15 a.m., 10:45 a.m., 6:30 p.m.; School – 9:30 a.m.; Youth – 6:30 p.m.;
Choir – 7:15
Wednesdays: Dinner – 5:30 p.m.; Team Kids – 6 p.m.; Student & Adult Prayer – 6:15 p.m., Choir – 7:30

First Presbyterian Church

Rev. J. Hunter Coleman, Pastor, 526-3175
Sundays: Worship – 11 a.m. (child care at 11 a.m.); School – 9:30 & 9:45.
Wednesdays: Children's Devotions – 9:30 a.m.;
Supper – 6 p.m.; Choir – 7 p.m.
Thursdays: Bible Study – 10 a.m.
Sat: Adventistas del Septimo Dia – 10 a.m. & 5

Highlands Assembly of God

Rev. Scott Holland, 524-6026, Sixth Street
Sundays: School – 10 a.m.; Worship – 11 a.m.
Wednesdays: Prayer & Bible Study – 7 p.m.

Highlands Seventh-Day Adventist Church

Wednesday evening prayer & Bible Study
Call Lloyd Kidder at 526-9474

Highlands United Methodist Church

Pastors Eddie & Kim Ingram, 526-3376
Sundays: School – 9:30 & 9:45 a.m.; Worship – 11
Wednesdays: Supper – 5:30 p.m.; Bible Study & activities – 6 p.m.

Lutheran Church of the Holy Family – ELCA

Rev. Pam Mitcham, Pastor,
2152 Dillard Road – 526-9741
Sundays: Worship/Communion – 10:30 a.m.

Macedonia Baptist Church

8 miles south of Highlands on N.C. 28 S in Satolah
Pastor Rusty Wolfrey, (706) 782-8130
Sundays: School – 10 a.m.; Worship – 11 a.m.;
Choir – 6 p.m.
Wednesdays: Bible Study and Youth Mtg. – 7 p.m.

Mountain Synagogue

St. Cyprian's Episcopal Church, Franklin 369-6871
Friday: Sept. 12 Sabbath Eve Services at 7 p.m.
For more information, call (706)-745-1842.

Our Lady of the Mountains Catholic Church

Rev. William M Evans, Priest
Parish office, 526-2418
Wednesdays & Fridays: Mass – 12 noon
Sundays: Mass – 11 a.m.

Scaly Mountain Baptist Church

Rev. Clifford Willis
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 Alfred Sizemore
Sundays: School – 10 a.m.; Worship – 10:45 a.m.; Evening Worship – 6 p.m.
Wed: Adult Bible Study & Youth – 7 p.m.
For more information call 526-3212.
Friday, Dec. 19: "Let's Keep Christ in Christmas – 7 p.m.
Sunday, Dec. 21: Service of carol singing and a candlelight service – 6 p.m..

Shortoff Baptist Church

Pastor Rev. Baker Crane
Sundays: School – 10 a.m.; Worship – 11 a.m.
Wednesdays: Prayer & Bible Study – 7 p.m.

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Franklin ■ 526-9769

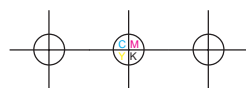
Rev. Maureen Killoran (part-time)
Sundays: Worship – 11 a.m.

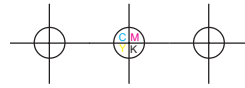
Westside Baptist Church

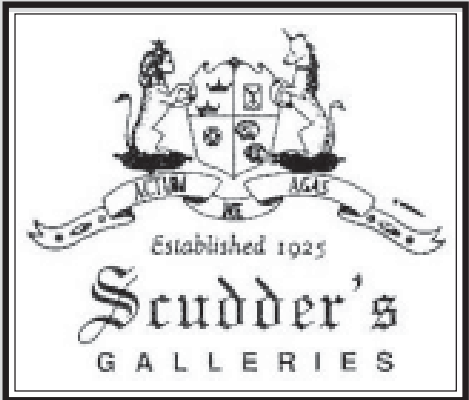
Interim Pastor, Terry Dixon
Services in the basement of the Peggy Crosby
Sundays: Fellowship & Worship – 11 a.m.;

Whiteside Presbyterian Church in America

Cashiers, Rev. Sam Forrester, 743-2122
Sundays: School – 10 a.m.; Worship – 11 a.m.







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Left, Ann Greenlee manager of the hospital's lab and Jolene Niblack of the Highlands-Cashiers Hospital auxiliary, with the blood refrigerator. The group also contributed money to the Eckerd Living Center for new geriatric chairs and a wheelchair. In all, the Auxiliary donation totaled \$8,000.

• Highlands Eateries & Light Fare •

Hospital auxiliary donates \$2,000 for new equipment

Patients who need transfusions and a number of residents in the Fidelia Eckerd Living Center are benefiting from the generosity of the Highlands-Cashiers Hospital Auxiliary.

The auxiliary recently gave \$8,000 for the purchase of some much needed new equipment at both the hospital and its nursing facility. The bulk of the money, approximately \$5,500, went to purchase a new blood bank refrigerator for the hospital's lab. The remainder of the money was used to purchase four new geriatric chairs and a new wheelchair for use at the Living Center.

"As it has many times in the past, the auxiliary has once again come to the aid of the hospital by donating new equipment," said Administrator Jim Graham. "For more than 40 years, the auxiliary has played a vital role in helping the hospital fulfill its mission to provide quality healthcare to the people of our communities. We greatly appreciate the extraordinary efforts of the Auxiliary over many, many years."


The old refrigeration unit, which dates back to the opening of the current hospital nearly 11 years ago, simply gave up the ghost, said Greenlee. The new unit is twice as large.

Blood usage was up approximately 25 percent during the summer months, but this fall saw a real jump in the number of transfusions. During September and October the hospital transfused twice as many units as normal, Greenlee said.

While some of the increased usage stems from more oncology patients and others with anemia, she said, the hospital has treated a number of severely ill emergency patients this fall who were experiencing internal bleeding.

Approximately \$2,500 went to the Living Center for four new Caremore geriatric chairs and a new wheelchair.

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Mark & Chris Flaschner in Italy

Buon Giorno!

As soon as raffle ticket No. 8258 was drawn over Labor Day weekend, we were banned from the "We've never won anything in our lives" club.

Much to our disbelief, we won a 10-day trip for two to Italy – not a bad return on a \$1 investment!

Joanna Baumrucker, the group's organizer, packed the 10 days with sensational tours, meals, shows and even a serenaded gondola ride. The accommodations in Rome, Florence and Venice were top-

notch and the planned events went off without a hitch.

The best part of the trip was being able to share our Italian experiences with a group of 40 wonderful people that signed up for the 7th annual Highland's Playhouse Theater Lover's Tour.

We feel very fortunate to have had this remarkable opportunity and urge everyone that attends the Playhouse's productions next year to show their support and purchase lots of raffle tickets.

Hey ... you never know!

Stacey's work included in collection



photo by Holly Reed

Local singer-songwriter, Cynthia Stacey, professionally known as Thea, has been published by the Frank Waters Foundation Press in a new book titled, "Rekindling the Inner Light." Her essay is one of many contained in this collection of essays and papers about Frank Waters who is considered to be the grandfather of Southwestern literature. Other authors include John Nichols, Tony Hillerman, Rudolfo Anaya, Vine Deloria, Jr., Denise Chavez, and Barbara Waters. To learn more about the Frank Waters Foundation and "Sheltering the Creative Spirit," or to order "Rekindling the Inner Light" contact them at P.O. Box 1127, Taos, NM 87571 or online at fwaters@laplaza.org or www.frankwaters.org.

• Christmas Cooking •

by Jan Potts

Eating this Christmas-time concoction has been a tradition in Lonabarger family ever since Jan Lonabarger Potts was a little girl. Her mother made it and probably her mother before her and now Jan makes it for her family to be eaten on Christmas Eve.

Danish Coffee Cake

Recipe makes 4 cakes

Ingredients:

5 cups flour

1 pound butter

Cut butter into flour until particles resemble the size of small peas.

1 envelope dry yeast

1 cup sour cream

3 egg yolks

Beat ingredients together until well mixed. Blend with flour and butter mixture.

Divide into 4 balls. Wrap and refrigerate for several hours. Roll out into a rectangle about 12-inches long by six-inches wide.

1 can of pie filling – raspberry, blueberry, strawberry

Fill center of rectangle with pie filling. Cut sides on an angle and fold over center.

Bake at 375 degrees for 35 minutes.

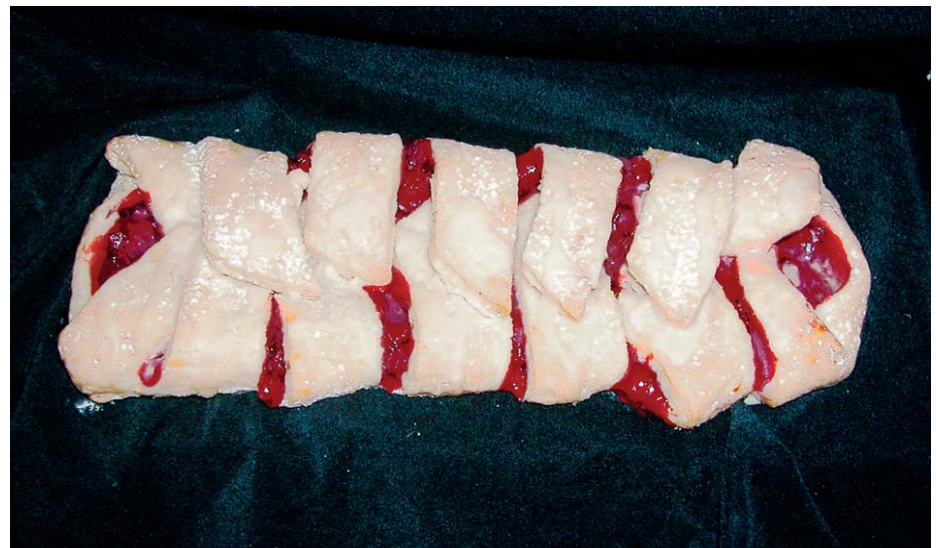
Frosting:

1 cup powdered sugar

2 tsp. milk

1/2 tsp. vanilla

Mix together until well blended and drizzle over top of cooled pastry. Enjoy.





• Police & Fire Report •

The following are the Highlands Police Department log entries for the week of Dec. 18-22. The only names are of public officials and/or people who were arrested.

Dec. 18

- At 9 p.m., officers were called to a residence on Dixon Drive about a person in distress. All was OK.

- At 10:40 p.m., officers were called to N.C. 106 and Buttermilk Lane to handle a minor accident. There were no injuries.

Dec. 19

- At 11:30 a.m., officers cited three men for possession of marijuana.

Dec. 20

- At 1 a.m., officers responded to an alarm at a residence on Old Walhalla Road. All was secure.

- At 10:10 p.m., officers were called to N.C. 28 below the post office where a man was being drunk and disorderly. The Sheriff's Dept. escorted the subject to Franklin.

Dec. 22

- At 9:30 a.m., officers received a call about a worthless check being given to the owner of a local transport company. The case is under investigation.

- At 9:30 a.m., officers received a call about two worthless checks being passed at Bryson's Food Store. The case is under investigation.

The following are the Highlands Fire & Rescue Department log entries for the weeks of Dec. 18-22.

Dec. 18

- The dept. responded to an alarm at a residence on Sagee Woods Drive. All was secure.

- The dept. was called to Highlands-Cashiers Hospital about a fire in the dryer. It was caused by lint build-up. There was no damage.

- The dept. was called to an accident on N.C. 106. There were no injuries.

Dec. 19

- The dept. responded to an alarm at a residence on Sagee Woods Drive. All was secure.

- The dept. was called to N.C. 28 where a tractor-trailer was stuck in the snow.

- The dept. was first-responders to assist EMS load a patient into the ambulance at a home on Vinca Lane.

Dec. 20

- The dept. was first-responders to assist EMS load a patient into the ambulance at a home on Vinca Lane.

- The dept. was first-responders to assist EMS with a medical call at a residence on Clear Creek Road. The victim was transported to Highlands-Cashiers Hospital.

Roadrunners Club to host annual New Year's Resolution Run, Jan. 1

Area runners, along with any visitors and guests who either run or want to start running, are invited to kick off 2004 "on the right foot" New Year's Day morning.

The Highlands Roadrunners Club will once again host its annual New Year's Resolution Run on Thursday, Jan. 1, 2004. The run commences at 9 a.m. in front of Town Hall on the corner of U.S. 64 east and Oak Street.

Runners of all ages and abilities are welcome. The informal run will

begin on a three-mile route around town, but those who may not be able to go the full three miles will have several opportunities to take shortcuts back to Town Hall at various points along the course. Shortcuts can reduce the run to one or two miles.

The Resolution Run, which is not a race, has drawn as many as nearly two dozen runners in recent years. There is no official timing and there is no charge to participate.

– Skip Taylor

... NEW YEAR'S DAY from page 10

interesting astronomical phenomenon to mark their new year. Every year the Nile flooded on almost exactly the same day. Over the years, the priests noticed that the floods began when Sirius, the Dog Star, could first be seen rising above the eastern horizon just before dawn. This day, July 19, became their New Year's Day.

Julius Caesar developed the calendar we use today after he met Cleopatra. Before this time, the Romans had a primitive lunar-based time-reckoning system. While Caesar was in Egypt he was exposed to (among other things) the Egyptians' superior calendar science, and upon his return to Rome made it one of his reforms. In addition to setting a 365¼-day year, he moved the New Year from spring to the first of January. The month of January was named for the Roman god Janus who had two faces: one looking forward and one backwards. This seems an appropriate symbol for the first month of the year.

Other peoples celebrated New Year in the fall. For example, the Jewish New Year, Rosh Hashana, occurs in autumn. This holiday celebrates the anniversary of the day the world was created, as determined by ancient rabbis through their interpretations of scripture.

Stonehenge, the ancient structure of monumental stones in England, may be a calendar marking one of the solstices as the beginning of the year. The stones were lined up in such a way that at dawn on the solstice a priest could see the rising sun cross the horizon precisely above a certain stone.

The date of the Chinese New Year is based on a lunar calendar. The holiday begins with the arrival of the second new moon following the winter solstice, usually between mid-January and mid-February, and lasts for 15 days.

In 527 A.D. the Abbot of Rome, Dionysius Exiguus (literally, Dennis the Short), made some serious modifications to the Catholic calendar. For example, he

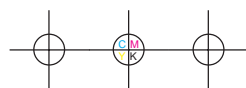
instituted the system of dating we know as B.C./A.D. Dionysius also moved New Year's Day back to spring, setting the date of March 25. Spring was the standard New Year throughout the Christian world until the last reform of the calendar by Pope Gregory XIII in 1583 that produced the calendar we still use today. One of the changes instituted was moving New Year's Day back to the day Julius Caesar had set, January 1. (England and its colonies, including what became the United States, didn't adopt this reform until 1752.)

But this still doesn't answer the question, why pick this day, 11 days after the winter solstice, to begin a month and a year? Why wouldn't the Romans have begun on a day with an astronomical basis?

I think maybe I have finally discovered a logical astronomical-based reason for January 1 to be the first day of the year. Looking at my almanac calendar this past year, I noticed that the length of day hovers at 10 hours and 1 minute for 8-9 days before and after the winter solstice (I'm not sure what latitude they use for that measurement, but I think that this principle of the days hovering at about the same length for almost 2 weeks around the solstice is probably true for a wide range of mid-latitudes).

Between December 13 and 31 the day is 10 hours and 1 or 2 minutes long. Starting January 1 the day starts to lengthen almost a minute a day. My conclusion is that January 1 was the first day you could be really sure that the sun was coming back after the solstice. Our calendar is based on the winter solstice as the New Year after all.

If you'd like to learn more of the fascinating history of counting time, from notching a stick each full moon to using the oscillations at the atomic level of a metal called cesium, see Calendar: Humanity's epic struggle to determine a true and accurate year, by David Ewing Duncan – call number (529 D).



● Upcoming Events ●

On-Going

- Daisys, Brownies and Junior Girl Scouts meet 6:30 p.m. every Tuesday at Highlands United Methodist Church. Come jjoin them.

- Highlands School is still collecting used ink cartridges. The staff just sent in 150 and they're ready for more. Please take used ink cartridges to the main office at Highlands School. It means money to the school.

- Every Friday and Saturday night, Cy Timmons sings and plays his guitar at Highlands Wine & Cheese from 7-11 p.m. It's free.

- Every Saturday night, Arthur and Katie sing and play their instruments at Buck's Coffee Cafe. It's free.

- The Mountain View group of AA has added a Wednesday meeting to its weekly schedule of meetings in the Community Room of First Presbyterian Church at 5th and Main Streets. The new lineup: Mondays at 8 p.m.; Tuesdays at 5:30 p.m. (women only); Wednesdays and Fridays at noon. For more information, call (800) 524-0465.

Dec. 24

- Highlands United Methodist Church Christmas Eve Service will be held at 5:30 p.m. It is a family-friendly service including Holy Communion and Candlelight. Everyone is invited.

- The Hudson Library will be closed December 24-26 and the Bookworm will be closed December 24 through January 2 in observance of the Holiday Season.

Dec. 25

- The third annual Christmas Day Buffet benefiting Habitat for Humanity is at the Main Street Inn. Seating begins at noon. Dinner buffet includes, baked ham, roasted turkey, sweet and mashed potatoes, dressing, assorted vegetables, desserts, ice or hot tea or coffee. Wine available by the glass or bottle. The cost is \$24.95 per person. MasterCard, Visa or American Express accepted. Call 526-2590 for reservations. Seating is limited.

Dec. 26

- The Highlands Mountaintop Rotary Club will hold a holiday meeting with fellowship and a continental breakfast. No speaker is scheduled. Guests are welcome.

Dec. 31

- The Highlands Wine and Cheese Shop is sponsoring a New Years Eve concert at the Martin Lipscomb Performing Arts Center.

until 2004! The all inclusive event is \$95 per person or \$179 for two persons. Please call 828-526-5210 for more information or to purchase tickets.

Jan. 1

- The Highlands Roadrunners Club will once again host its annual New Year's Resolution Run on Thursday, at 9 a.m. in front of Town Hall on the corner of U.S. 64 east

the weather and sturdy comfortable shoes. Hikes are limited to 20 people; reservations are required. Call leader Kay Coriell, 369-6820, for reservations, more information, or in case weather looks doubtful on day of hike. Visitors are welcome, but no pets.

Jan 6

- The Train – A suspenseful WWII adventure about the French Resistance's attempt to stop a train loaded with fine art, seized from French museums from reaching its destination in Nazi Germany. Cast: Burt Lancaster as the head of the French railway system and Paul Scofield as the unrelenting German Commander. Director: John Frankenheimer. The time is 7 p.m. at PAC on Chestnut Street. It's free.

Jan 8

- Childbirth and parenting education classes begin for a five-week session at the Macon County Public Health Center Thursday evenings. Call Hope Burch at 349-2441 to registers.

Jan. 18

- The Nantahala Hiking Club will take an easy 2 mile ike on the Macon County Greenway in Franklin. The group (or individuals the option of adding another two miles on the rail going the other way, for a total of 4 miles. Meet at Macon Plaza Bi-Lo) at 2:00 p.m. Bring a drink, a snack if you wish, wear clothing appropriate to the weather and sturdy, comfortable shoes. Hikes are limited to 20 people; reservations are required. Call leader Kay Coriell, 369-6820, for reservations, more information, or in case weather looks doubtful on day of hike. Visitors are welcome, but no pets please.

Jan 20

- The Railway Children – Set in 1905 and based on the novel by E. Nesbit, this warm tale from Great Britain focuses on a family whose idyllic life is shattered. Cast: Dinah Sheridan, Bernard Crabbiness, William Mervyn, Ian Cuthbertson and Jenny Agutter. The time is 7 p.m. at PAC on Chestnut Street and it's free.

Christmas Day buffet at the inn



The third annual Christmas Day Buffet benefiting Habitat for Humanity is at the Main Street Inn. Seating begins at noon. Dinner buffet includes, baked ham, roasted turkey, sweet and mashed potatoes, dressing, assorted vegetables, desserts, ice or hot tea or coffee. Wine available by the glass or bottle. The cost is \$24.95 per person. MasterCard, Visa or American Express accepted. Call 526-2590 for reservations. Seating is limited.

The evening of romance will include music by Cy Timmons, an Atlanta and Highlands area legend and national recording artist/pianist Keith Phillips, also of Atlanta and Athens, Georgia. Keith's newest CD, Nightfall, is available on Amazon.com or at Highlands Wine and Cheese Shop. The event will include fine wines and food catered by chef Holly Roberts and champagne and party favors at midnight. Festivities will begin promptly at 8:30 p.m. and continue

and Oak Street.

Jan. 2

- The Highlands Mountaintop Rotary Club will hold its regular breakfast meeting with continental fare and fellowship.

Jan. 4

- The Nantahala Hiking Club will take an easy 3-mile hike on the Craig Mountain trail. Meet at the Smoky Mountain Visitor Center on Highway 441 (near Otto) at 2:00 p.m. Bring a drink, a snack if you wish, wear clothing appropriate to

