

Highlands' Newspaper FREE

Volume 5, Number 6

PDF Version – www.HighlandsInfo.com

Thursday, Feb. 8, 2007

On-going

- Tuesday & Thursdays, at the Rec Park, small group personal training, \$7 per class or \$50 for 8 classes. Call 342-5029.

- Every Tuesday, beginning Feb. 13, Women's Bible Study, Beth Moore's study of Daniel at Community Bible Church Fellowship Hall. All ladies invited. Call the church at 526-4685 to order your book.

- Step Aerobics at the Rec Park, 4-5 p.m., Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays. \$5 per class.

- Beginner Classical Yoga Group meets on Mondays, 5:45-7 p.m. at Highlands Yoga and Wellness, 464 Carolina Way. Mats and blankets provided. Learn the basics and improve your health Call 526-8880.

- Yoga Classes at the Rec Park. Mondays and Wednesdays. Bring your mat. \$7 per person per class or \$50 per month.

- Health Tracks at Highlands-Cashiers Hospital has osteoporosis prevention exercise classes, total body and muscle-toning workout exercise class and Pilates classes. Call Jeanette Fisher at 828-526-1FIT.

- Every Tuesday Weight Watchers meets at the Highlands Civic Center. Weigh-in is at 5:30. The meeting starts at 6 p.m.

- Live music at Fressers in Helen's Barn featuring Cy Timmons 6 p.m. until, Fri. & Sat.

- Live music at Cyprus Restaurant every Friday at 9:30 p.m.

Thursday, Feb. 8

- Dr. Rick Spurling "Bully Free School Zone" workshops have been rescheduled. The educators' workshop at Macon Bank Corporate Center from noon to 3 p.m. (lunch provided) Parents' seminar will be held at Franklin HSI Fine Arts Center at 7 p.m.

Friday, Feb. 9

- Highlands Little League Baseball signups for ages 5-14 are at the Rec Park from 3:30-6:30 p.m. Cost is \$50 for first child, \$45 for second child. Birth certificate mandatory. Call John Shearl at 526-2251 or Monica Vinson at 526-9107.

Saturday, Feb. 10

- International Friendship Center Valentine's Dinner at Main Street Inn at 6 p.m. An auction and black-tie fundraiser. Cost for tickets are \$100. Call 526-2590.

- Hurricane Creek at Instant Theatre on Main Street at 8 p.m. \$20 per ticket includes complimentary beer, wine and mixed drinks. Call 828-342-9197.

- The Nantahala Hiking Club will take a 3-4-mile, easy-to-moderate hike to Rough Run and High Falls. Call leader Walter Taylor, 743-6977, for reservations.

Tuesday, Feb. 13

- HIARPT's Faith and Reason. Coordinator: Martha Porter. Discussion material will be distributed at prior session. 10 a.m. at the Highlands Civic Center. Lunch will follow at 11:30.

Future violations curtailed by ordinance

Effectively immediately, is the town's revised soil erosion and sedimentation ordinance – part of the Highlands Code Ordinance.

"It won't do anything in regards to what's happened at Riverwalk, but it will take care of the future," said Town Attorney Bill Coward.

Coward.

The ordinance has been in Raleigh at the Department of Water Quality for about four months and is now a beefed up version of the Highlands' old ordinance.

"The language has been cleaned up and the format is easier to follow," said Coward.

Ramifications for allowing soil and sedimentation to leave property are also more clearly defined.

"The civil penalty assessment factors have been expanded, said Coward. "The previous ordinance referred to the 'extent of harm and

•See VIOLATIONS page 3

Board rethinks parking issues

A request by the Chamber of Commerce to continue its visitor parking pass program sparked an in depth conversation about parking regulations in the downtown business area Wednesday night.

"I think if we're going to issue parking passes we should do away with two-hour parking and be fair to everyone," said Commissioner Herb James. "I think we should suspend it for a year and see how it goes."

Visitors to Highlands – in state or out-of-state – can go to the Visitor's Center on Main Street and request an all-day parking pass so they don't have to be hampered by parking regulations.

President of the Chamber, Rick Siegel said two hours wasn't enough time for people to shop and the visitor pass program was successful last year.

Commissioners said the real problem, as they originally understood it, was a lack of parking on Main Street for customers because employees and business owners were using the majority of spaces.

With the two-hour parking restriction set to go into affect April 15, several business owners were at the meeting to oppose it.

"It's unfriendly and I'm pretty sure it's unconstitutional and

•See PARKING page 15

Weekend Weather:



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HS report card on-line

The North Carolina School Report Cards for the 2005-2006 school year shows Highlands School has strong points and weak points, said Principal Brian Jetter.

The report includes information about school and student performance, class sizes, attendance, school safety, instructional resources, and teacher quality. It provides details about school performance under the federal No Child Left Behind Act. It also contains information about school discipline, high school graduation rates, and internet connectivity.

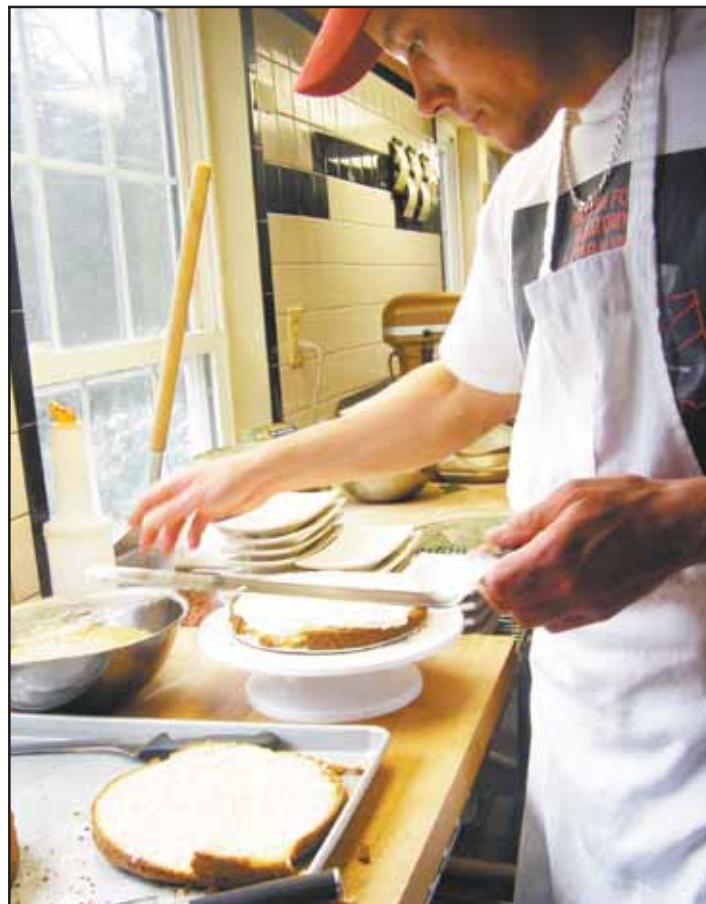
Reports are divided between grades three to eight where reading and math is tested in end-of-grade tests. Scores on tests given in grades 3, 5, and 8 are considered a gateway and help determine whether students can move up to the next grade. High school students are given end-of-course tests in English I, Algebra I, Algebra II, Geometry, Biology, Chemistry, Civics and Economics, and U.S. History.

Principal Brian Jetter, whose new team took over for the 2006-2007 school year, said he and his teachers are aware of the weak points.

"Our math scores in grades 3-8 and our Algebra I score are a serious concern to us, and they present us with a real challenge," said Jetter. "The grade 3-8 scores represent results from the first year of this new, revised state math test that went into effect for the 2005-06 school year. Our elementary team has worked hard to come up

•See REPORT page 8

Girl Scout Cookie Cook-off is on!



Nicholas Figel, of Cyprus International Cuisine creates Lemonade Tropical Layer Cake from Girl Scout cookies. See story page 4. Photo by Susanna Hearn

Magistrates to see NCIC report

Macon County magistrates will now know what law enforcement officials know about offenders prior to setting bonds.

At the January Macon County Commission meeting, commissioners learned that perpetrators of a home invasion – people who were self-proclaimed gang members and listed as such in the national gang member database —

appeared before the magistrate and quickly bonded out on an unsecured bond – basically a signature bond, said Sheriff Robbie Holland. This prevented the sheriff's department from establishing probable cause or obtaining warrants.

To keep this from happening again, at the Feb. 5 commission

•See NCIC page 10

• THE PLATEAU'S POSITION •

• FORUM •

• LETTERS •

Perhaps a 'custom' transfer tax would fit the bill

By **Kim Lewicki**
Publisher

A little history. A real estate transfer tax is an assessment fee based on the value of property that is paid each time residential or commercial real estate is bought or sold.

In 1986, the North Carolina General Assembly allowed seven of the 100 counties in North Carolina to impose a 1% land transfer tax. Five of the seven counties — Dare, Camden, Currituck, Pasquotank, and Chowan — incorporated a transfer tax. The other counties — Washington and Tyrrell — didn't.

The North Carolina Association of REALTORS® strongly opposes land transfer taxes because it says they are:

- Unreliable sources of funding because they are dependent on economic cycles;
- Do not generate adequate income to fund infrastructure needs, and can erode support for necessary bond issues;
- Hinder economic development efforts and make counties less competitive;
- Are grossly unfair for current residents of the county who are only moving within the county;
- Target too small a group of the public because public infrastructure is everyone's responsibility;
- Make homes less affordable, especially for entry level buyers, and are regressive;
- Are non-deductible and may not be included in the appraised value of a home.

Obviously, a transfer tax isn't necessary in all counties in North Carolina because not all real estate markets are the same. However, it becomes a viable solution for raising revenue in resort/second-home markets in mountain counties like Macon and waterfront counties like Dare, Camden, Currituck, Pasquotank and Chowan. That's where real estate is churned and property values escalate. It's also where second- and third-home owners enjoy income from their purchase as vacation rentals which represents an added seasonal strain on local services and infrastructure.

Currently, state, county and town officials are faced with trying to address budget problems. Traditionally, officials look at raising taxes and cutting budgets.

The NC Association of REALTORS® believes that budget problems should be addressed by simply reducing spending

• See FORUM page 3

What's the solution Highlands?

Dear Editor,

There is misery in Dogpatch! The weather is bad and is going to get colder. ETJ is not working as smoothly as planned. Property evaluation notices and new "paper millionaires" are here. The location of the antique show is a matter of concern. A town official has problems with the law and was fired. Can there be affordable housing?

The town has said ETJ needs more discussion. Why am I not surprised? They totally ignored public opinion when they voted for ETJ. I am sure they want your input now: that is, if you agree with them; otherwise, your opinion doesn't matter. The reason given for needing ETJ was to protect the watershed and that they (the town) were better qualified than anyone to do that. Two words are all that need to be said: River Walk!

Highlands has done an excellent job of recruiting people to purchase the expensive real estate found here, but has failed miserably in recruiting average people to work here and attracting business to support the influx of people. Their recruiting has raised the price of real estate to the point where only the very wealthy can afford it! I hope all of you will always remember those people who helped destroy the Highlands

we knew and loved.

ETJ is only a tool used to make property even more valuable. If the long range plan is to force average people out, then ETJ is the perfect tool. It can be used to force the value of property to go so high and be so restricted that average people can no longer afford it and no longer want it. High property values generate no "real income" until the property is sold. If you only want to have a home and live here what helps you pay the extra tax?

Can there be affordable housing in this environment? Again, if the long range plan is to force average people out what better way to do that than to get all affordable housing as far out of Highlands as possible? If they don't live in Highlands then they won't be in town!

As for the day-to-day operation of the town government I have a question. What kind of checks does the Town do when hiring new employees?

Sometimes you find something that is just too good not to share. I don't know the origin of the following quote, but, it is very true.

"Only a government that is afraid of its citizens tries to control them."

Harold Neely
Highlands

LETTERS-TO-THE-EDITOR POLICY

We reserve the right to edit submissions. Views expressed are not necessarily those of Highlands' Newspaper. Please email letters by Monday at 5 p.m. There is a 500-word limit without prior approval.

Highlands' Newspaper

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Tax burden truths

Dear Editor,

I appreciated your editorial in the Feb. 1 issue of Highlands' Newspaper addressing property tax issues. I have to agree that the county ought to at least consider a land transfer tax to take the burden off homeowners. A homestead exemption is also worth considering. With valuations going through the roof, it is conceivable that more than a few people will be forced to sell their property because of their inability to pay the taxes. In addition to the personal hardship, it becomes an affordable housing issue since working class people are hit the hardest.

The fact is that current residents are subsidizing the growth that is changing our communities and forcing our taxes higher. Residential construction actually costs most communities more in tax-based services than is returned to the public coffers in new taxes. This has been proven again and again. Carroll County, VA did a cost-benefit analysis in 1991 and found for every residential tax dollar they collected, the county spent \$1.22 in services, a net loss. This is pretty typical.

Additional homes require additional infrastructure: road widening, traffic signals, schools, policemen, inspectors, sewer, etc. If Macon County is typical, the new taxes they bring in are not adequate for those needs, which means that we are paying for the improvements that these new homes make necessary. Considering how rapidly and dramatically Highlands is changing, you could say that we are paying for our own ruination — that is, if you like the small town that we have historically been.

Impact fees are a good way to address this problem. Impact fees are assessed on a new development for capital improvements that are a direct consequence of the development and in proportion to projected needs to serve it. Macon County should be weighing the costs of new growth by conducting a tax impact assessment for every proposed multi-home development to gauge infrastructure costs and tax benefits/losses, and institute impact fees if necessary.

If people carefully consider this concept, I believe most would contend that the burden of paying for capital improvements should be borne by new development because the new residents, not current residents, will be the ones putting pressure on the existing facilities. It seems fair to me, and it's long overdue.

Cynthia Strain, Highlands

• See LETTERS page 10

Mary Edie Small

Mary Edie Small, 91, of Highlands, NC, formerly of Macon, St. Simons, and Savannah, GA, died January 29, 2007. She was a native of Yonkers, New York, the daughter of the late Richard and Priscilla Van Tassell Edie. She was married to Ralph B. Small, Jr., who died in 1972. She was a homemaker.

Mrs. Small was a former member of Vineville Baptist Church in Macon, GA, where she was active in WMU, was on the finance committee and was a Sunday School Teacher. She was a member of the First Baptist Church of St. Simons Island and a member of the St. Simons Island Women's Club, she was also an active bridge player. The focus of her life was her family and church.

She is survived by her son, Ralph B. Small, III and his wife Bonnie Jean of Glenville, N.C.; three grandchildren, Parks Edie Small, Leigh Small Beauchamp and Ashley Small Olson; five great-grandchildren, Mackenzie Small, Scott and Tyler Beauchamp and Parker and Anna Olson.

Graveside services were held February 3, 2007 at 11 a.m. at Riverside Cemetery in Macon, GA, with Dr. Felix Haynes officiating.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that memorials be made to the Fidelia Eckerd Living Center, Activities Department in care of Highlands-Cashiers Hospital Foundation, PO Box 742, Highlands, NC 28741. Bryant Funeral Home was in charge of arrangements. Online condolences can be made by visiting www.MeM.com or bryantfuneralhomes.com.

Chris Todd

Chris Todd, 57, died January 10, 2007 from Parkinson's disease. He was born on March 4, 1949, the second son of Eileen and David Todd. His younger years were spent in Birmingham, MI before his family moved to Indian Harbor Beach, FL in the early 60s where his dad was transferred with Chrysler.

Chris graduated from Satellite Beach High School in 1966 and from The University of West Florida in 1971. He then attended the University of Florida School of Law from which he graduated in 1974. He practiced law in Boca Raton, FL for many years where he lived with his wife, Donna, and three daughters.

As a life-long member of the Presbyterian Church, Chris was always true to his faith, and very active in the West Boca Presbyterian Church that he helped to build and support. He was very much admired by the people of that community. For the last 15 years of his life, Chris suffered from Parkinson's disease.

Preceding him in death was his brother, David Charles Todd, and his father, David F. Todd. He is survived by his three daughters, Melissa, Amanda, and Amy, by his ex-wife, Donna Todd, and his mother, Eileen S. Todd.

Memorial services will be held 10 a.m., Monday, Feb. 12 at Highlands Presbyterian Church with Rev. Hunter Coleman officiating. Burial will be held at Highlands Memorial Park. Bryant Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements.

• MILESTONES •

Zeibarth makes Dean's List at Mount Ida College

Highlands School graduate, class of 2005 Jessica Tyler Ziebarth was named to the Dean's List at Mount Ida College – Chamberlayne School of Design in Newton, MA for the fall 2006 semester. Jessica is a sophomore majoring in Interior Architecture. She is the daughter of John And Cheryl Ziebarth of Highlands.



Jessica Ziebarth

Good deed done

On Tuesday, Jan. 30, Austin Baty, 10, was walking from the old gym to the band room in the middle school and found \$300 folded in a wad on the sidewalk.

When he got to the band room he turned the money into music teacher Ms. Kristina Kirchner. Soon the owner of the money, school janitor Ms. Pam Chastain was found. She rewarded Austin with \$5.



Austin Baty

... VIOLATION continued from page 1

cost of rectifying it," he said. "Now there are five specific factors for assessing penalties."

The degree and extent of harm caused by the violation;

The cost of rectifying the damage;

The amount of money the violator saved by noncompliance;

Whether the violation was committed willfully;

The prior record of the violator in complying or failing to comply with the ordinance.

Another major inclusion is the Restoration After Non-Compliance section. "The town may require a person who engaged in a land-disturbing activity and failed to retain sediment generated by the activity, as required, to restore the waters and land affected by the failure so as to minimize the detrimental effects of the resulting pollution by sedimentation. This authority is in addition to any other civil or criminal penalty or injunctive relief authorized under this ordinance."

In the Mountain Overlay District which is Highlands, three districts according to slope have been designated. District 1 is zero percent to 30 percent; District 2 is 30 percent to 60 percent; and District 3 is 60 percent to 100 percent slope

In District 1, any land-disturbing action where 3,000 sq. ft. or more of ground will be uncovered, a plan drawn to the scale of one inch to 40 feet showing boundaries, topography, slope degree, the location of buildings and roads must be filed with the town. But the plan doesn't have to be prepared by an engineer.

In District 2, for any land-disturbing action, regardless of size, a plan must be filed exactly as in District 1 but must also include statements concerning Basic Control Objectives and a Best Management Practices must be submitted as well as a ground cover planting schedule

... FORUM continued from page 2

while not increasing taxes.

Unfortunately, there is nothing simple about that scenario. As a county's population grows and strains services and infrastructure increase, it's almost impossible to reduce spending and decrease taxes at the same time. County Manager Sam Greenwood last week informed the commission that income from revals isn't enough to address upcoming capital facilities expansion and services.

Impact fees are another way to provide income for rising county costs. Impact fees are expenditures that developers are required to make as a precondition to approval of their project. The town of Highlands is currently considering this as one way to fund its Greenway Project and to help fund infrastructure as development increases.

The NC Association of REALTORS® say those costs are ultimately passed on to the

In District 3, for any land-disturbing action, regardless of size, everything required in District 1 and 2 must be prepared by a North Carolina licensed civil engineer.

However, since the state allows other professionals in the arena to prepare such plans the board agreed to accept the ordinance as written pending verbiage allowing engineers and other professionals to prepare plans.

"Since the state allows it, I think we should," said Commissioner Hank Ross. "I believe architects, landscape architects, surveyors, engineers and others are allowed to and we should match the state."

Because the ordinance is part of the Highlands Code Ordinance and not part of the zoning ordinance the administering of it is more of a police-type action than an administrative action.

Rec Park to be site of Highlands Playhouse Antique Show

A plea to rethink its position concerning the Highlands Playhouse Antique Show at the Rec Park was heard loud and clear by the Town Board Wednesday night.

"We're here to ask you to reconsider usage of the Rec Park by the Highlands Playhouse," said spokesperson Dwight Bryant.

During the public comment session of the meeting, Bryant said instead of needing the facility for a full week, it would only be needed 4 ½ days beginning the evening of Tuesday, Sept. 25 through Saturday, Sept. 29.

Following the closed session portion of the Town Board meeting, Commissioner Herb James announced he wanted to change his vote concerning the matter. The new vote was came in 4 to 1 for the idea instead of the original vote of 3 to 2 against it.

homebuyer, too. The association says both impact fees and transfer taxes discourage home ownership and are discriminatory, regressive, unreliable and anti-economic development.

So what's the answer for Macon County?

Perhaps exemptions from the transfer tax could be given low-income families, first-time home buyers, or buyers of homes selling for less than \$425,000 (the average cost of a home in Highlands) — or a combination of all three scenarios. That way homeownership would still be encouraged and the American Dream would still be attainable.

Certainly, with some modifications, it's likely a transfer tax wouldn't affect the number of real estate sales in the county. Historically speaking, real estate in Macon County is a good investment and a pretty sure bet.

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Two Highlands restaurants compete in Girl Scout cookie cook-off

Susanna Hearn
Reporter

Highlands residents will be excited to learn that some of their favorite Girl Scout cookies are coming to restaurants near them.

Fresser's Eatery and Cyprus International Cuisine are participating in the second annual Western North Carolina Girl Scout Cookie Cook-Off. The restaurants are using the cookies to create unique desserts that they will sell through Feb. 16. A part of the proceeds from the sales will benefit Girl Scouts of Western North Carolina Pisgah Council to support Girl Scout programs throughout WNC.

At Cyprus Restaurant owner Nicholas Figel demonstrated the preparation of his Green Tea and Thin Mint Tira Misu. "Everyone here likes Thin Mints a lot," Figel said. "When we had the option to do this everyone said we should use the mints." Cyprus' other dessert option will be the Girl Scout Lemonades Tropical Layer Cake, which takes 25 minutes to prepare and includes coconut and pink guava.

Fresser's Eatery also used the Thin Mint in its tentatively titled "Chocolate Mint Raspberry Mousse," a layered parfait with crushed Thin Mints. Owner Debbie Grossman used her favorite Girl Scout cookies, Peanut Butter Sandwich cookies, to create a pie. They also created a Caramel Delight dessert.



Fresser's Eatery created three Girl Scout Cookie desserts.

"We have our own in-house competition going on here on top of the Girl Scout competition," Grossman said as she encouraged votes on Fresser's three decadent desserts.

Restaurant patrons can vote on their favorite desserts by visiting the Girl Scout website at www.girlscoutswnc.org, or by visiting Fresser's or Cyprus and filling out a paper ballot.



Girl Scouts

The restaurant with the most votes for one of its desserts will receive an award in each of four geographic areas — Asheville & Buncombe County; Haywood, Henderson and Transylvania Counties; Avery, Madison, McDowell, Mitchell and Yancey Counties; and Cherokee, Clay, Graham, Jackson, Macon and Swain Counties.

Cyprus and Fresser's used four varieties of Girl Scout Cookies — Thin Mints, Caramel Delights, Lemonades, and Peanut Butter Sandwich Cookies. Thirty-four restaurants are participating in the Cook-Off state-wide.

Nicholas Figel of Cyprus International Cuisine puts finishing touches on Green Tea and Thin Mint Tira Misu



• HIGHLANDS SCHOOL BASKETBALL •

Lady Highlanders drop two tough games

By Christopher Potts

The Lady Highlanders traveled to Swain January 30 and lost a hard fought battle 58-51. The girls punched Swain in the mouth in the 1st quarter, outscoring the Maroon Devils 18 to 9. The Lady Highlanders desperately fended off the Maroon Devils attack in the 2nd to hold a 29-25 lead into the locker room at the half. Swain battled from behind to take a 43-42 led at the end of the 3rd quarter. Foul trouble kept the Lady Highlanders behind Swain through the rest of the game.

Allison Winn led the ladies in scoring with 20 points and 5 rebounds. Toni Schmitt followed with a great all around game of 11 points, 8 rebounds and 6 assists. Katie Bryson scored 8 points and 5 rebounds, Brie Schmitt added 7 points while Danielle Reese and Kate-Marie Parks had 2 points each. Kaylie Buras rounded out the Highlander scoring with a free throw. The Maroon Devils were led by Sarah Davis with 18 points and Kristin Cook with 10 points.

Feb. 2, the Lady Highlanders hosted Hiwassee Dam in a battle for the conference regular season title, falling short 67-44. Hiwassee Dam jumped out to an early lead and never looked back, although the Lady Highlanders put up a valiant effort in the loss on Senior Night. Highlands had difficulty blocking out the Lady Eagles as many of their points came from put-backs under the basket. Any hope for a Highlands comeback ended in the 3rd quarter, as Highlands could not get their offense together and Hiwassee Dam pushed their lead to 26 points. The girls never quit, battling until Coach Brett Lamb pulled his seniors to standing ovations for their efforts.

Allison Winn led the Lady Highlanders with 19 points. Toni Schmitt scored 10 points, 9 rebounds and 6 assists while Katie Bryson added 9 points and 5 rebounds. Danielle Reese scored 4 points, Brie Schmitt had 2 points, and Kate Marie Parks added 5 rebounds while Kaylie Buras contributed a significant amount of playing time. Jenna Harris led all scorers with 23 points followed by Erica Morrow with 14 points for the Lady Eagles.

"It was a tough night for our seniors," said Coach Lamb after the game, "All three played a great game and showed tremendous amounts of leadership. They showed the team what heart is and we wish them the best in the future. We need to still work on things and hope to meet Hiwassee in the tournament and win and continue our way to state playoffs."

The Lady Highlanders (13-13, 3-2) close out their regular season at Blue Ridge on Feb. 9. The game starts at 5:30 pm. The conference tournament follows Tuesday, Feb. 13 with game times to be determined.

Boys focus on conference title

Highlands traveled to face the Swain Maroon Devils in a non-conference match-up on January 30, and came away with a 76-59 victory. The Maroon Devils kept the visiting Highlanders in check on the offensive side of the ball, holding the score to 31-26 at the half. Highlands clicked in 3rd quarter, pouring on 26 points while holding Swain to 8. The Highlanders coasted through the final quarter, allowing some of the younger players to get some work in the final minutes of play.

Five Highlanders reached double digits in scoring, led by Nick Kerhoulas with 16 points. Darin Keener and Jason Aspinwall scored 13 points apiece, Alec Schmitt and Arthur Reynolds both scored 10 points, and Ezra Herz had 8 points. Andrew Billingsley and Mike Lica each scored 2 points while Hunter Leffler and Chris St. Germain notched a free throw apiece. Bradley Kirkland led the Maroon Devils with 14 points followed by Caleb Williamson and Cory Hipp with 13 and 10 points respectively.

The Highlanders followed their road win with a huge victory over Hiwassee Dam at home, 70-49. Highlands controlled the game from the outset, creating pressure on both sides of the ball. The Highlanders answered every Eagle run with a run of their own, gradually extending their lead throughout each quarter. Despite some early foul trouble, Highlands continued to smother the Eagles on both ends of the floor. Highlands out rebounded the Eagles 37-25, with 17 offensive boards for easy tip shots or another opportunity to run the offense. Coach Butch Smart cleared his bench in the 4th quarter, leading to standing ovations for each of the seniors as they checked out of the game.

The seniors contributed the bulk of the scoring. Alec Schmitt nearly duplicated his performance from his previous match up against Hiwassee Dam, pouring on 34 points, 11 rebounds, 9 steals, and 6 assists. Darin Keener scored 12 points and 8 rebounds, Jason Aspinwall had 8 points and 6 rebounds, and both Nick Kerhoulas and Arthur Reynolds scored 6 points with 3 and 5 rebounds respectively. Reynolds also added 5 assists to the books while Andrew Billingsley added 3 points and 2 rebounds. Hunter Leffler rounded out the scoring with a free throw in the 4th quarter. T.J. Pinkerton and Kendrick McDonald led the Eagles with 10 points apiece.

The Highlanders (22-4, 4-1) close out their regular season at Blue Ridge on February 9 at 7 pm. Highlands will tie for conference title honors with a win at Blue Ridge and can win the regular season title outright with a Nantahala loss to Hiwassee Dam. Highlands will host conference tournament action on Tuesday, February 13 with game times to be determined.



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• LAUGHING AT LIFE •

Crooked cop or just plain blessed?

Dateline: January, Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

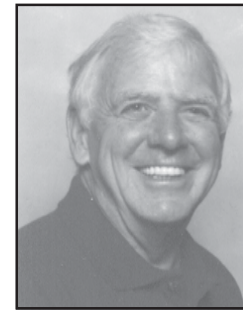
Here's a newsflash. There are more people speaking the English language in Dubai than in downtown Miami or Los Angeles. Hello....think about that for a minute. While Arabic is their preferred language, it seems as if everyone is comfortable with English. Since 80% of the country consists of expatriates, English as a second language is commonplace. Not once, while making a phone call, did I have to "Push one for Arabic, two for English." Language was never a problem.

Wait, I'm getting ahead of my story. I've got to tell you if I used to be a crooked cop....or not. Well, I didn't make a big score as a policeman and I don't have the money buried in my backyard. And, no, I didn't bring a load of marijuana to Highlands and sell it to our school kids. The fact is, when it came to drugs, I was honest to a fault. Dope peddlers hated me because I mistreated them all equally. I was an equal opportunity offender. Ask around. Also, crooked cops never reached the rank of Major, at least not where I worked. So where did I get the money to travel to one of the richest vacation spots in the world? I didn't. I'm just plain lucky....or maybe blessed is a better word.

Our youngest son is a pilot for Emirates Airline, flies the giant Boeing 777 and lives with his beautiful wife in Dubai. That permits the li'l missus and me to fly, visit and frolic on just a smidgen of what it would cost a tourist. And flying business class gave us an opportunity to see how the wealthy live. We even had the "Marhaba," an escort service, take us through Customs and put our luggage in the car. Is that hoity, toity, or what? Normally, we are willing to fly "cargo" just to be able to travel.

We missed all the tourist traps that cost big bucks and avoided high priced restaurants and other expensive attractions because our son really knows his way around the city. We saw it all and drenched ourselves in Arabian culture without opening the pocket book too often.

It was fun to see men escorting more than one wife around the malls. Speaking of malls, one is more lavish than the next. I stood in awe, mouth wide open like



Fred Wooldridge

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some kind of hayseed and watched Arabians frolic at an indoor ski slope and ice center right in the heart of one of Dubai's most elegant malls. Did I mention the temperature reaches 125f in the summer?

Traffic in Dubai is worse than in New York City. The city is laid out with many round-a-bouts that are nightmares. Once in the circle, it's hard to get out. Then the guy on the inside lane shoots across four lanes to exit. Horn blowing is expected and encouraged, so the entire

city is honking away. Pass the aspirin.

This was fun. After about a week of exploring, our son left town on a flight and we were on our own. We took a taxi. Holding up a large handmade map, I said to the driver, "Do you know where this is?" He nodded, so we jumped in and he heads in the opposite direction from where we wanted to go. "Maybe he knows a shortcut," I thought. Finally I shouted "Stop, you're going the wrong way." He pulled to the curb and gave us a puzzled look, then said, "Not knowing!" I held up the map again. "Take us here." He smiled, "not knowing!" "Can you take us back to where we started?" "Not knowing!" We got out. The next day our son informed us that many taxi drivers don't know their way around the city, so when they're lost they shrug and say "Not knowing." Swell!

There is bad news to our magic story. Most important to us is that we may never see our son living in the US again, at least not for a very long time. They love their life in Dubai and by the time he retires, who knows where we will be.

Life is not grand for all who live in Dubai. The "Jinglies", as the Arabs call them, live under deplorable conditions. They are the Pakistani and Indian locals who do the menial jobs. They work for horrible wages and are not treated with much respect. The "Jinglie" who cuts the grass at our son's complex lives on site in the maintenance shed, a smelly place that is home to him and the lawn mower.

But I didn't come here to save the "Jinglies", just visit my son. They will have to get along without my help. Oh, here's a thought. If the Arabs eventually overthrow us, we just might be the next generation of "Jinglie." Stick that in your Hookah and smoke it.

Perception is everything

I thought that Bull had a pretty good life. We gave up trying to force him to eat green food years ago. He wears shorts in February and sweat pants everywhere but church. He's skied in Canada, Austria, Colorado and Utah in addition to frequent trips to Cataloochee. Coming home from a photo safari to Africa last November, he said, "Let's go someplace with snow for Christmas." He loves room service. I tell him more often in a single day that I love him than my Dad told me in my entire life. Dad thought it was good to leave



Dr. Henry Salzarulo

Feedback is encouraged.
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'em guessing. Bull is just about the sweetest boy in the world. He is kind, generous, and extremely polite. He has raised money for Haiti and carried cheer baskets to nursing homes. When we are in a city, he always gives money to the homeless. He is friendly to both kids and adults, and extremely insightful. His Mom calls him an old soul and we sometimes refer to him as "The Prophet." He's 10, and I thought things were rolling along pretty darned well. I think of him as privileged, but not spoiled.

That's when he said, "Dad, you wouldn't last a day in my shoes." I was amused with the form of his complaint and pleased that he was confident enough to mention it, but also pretty shocked. It was both a challenge and a starting point for negotiations. We, that's Lizzie, had taken down the Christmas tree, but we, Lizzie again, had not yet repacked the ornaments. Bull was sweeping up the needles that had shed in the process. "Careful," I cautioned. "Don't get too close to the ornaments. They're very fragile." Bull rested his broom against the back of a chair. Predictably, I suppose inevitably, the broom fell. The handle struck and pulverized a mercury glass ornament, an elephant head, rendered in considerable detail. Many people don't know that the African elephant's ear closely resembles the shape of the continent of Africa. In the days of big game hunting, the tusk would be intricately carved into an Oriental wagon train, the oversized feet fashioned into, of all things, foot stools, and a map of Africa might have been painted on the ear. My inclination to interrupt a story with remotely related details is one of the things that makes Bull's life tough. Education at every opportunity, or boring and showing off. It depends on point of view.

I guess we could blame Lizzie, if we were inclined, because the next day the Christmas ornaments remained unpacked. On that day, I was test flying a large Styrofoam glider in the living room. On her

maiden flight the glider suddenly swerved to the right and crash-landed into the bulbs. A glass polar bear was the single casualty. I laughed it off and asked Bull to bring a vacuum. That's when he said it. "Dad, you wouldn't last a day in my shoes." Of course, I knew instantly where he was headed but decided to play for time. "Whatever, on earth, are you talking about," came out as "Huh?" He explained that he had been cleaning up, a useful activity, and had experienced an accident. My response had been, "Bull, D-word! I told you to

be careful. D-word, look what you've done. When you will learn some responsibility, D-word." I might have left out a D-word or two, or maybe even a G-D word, but I hope you get the point. I went off. Over an ornament, a poorly placed broom, an accident. It's hard to imagine that it had anything to do with responsibility.

When I broke the bear, I made a sound that was part laugh, part hiccup, with a little belch thrown to add complexity. I sounded like Goofy in the old Disney cartoons. Bull correctly observed that in contrast to his work-related accident, my misadventure resulted from juvenile play, which along with football games and marshmallow gun wars, Lizzie had forbidden in the living room. Why, he asked rhetorically, had his accident provoked a tirade while my own elicited only a silly laugh followed by a clean up to hide the evidence from Lizzie who is very fond of her ornaments?

Kids, he said, don't want to run things. They just want to be treated fairly, equally. Did he mean as adults?

He did point out that when I act in a childish (there I go again) manner, Lizzie says, "Stop acting like a child." If one throws a tantrum, he is referred to as childish and his actions as childish behavior. I've found it increasingly difficult to convince Bull that adults find childish behavior acceptable and normal in a child, but use the word in a pejorative manner to describe similar behavior in adults. Bull finds both the terms and the underlying attitude offensive. Adults often tell kids that some activities are OK for grown ups, but inappropriate for children. Driving a car, going to college, and getting married are examples. We go astray when making meth and robbing banks are added to the list.

We're still trying to balance providing the protection, love, and training that Bull needs and that being parents requires, while accepting that his kid feelings are pretty similar to our adult ones. I've learned this

•See SALZARULO page 17

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... REPORT continued from page 1

with a plan that puts more emphasis and focus on the specific math strands and objectives on which the greater portion of this new test is based. We look forward to improvement in these scores this year."

The percentage of students whose scores were at or above grade level for math in grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 respectively were: 64, 63.2, 33.3, 66.7, 67.9, 50, and 58.5 – overall lower when compared to other schools in Macon County and the state.

Highlands School achieved expected growth and adequate yearly progress for 2005-2006 but dropped to a "School of Progress" where 60 percent of the students are considered at grade level. In past years Highlands School has been named a "School of Excellence" when at least 90 percent of the students were at grade level and a "School of Distinction" when at least 80 percent of the students were at grade level. But officials say in small schools a small group of students can determine

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Calling audibles on sports and life

Basking in football recruiting insanity

By the time this article has printed, National Signing Day will have come and gone on February 7. This day marks the culmination of a year's work for football coaches across the country. NSD is the first day a high school recruit can sign a letter of intent to any college offering a scholarship.

Recruiting is the lifeblood of any collegiate sport, mainly football and basketball. Football recruiting is a lot more interesting as it takes at least 60 players in order to make a great football team while one great basketball player can make a huge difference in the one season they must play now in order to head to the NBA. What makes recruiting even more interesting is how it has become a business in itself.

Take for instance the emergence of both Scout and Rivals recruiting services. Both websites offer up-to-date information on a list of college teams for both basketball and football recruiting. Both sites have a ranking system of one to five stars in which the five star players are considered the best in the country. Players are ranked by positions and politics... which is the part I hate the worst as players recruited by certain schools automatically get upgraded in star rankings. Message boards, which can be the bane of my existence from time to time, allow ideas and information to spread. Both sites charge around \$10 a month, and each individual site, whether it be for North Carolina, Georgia, Florida, or whoever your favorite team is, can make hundreds of thousands of dollars a year.

The circus has continually grown over the years, but the



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John Cleaveland Realty
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suspense that glues tens of thousands of people to their computer screens is over the top. High school kids hold press conferences to announce their choices. These same kids make their decision an act in itself. The big thing to do is to put on a hat to show which school has been selected. What really irritates me is the amount of drama these kids put into their recruitment, with all of the pomp and circumstance of an episode of Jerry Springer.

My favorite example of this is the story of a football player from two years ago, whose name I will omit. He was a highly regarded prospect out of high school, recruited by every school in Virginia and the Carolinas. About a month before signing day, he gave a commitment to Virginia Tech, which upset a lot of fans of the Carolina schools. Rumor has it that the day before signing day, he called three schools in the Carolinas as well as Virginia Tech and said he would be attending

school there. On signing day, his letter of intent never made it to any of those schools, as he faxed it to South Carolina. He played a handful of snaps at South Carolina, and decided to transfer... which restarted the hoopla once again. He verbally committed to North Carolina, who decided they didn't want him after the stunt he pulled the prior year, so he committed to NC State. He couldn't get into NC State thanks to grade issues, so he went to community college for a year and planned to attend NC State... until FSU called. For the third year in a row, his decision leads to more drama, and he has yet to make an impact on any college football field.

The point of this rant is a call-out on the spectacle of recruiting. I agree that these kids deserve a moment in the spotlight for their accomplishments in high school and that the decision to attend a school is incredibly difficult. What I don't agree with is lack of commitment on the parts of these kids, no matter how hard the decision may be. Recruiting is cutthroat and colleges will beat down the door until it is no longer legal to do so. Verbal commitments are worthless and are now being treated as reservations until signing day, when a real decision has to be made.

Bottom line: when someone makes a commitment, they shouldn't say they're still looking at their other options. Would anyone ask a woman to marry them, yet still look around? If you're still looking, you don't need to be engaged. Stop making reservations about life and take the leap instead of making others wait with baited breath.

a school's ranking. There were 407 students at Highlands School during the 2005-2006 school year.

Jetter said there are plenty of high points concerning Highlands School, however.

"Our reading scores in grades 3-8 for the most part are good; as are our English I, Algebra II, Geometry, Biology, Chemistry, Physical Science, Civics and Economics, and U.S. History scores in the End-of-Class tests in the high school," he said. "However, while our teachers take pride in their students' achievement, they know we

can not ease off at all on our focus on reading, or on our high school courses, because there is plenty of room for improvement."

The percentage of students whose scores were at or above grade level for reading in grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 respectively were: 92, 94.7, 85.7, 91.7, 85.7, 86.7 – overall higher when compared to other schools in Macon County and the state.

Scores for English I, Algebra I, Algebra II, Geometry, Biology, Chemistry, Physical Science, Civics & Economics and U.S. Histo-

ry, respectively are: 84.8, 69.8, 93.3, 87.1, 73, 90.5, 85, 80.5, 83.3. Except for Algebra I, where the percentage of students at or above grade level was 69.8 compared to Macon County's score of 85.5 and the state at 82.6, in all other courses the Highlands School percentages were substantially higher than both the county's scores and the state's scores.

Jetter said Highlands School's non-test strengths are its high daily attendance, high number of students promoted at each gateway

• See REPORT page 17

• THE CONSERVATIVE POV •

American Idol?

I must confess, I have never seen American Idol and I probably never will. However, with all the hype that goes on about it, I think I've got an idea of what happens. It starts out the season with a bunch of no-talent clowns, for their humor value, and they get tossed off the island, never to be heard from again

(I might be mixing metaphors here). As the year grinds on, those with real entertainment value emerge and at the end of the season, The American Idol is crowned and begins a career of fame and fortune, unless, of course, they are seen in public doing bad things in which case they are banished to rehab.

Isn't it amazing the way life imitates art? Isn't the way we choose our president just a dead-ringer for the process which the American Idol is selected? Here we are, at the beginning of the season, with a whole raft of folks lobbying, and soon to be auditioning in state primaries and caucuses for a chance to grab the brass ring.

Supposedly, as the herd gets thinned out, the cream of the crop rises to the top, and voila, the best of the best is chosen to lead the free world. This is second in importance to the American public only to who actually becomes the American Idol. After all, first things first. Wouldn't it be lovely if people had a fraction of the interest they have in "Idol" in things which dramatically affect their lives? Dream on.

At this point, the Democrats seem to



Don Swanson
Feedback is encouraged. Email swansonson@dnet.net

feel that Hillary isn't a lock on her party's nomination, since, between official candidates, those that have announced, those which have formed exploratory committees and those who are likely to run number 12, unless you count the tooth-fairy, in which case, there is an even Baker's dozen.

Just in case you've lost track, here they are — Chris Dodd, John Edwards, Mike Gravel (who?), Dennis Kucinich (my personal

favorite), Tom Vilsack, Joe Biden, Hillary Rodham Clinton, Barack Obama, Bill Richardson, Wes Clark, Al Gore and Al Sharpton. Thankfully, Ms. Heinz-Kerry evidently felt she had blown enough dough last time and Mr. Heinz-Kerry won't be running this time (unless, of course, he said he wouldn't before he says he will).

Not to be outdone, the Republicans are ahead 15-12 in the nomination sweepstakes, and here they are — Sam Brownback, John Cox (who?), Duncan Hunter, Jim Gilmore, Rudy Giuliani, Mike Huckabee, John McCain, Ron Paul (who?), Mitt Romney, Tom Tancredo, Tommy Thompson, Newt Gingrich, Chuck Hagel (my personal non-favorite), George Patacki, Mike Pence and Harold Stassen (just checking to see if you're paying attention).

Why so many runners this time? I can't remember any campaign season with this many entrants, can you? I suppose the fact that there is no sitting president or vice-president in the race has

something to do with it. But I've got some other thoughts. If you were a congressperson, wouldn't you rather be up to your hip-boots in the snow in New Hampshire next winter than slogging around the "Hill" with all those smarmy non-runners? Wouldn't you rather be in Iowa in July, kissing hogs, than sitting in a conference room listening to Henry Waxman pontificate on who knows what?

By the way, what happens to all those left over campaign funds? Let's say I decide to run, and by some miracle, I raise \$10 million for my campaign. Now I have no interest whatsoever in winning anything but the lottery, so I tool around the country, staying at 5-star hotels with my lovely young assistant, eating at the finest establishments, saying dumb things at every opportunity and darned if I get nowhere in my non-quest for the nomination. So I've blown 5 of the 10 million, and now what happens to the leftovers? I don't think I give it back, do I? Hmmm.

The good part of this stampede is that the odds are about 103% that your political philosophy will be represented by someone in the mix. From sending aid

to space aliens to doing away with the internal combustion engine to "everyone's going to drown by next Tuesday," we've got it all.

So what does this plethora of presidential wannabes really mean? I have no earthly idea, but it's going to be fun to watch. As someone recently said, "the circus is back in town."

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... LETTERS continued from page 2

Reval process is all wrong

Dear Editor,

It has never been a surprise that the Highlands plateau produces most of the revenue to support Macon county – but there is a much larger picture to look at.

Macon county absolutely has a right to assess property within the county at fair market value; however that is not what they have done. They are using the highest values on particular streets and neighborhoods to place values on others within those areas.

A great example would be any older street that has had a new home built within the last couple of years. Here is how a value has been determined. Say Joe Blow has owned a 2,500 sq. ft. cabin on one acre on a nice street for the last 10 years but tucked in the woods with no view. His brother John Doe buys this awesome one-acre long-range view lot across from Joe and builds a 2,500 sq. ft. cabin with all the bells and whistles. Wow, what a cabin, what a view! Macon County is placing the same value on Joe's based on address and square footage without taking into account that his brother's is worth far more because of view and amenities. This is an unfair way to "appraise" property for taxation.

Now lets look at the future of Highlands development. With such high value being placed on the land it will be no surprise that people owning this land will need to place larger structures and more of them on their property to justify the assessments.

Another example would be this. Sarah owns her great-grandfather's historic home in Highlands on three acres. The house is old and beat up and only 1,200 sq. ft. She loves this house and cannot imagine tearing it down as it is about to be placed on the National Register.

Here's the problem. Sarah is on a fixed income and just cannot afford all the increases in her taxes because of the multi-million dollar new homes that surround her. Three acres would make a nice new development and part of it is zoned commercial anyway, so a new shopping center is not a bad idea, either. Sarah can get used to living in another mountain community that is not so highly taxed.

This is just the beginning as almost all towns or cities follow suite with increased "city" taxes. Good luck to all land owners on the plateau in both their development endeavors and finding another town that is as wonderful as Highlands.

Stephen Barnwell, Atlanta, GA

Loved the snow shot

Dear Editor,

I would like to take this opportunity to say thanks for helping me stay informed and up to date with Highlands. Whenever I need a distraction from work, I enjoy catching up on the news around town or just to see how the weather is looking via the WebCam. Thanks for a the glimpse of a little snow on Thursday!

Dr. Clay Allen, Atlanta, GA

... LETTERS continued from page 2

meeting. Sheriff Holland informed members that he implemented a policy requiring his officers to supply the magistrate with a printout of an offender's criminal record from the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) database.

"He can choose to look at it or not, but at least he will have been given the option and there will be no doubt that he has been notified prior to setting bond," said Holland.

After viewing the document, the magistrate will return it to the Sheriff deputy for inclusion in the case file. The magistrate is not allowed to keep the document.

"Regardless of the information in the criminal record, magistrates can make bonds at their discretion," said Holland. "But at least we can verify that the magistrate has been notified," he said.

The NCIC system is maintained by the F.B.I and is available to criminal justice agencies for prompt disclosure of information in the system from other criminal justice agencies about crimes and criminals. Information spans states not just counties, so it's particularly helpful.

But, since North Carolina magistrates aren't on the "need to know" list, they don't know what law enforcement officials know prior to setting bonds.

A week after the alleged gang members were released on an unsecured bond, the sheriff's department went before an 18-member grand jury which found probable cause and issued \$50,000 secured bonds.

Following in Holland's footsteps, at the Feb. 5 meeting, commissioners signed a referendum requesting the N.C. General Assembly to consider giving magistrates access to the NCIC database. County Attorney Leslie Moxley said it would be good for magistrates statewide to have access to this information, rather than on a voluntary action on a sheriff's part.

Commissioner Jim Davis said this tool will enable the magistrate and the sheriff to better protect the public.

"I think this is a good idea," agreed Commissioner Brian McClellan. "Having more information before making a decision isn't a bad thing," he said. "More informed decisions are good for all."

• HIS & HERS •

The welcome wagon

I received a nice surprise recently — a welcome letter from Pastor Dan Robinson, of the First Baptist Church. It was a lovely gesture, and took me back about 52 years. My father, Al Mead, an electrical engineer with General Electric, was sent to Waynesboro, VA, in 1954. I remember arriving by train in the early morning, and, half-asleep, being handed over by a kindly porter wearing white gloves into the arms of my anxious father.

We moved in to a corner house in Wayne Hills; shortly after our arrival, the doorbell rang. There were two ladies at the door, from the local Welcome Wagon. Upon reflection, I'm sure they were dying to check out the new neighbors. Still, it was a wonderful gesture I still remember. They had a basket of goodies. In those days, Waynesboro had a dairy and a bakery, both long gone. They brought lots of coupons, to entice us to use local shops and services — the dry cleaner, the supermarkets, the restaurants, the car dealerships. We discovered that Waynesboro had a drive-in, a roller skating rink, and two movie theaters, the *Wayne* (the acceptable one) and the *Cavalier* (nicknamed "The Scratch" because it was rumored its seats had fleas). We had both a Tastee Freeze and Dairy Queen, whose musical van during the summer drew kids from their homes like a pied piper).

It was a pretty good life, certainly for a child, marred by only a few major sticking points. My father was a Yankee, with the last name of a Yankee general. My mother was French, with an accent and "foreign ways." Worst of all, my parents did not attend church, in a town where social identity depended on what church you attended. No matter what we might do as a family, in the eyes of many, the Meads were "godless heathens."

Fortunately, when I was 14, Helen developed a crush on my brother, Eric. I was a freshman and Helen was a senior. That she would stoop to friendship with a freshman was so amazing, it took my breath away. Of course, the plan was to befriend me, get invited to my house, and just stumble upon my unsuspecting brother. Poor Helen. If she had only known that my brother avoided home like the plague. We had parents who actually required that their children do chores for their allowances, and you can't



Michelle Mead & John Armor
 michiamead@aol.com
 John_Armor@aya.yale.edu

wash a car or mow the lawn if you are not at home, right? Guess who got stuck with most of the chores, by default?

The other thing was that, sweet as she was, Helen was no beauty. If Helen of Troy had the face that launched a thousand ships, this Helen had the face that sank them. She invited me to go along with her to choir practice at St. John's Episcopal Church, the *crème de la crème* of Waynesboro churches, where old money sat through long, lovely services, and gossiped gleefully at coffee hour. I sat awkwardly in my seat during choir practice, not knowing what was expected of me. Fortunately, it was a small choir, and the lady tapped to sing a solo during Midnight Mass on Christmas Eve had come down with laryngitis. The choir director looked at me sternly, and asked, "Can you sing?" As a matter of fact, I could. I sang all the time, to show tunes my parents listened to, and all of my father's *Sing Along with Mitch* albums. While I had studied piano for five years, I'd never read music to sing by. No problem. The choir director shoved the sheet music in my hand, and played my part on the piano. "But I'm not Episcopalian," I whispered miserably. "So what?" he whispered back, "I'm Jewish".

The rest is history. I sang that solo on Christmas Eve. My parents attended, mortifying me by turning their backs on the minister and the altar, just to peer up at their daughter, singing from the balcony in the back of the church. I eventually moved to Paris, where I was confirmed in the American Pro-Cathedral on the Avenue George V. Heavens above! One November 11, I was even part of a mixed choir of Brits and Americans who sang a service at Notre Dame Cathedral. Not bad for a "godless heathens." huh?

And, yes, folks, Helen eventually found and married someone who appreciated her for the good soul she was. I hope she's as happy as she well deserves. Here's a blessing on all people who open their hearts, and make us feel welcome, especially when we most need it.

• About the Author: Michelle A. Mead is a writer and translator who grew up in Waynesboro, Virginia, before wasting her youth and good looks in Baltimore, Sydney, Paris, and New York. She and John Armor alternate columns.

Black-tie dinner & auction fundraiser at the Main Street Inn

On Saturday, Feb. 10 there is an International Friendship Center Valentines Dinner fundraiser at the Main Street Inn at 6 p.m. This is an auction and black-tie fundraiser. Cost for tickets are \$100. Call 526-2590.

Auction items include these pearls which are a donation and a gambling counter which has a reserve. The pearls are 20", 6.0-6.5mm, 14kt clasp. Another item for auction is a neckpiece which is a Chinese Gambling Counter set in 14kt gold and fancy with a 14kt gold 17-inch chain. The counters are 150-250 years old and hand-carved mother of pearl.



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• REFLECTIONS FROM TURTLE POND •

The universality of human experience

YouTube is a powerful force for world peace. While watching videos of people playing with their pets or children I am often startled when I hear a voice because it is often not English. And yet these people are just the same as me! They play with their cat the same way I play with mine. They coo at babies just the way I do.



Katie Brugger

Films create the same experience. I remember an Iranian film I saw years ago and the sensation while watching it was: this could be an American film! The only difference was the women were wearing scarves and their clothes covered their bodies to their wrists, ankles, and neck, but the interpersonal dynamics were the same.

I like memoirs for the same reason: they provide the reader with a sense of the universality of human experience. This year I have particularly enjoyed reading a couple of Iranian women's memoirs of life during and after the Revolution of 1979.

In the midst of all the strangeness of a very different culture, these women relate struggles that most American women will find very familiar: balancing husband, children, and work; worrying about your children's safety and future; arguing with your husband about how the household duties should be split; worrying about money and putting food on the table...

Azar Nafisi, the author of *Reading Lolita in Tehran* (B Nafisi), was a student in the United States during the 1970s. She participated in demonstrations against the Shah at her university, and when the revolution occurred went back to Iran to be part of the new order.

Much of this book is a defense of the novel as an art form. I had read some of the books she discusses, but not all. The book is pleasurable to read whether you've read the novels or not—she describes enough of the plot to understand the point she is making.

Ms. Nafisi's first year of teaching was in the fall of 1979. As students were marching in the streets yelling Death to the Great Satan she was inside Tehran University teaching the Great Satan's literature. Not only that, she was teaching books that described the lives of very immoral people, and the Islamic fundamentalists demanded to know why anyone needed to read about such "bad" people.

Her answer is that the novel teaches us to see that no one is all good or all bad. "We can't experience all that others have gone through, but we can under-

stand even the most monstrous individuals in works of fiction... A good novel is one that shows the complexity of individuals, and creates enough space for all these characters to have a voice; in this way a novel is called democratic — not that it advocates democracy but that by nature it is so."

In a country preaching black-and-white morality, she praises the moral messiness of the novel. In a country becoming more authoritarian by the minute, she lauds the democratic nature of the novel. The contrasts are stunning.

Mixed in with her discussion of literature is her account of daily life and the struggles to survive as Islamic law became more and more strict. One of her students was spotted running up the stairs in a university building because she was late for class. In order to escape expulsion — the penalty for such a grievous offense — she had to sign a retraction stating that she would promise never again to run on the university premises. Great amounts of attention had to go to ensuring that not a single strand of hair poked out the front of the head scarf.

Eventually Ms. Nafisi gave up the struggle and instituted a private class for women who had been students of hers in the past. Her description of her students' arrival, when the young women would peel off their chadors and scarves and gloves to reveal brightly colored T-shirts and earrings and painted fingernails was fascinating.

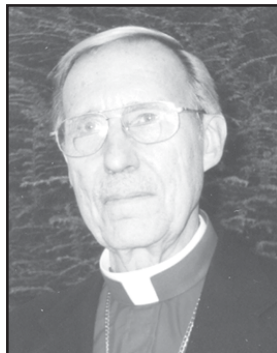
There is a perfect irony to the title of this book *Reading Lolita in Tehran*: we think the villain in *Lolita* is a monster because he wants to have sex with a 12-year-old girl, yet under Islamic law a girl can be married at 9. This book is filled with stories of abuses against women that will horrify any reader.

The film "Osama," the first feature film to be made in Afghanistan after the Taliban were driven out, is a perfect accompaniment to these memoirs. Finished in 2003, it was shot entirely on location in Kabul, telling the story of life under the Taliban. The movie shows what it is to be a woman in a fundamentalist Islamic society in a visceral form: the effect of complete imprisonment that a burkha or chador creates.

Iran Awakening: A Memoir of Revolution and Hope, by Shirin Ebadi (323.3 E), also describes the trials of a woman's life in Iran, but she is more focused on the political than the personal.

Ebadi was trained as a judge — in

Solitude essential



+The Right Rev.
Dr. John S. Erbeling

In today's busy world there rarely seems to be any time for a quiet moment alone. When we do find it, many of us seem frightened at the sound — or lack of sound — and seek to change it. When we walk into an empty room, often the first thing we reach for is the TV control. We tend to choke our solitude with music, or talk, or sounds to which we don't even listen. It's there simply to fill a vacuum; and when it's gone, we become nervous at its absence.

Perhaps we need to learn again to be alone, to experience the quality of solitude, to allow life with all its fullness to rush back into our consciousness. To be alone and to think deeply about one's own life is important to our personal sense of well-being. It's part of the process of developing a well-defined personal philosophy of life.

Most of us would probably argue that we would like a few undisturbed minutes but just can't find the time. Perhaps the trick is to schedule some time alone each day, even if it's just for a quarter of an hour. And it doesn't have to be in some dark corner. You can be alone with your thoughts in a park, in a museum, in a house of worship, or in a library. You can be alone while soaking in the tub, knitting a sweater, or working in the woodshop. The important thing is to share a moment with yourself undisturbed by the rush of others demands and interests, the unending stream of emails that clutter our lives.

It is a good thing to sit down and commune with yourself, to come to an understanding with yourself, and decide in that silent moment what your duty is. Our first duty should be to listen, to "be still and know that I am God."

Lives built around a daily moment of solitude seem to have a greater comfort zone in dealing with daily challenges. They have an eternal perspective to help meet daily pressures in subtle ways. It helps keep life in balance so no single element becomes the only important part of life. There's a reserve provided by this spiritual center of solitude — a balance that permits individuals to tolerate stress more than would be possible if there were nothing else.

Perhaps the most important reward of solitude is that it keeps us in touch with spiritual values. When we lose the light of Christ, we lose the purpose of life; and when the purpose of living is forgotten, the universe becomes meaningless.

If we are serious about understanding ourselves and our purpose in this existence, then we need to find time to think about it. We should not be afraid of the quiet in our lives. We should cherish it and use it as a tool in assessing where we are along life's eternal road.

• PLACES OF WORSHIP •

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Sunday night services every 2nd & 4th Sunday at 7
Wednesdays: Mid-week prayer meeting – 7 p.m.

BUCK CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH

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Rai Cammack, Branch President, (828) 369-1627

CHRIST ANGLICAN CHURCH

Office – 526-2320

Sunday: Holy Communion -- 2 p.m.

(Community Bible Church on U.S. 64 between Highlands and Cashiers)

Tuesday: Womens weekly Bible study at 2 p.m.

Wednesday: Mens Bible study at 8 a.m.

at First Baptist Church

Pot Luck Supper last Sunday of each month.

All are Welcome!

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Pastor Everett Brewer

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

Prayer – 6:30 p.m.

Evening Service – 1st & 3rd Sunday -- 7 p.m.

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3645 U.S. 64 east, Highlands

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Tuesdays: 10 a.m. Womens Bible Study

Wednesdays: 5:15 p.m. Students' Dinner (free for kids in 8th grade and younger);

5:30 p.m. Supper; 5:45 p.m. - 7:15 pm Small Groups for

kids Pre-K through 8th; 6:15 pm - 7:15 pm Adult Bible

Study 6pm-7pm Choir Practice

• Small Groups are offered for all ages throughout the

week, see our website or call for more info.

EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF THE INCARNATION

Rev. Brian Sullivan – 526-2968

Sunday: 8 a.m. – Holy Eucharist-Rite 1; 8:30 a.m. -

Breakfast; 9 a.m. - Sunday School; 9:45 a.m. - Choir

Practice; 10:30 a.m. - Childrens Chapel; 10:30 a.m. - Holy Eucharist - Rite II

Monday: 4 p.m. - Womens cursillo Group; 5:30 p.m. - Womens Cursillo Group

Tuesday: 8 a.m. - Mens Cursillo Group; 9:30 a.m. - Staff Meeting

Wednesday: 2 p.m. – Interlude; 6:30 p.m – Choir

Thursday: 7:30 a.m. - Mens Cursillo Group Meeting;

10 a.m. - Holy Eucharist with healing; 10:30 a.m. -

Daughters of the King Meeting; 10:30 a.m. – Bible Study

• Sunday Service on Channel 14 Sun. at 10:30 a.m.

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Wed: dinner 5 p.m. followed by childrens

Pioneer Club 6 p.m.; Junior & Senior Youth Group 6:30 p.m.;

Adult Bible Study & Prayer Meeting 7 p.m.

Small groups available throughout the week.

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

Dr. Daniel D. Robinson, 526-4153

Sun.: 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.;

Prayer – 6:15 p.m., Choir – 7:30 p.m.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Rev. J. Hunter Coleman, Pastor, 526-3175

Sun.: Worship – 11 a.m.; Sun.School – 9:30 & 9:45.

Mondays: 8 a.m. – Mens Bible Discussion & Breakfast

Tuesdays: 10 a.m. – Seekers

Wednesdays: Supper – 6 p.m.; Choir – 7

Sat: Adventistas del Septimo Dia – 10 a.m. & 5

HIGHLANDS ASSEMBLY OF GOD

Sixth Street

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

Wednesdays: Prayer & Bible Study – 7

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Handbells; 6:15 – children, youth, & adults studies;

7:15 – Adult choir

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Thurs:12:30 – Womens Bible Study (nursery)

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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.

SHORTOFF BAPTIST CHURCH

Pastor Rev. Wayne Price

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

Wednesdays: Prayer & Bible Study – 7

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Sundays: Worship – 11 a.m.

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UNUSUAL RIVERFRONT PROPERTY. Two bedroom, 2 baths, 3-car garage, workshop, carport, concrete driveway, covered porch over looking Cullasaja River, gazebo, spiral stairway up to foyer entrance, washer and dryer, 2-door refrigerator with ice and water dispensers, smooth top range, dishwasher, plus efficiency apartment, much more. On almost level 1/2-acre on scenic Highlands Road only 5 miles from Franklin. Phone owner 828-369-2278 for appointment. \$395,000.

ON MIRROR LAKE – 3 bedrooms, 3 bath, plus cottage. Call 828-342-2302.

ON LAKE SEQUOYAH – Fabulous lake views. All newly remodeled executive home. 3 bedrooms, 4 1/2 baths, 4 fireplaces. Call 828-342-2302.

BY OWNER ON MIRROR LAKE – Cute 2/2 on Wyanoak. All Newly remodeled. \$399,000. Call 828-342-2302.

MOTOR COACH SITE – Private, luxury motor coach site available for purchase. Downtown Highlands. Corner of Fifth St. and Chestnut St. Gated, restricted. Call 828-526-5333.

BY BUILDER – 4/3, new construction. Executive home. 1.5 acres, bordered by 2 creeks and a pond in a new up-scale subdivision less than 5 minutes from downtown Franklin. \$485K. Call 371-3669.

PRIVATE, WOODED LOT ON HIGH RIDGE – Cashiers area; Sapphire Valley Resort amenities (golf, boating/fishing, swim & tennis, skiing, horseback riding). \$45,900. By owner. Call Eva (404) 819-8300.

QUAINT – Newly remodeled farm-style home. 1 acre, 2 stories, 3 bed, 1 bath, hardwood & carpet floors. Close to Cashiers area golf courses and Lake Glenville. Quiet neighborhood. Asking \$180,000. Call Linda. Day: 828-743-2948. Evenings: 828-743-2654.

ADORABLE 3 BR/2 BA COTTAGE with wonderful mountain view. One mile from Main Street. Highlands. \$275,000. By Owner. For Appt. 828-526-1085.

THREE BEDROOM – 2 bath ranch home on approx. 3/4 acre. 2 miles from Highlands-Cashiers hospital. \$240,000. Will consider offer. Ask for Anna. Country Club Properties 828-526-2520

ITEMS FOR SALE

DINING ROOM FURNITURE. Very nice. Rectangular with two leaves 6 chairs, 2 with arms. Maple with upholstered seats. \$326 all inclusive. 864-972-8525 or cell 864-723-4101

SHE IS AKC FEMALE YORKIE REGISTERED. She is very sweet and pre-spoiled. Given lots of attention. She will be an estimated 3.5-4 pounds at her adult weight. She has an excellent temperament. She is raised in the house. She has been well socialized with...and ready for her new home now. She comes with health guarantee and shipping is available. For more information contact me on my email. susan_755007@yahoo.com 2/8

SPA (FLORES 6-3 SERIES) – From Rec Warehouse, 6-8 seats with 38 jets including a waterface and 4 shoulder jets. The size is 93" x 93" x 41.25". Brand new, still in container. Original price \$6,500, will sell for \$5,000. Can be seen at Long Transfer Company. Call Mariette at 770-503-4433.

HILTI TE 805 DEMOLITION HAMMER. New. Case & 4 bits. \$500. 828-526-2700 or 828-421-7886

1958 ALBATROSE TRAILER WITH COVER AND PORCH. Maple interior. Good condition. \$1,000. Can be seen a Carolina Court. 526-5939.

JENNY LIND BABY BED – light stain, excellent condition, mattress, all linens, originally \$375 asking \$225. Call 526-0498.

NINE OLD DOORS – original paint, 4 and 5 panel, 7 interior, 2 exterior, good condition. All for \$375. Call 526-0498.

AKC BLACK LAB PUPPIES – Very healthy, home-raised, loveable. 2 female, 1 male. Call 828-389-9737.

IKEA STORAGE LOFT QUEEN BED WITH DESK, BOOKSHELVES & DRAWERS. – Solid Pine/ Hardware & Instructions Included 63" w x 84" h x 86" l \$400, OBO. 828-524-1172.

SLEEPER SOFA – Neutral Plaid. Like New. \$145. Call 864-972-8525.

MICROWAVE – GE spacesaver, 19"x12"x12", black. \$50. 526-5834

ENGLISH & AMERICAN ANTIQUES – 18th & 20th Century. Private Estate Sale by Appointment only. Call 828-452-4888.

1 LADIES 26" BICYCLE. 6-speed, very good condition. \$25.00 828-349-3320

HEAVY BRASS ELECTRIC HANGING FIXTURE – Six green, glass panels, 4 feet of matching chain. 22-inch diameter. \$975. Call 526-1773.

ALL WOOD LARGE (6' TALL X 7' LONG) ENTERTAINMENT CENTER. – lighted with stained glass upper doors, wood doors on bottom, has open shelves too, very nice \$450 obo, King size bed frame with brass headboard \$75 obo, please call 828-369-2223 or after 5pm 828-331-8422.

AKC REGISTERED SHELTIES. Sable Merle & Blue Merle. \$300. Call 706-982-9325.

RAINBOW E-SERIES VACUUM CLEANER, excellent condition with all accessories, \$925 call Dee @ 828-369-8928.

SOLID DARK OAK DINETTE CABINET.

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19"x64"x84". 3 glass windows on top. 3 drawers on bottom. 2 bottom doors with keys. Imported from Belgium. Excellent condition. \$1,500. Call 369-3250.

VEHICLES FOR SALE

2001 JAGUAR S-TYPE 4.0 – Excellent condition. 98K miles. Still under warranty. \$15,000. Call 828-243-6447.

ANTIQUE 1926 MODEL T FORD TOURING CAR – Fully restored. Needs a new starter. Selling for health reasons. \$15,000 but will discount cost of starter and ignition work. Great car and lots of fun. Call Horace Duncan at 526-3760.

2003 DODGE STRATUS – red exterior, gray interior, 30,000 miles, AM/FM cassette, A.C. PW, PS, PB, clean. \$8,000 OBO 828-526-3257.

1991 SUBURBAN 3/4 TON, 130K miles, 20K on Tranny, 350 V8, lift w/wheels & tires, good condition, never off-road, white/blue \$4350. Call 200-0013.

GEM ELECTRIC CAR – Excellent Condition. Has two motors and will cruise at 40 mph. Many extras including new tires. Great for gated communities, golf courses, and senior citizen communities. Asking \$6,500. email gem603@prodigy.net

UNWANTED ITEMS in good condition for a family of five. please call Tony @ 828-779-1765.

GARAGE SALE

MULTI-FAMILY SALE Feb. 17, 9:a.m.-2:p.m. Furniture, antiques, rugs, dishes, linens, "collectibles", TV, dishes, glassware, etc. Pinebrook Condo #12, corner 5th and Spruce. 526-3671

SERVICES

CAREGIVER/COMPANION – Private Duty, days & overnight. References. Call 828-421-5940 or 828-399-1749. 2/15

PERSONAL CARETAKER – Run errands, clean house, buy groceries, Transport to appointments. References available. Call Cheryl. 828-421-6685.

WINTER CLEANUP – Yards, landscaping., **STORAGE ORGANIZATION** -- garages, attics, storage rooms. Call 526-0241. 1/25

FIVE STAR CLEANING & MAINTENANCE – Light and detail cleaning, concierge services, openings and closings, grocery shopping, personal shopping, personal chef and table service, house repairs, improvements: lighting, plumbing, fixtures, tile, drywall repairs and more. Call 828-332-7201.

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YARD WORK & PRESSURE WASHING – Yard and property maintenance. Pressure Washing and odd jobs. Call Bruce at 828-369-3168 or 828 371-2766. 8/18

H & D HOUSE CLEANERS – We're the team for minor cleans. Dishes, bed, floors, & baths. Give us a call "cause we are the Best!" 706-982-1994 or 706-782-0376

SCOTTS CONSTRUCTION 'ME FIX IT' – Decks, roofs, pressure washing, painting, lawn service, small electrical, floors, carpet cleaning, house cleaning! No job too small. 30 yrs. exp. Call David at 828-369-5886 or 828-347-5051.

C&C CONTRACTING – WE GET IT DONE – SMALL OR LARGE – Remodeling, decks, doors, windows or the whole house! Call Art Doughty at 828-508-1360 Workmen's Comp, General Liability, References

HIGHLANDS SHUTTLE SERVICE – Atlanta Airport Shuttle. Drive - Away • Auto Delivery. All Out-of-Town Trips Driving Services. Call 526-8078.

... PARKING continued from page 1

possibly discriminatory," said one shop owner. "I can't park curbside but I'm a taxpayer like everyone else." She said if her husband drives the company vehicle to town and parks curbside he gets a ticket even though he doesn't work in the store.

The regulation prohibits business owners and their employees from parking curbside on Main Street. They can, however, park in the two-hour parking spots but must move their cars every two-hours or risk a ticket like everyone else.

"My business depends on my vehicle," said Realtor Karen Dunn with Country Club Properties.

Terry Potts who owns Country Club Properties, agreed. "We deserve access to our wares," he said. His wares are the properties he sells. "When someone comes in to see a piece of property we need access to our vehicles. He said the real estate business is different than a retail business where owners and employees can park their cars and leave them all day.

Commissioner Hank Ross said the parking situation is very complicated. "It was probably shop owners parking in front of their competition which started this whole thing. If we abolish everything, then

we're back to the same problem."

Commissioner Amy Patterson said she didn't know the reason why, but she knows she has no problem getting a parking spot on Main Street in the middle of the day anymore.

"I don't know if it's due to the two-hour parking which promotes turnover or if it's because employees aren't allowed to park curbside," she said.

Police Chief Bill Harrell agreed the two-hour parking should be abolished but em-

ployees shouldn't be allowed to park in the B1 district.

Commissioner Ross said the Chamber of Commerce was the institution that suggested the parking restrictions in the business district in the first place and it should be the institution to fix it. "They should come up with the answer," he said.

The board asked the Chamber to return to the March 7 Town Board meeting with a solid case for or against two-hour and employee parking restrictions.

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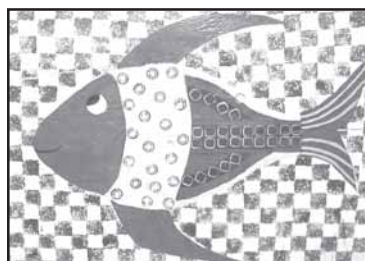
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\$10 minimum with credit card



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7:30 a.m. to 7 p.m.



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pastries, sandwiches
384 Main Street

• UPCOMING EVENTS •

Hurricane Creek Feb. 10 at ITC



Saturday night, Feb. 10 at 8 p.m. The Instant Theatre Company's (ITC), Studio on Main, 310 Main Street, Oak Square features Hurricane Creek, Just \$20 will get you a space with complimentary wine, beer, and mixed drinks, and a dance floor complete with euro-tech lighting and the best R & B, blues and classic rock anywhere around. Call 828-342-9197 for recommended reservations (only 75 thrill seekers permitted), or for more information.

On-going

- NA open meeting every Saturday at 7:30 p.m. of the ACC Satellite Group at the Graves Community Church, 242 Hwy 107 N. in Cashiers. Call 888-764-0365 or go to the website: www.ncmana.org.

- Every Tuesday, beginning Feb. 13, Women's Bible Study, Beth Moore's study of Daniel at Community

Bible Church Fellowship Hall. All ladies invited. Call the church at 526-4685 to order your book.

- It's Girl Scout Cookie Time. Order now. Highlands Brownie Scouts Troop #219. See your local Brownie Scout or email to HighlandsBrownies@hughes.net. Booth sales start mid-February.

- Step Aerobics at the Rec Park, 4-5 p.m., Mon-

days, Wednesdays, Thursdays. \$5 per class.

- The Macon County Art League exhibits work at the Bascom Louise Gallery in the Hudson Library through Feb. 15.

- Beginner Classical Yoga Group meets On Mondays, 5:45-7 p.m. at Highlands Yoga and Wellness, 464 Carolina Way. Mats and blankets provided. Learn the basics and improve your health. Other classes available. Call 526-8880 Ashby or Chad.

- Yoga Classes at the Rec Park. Mondays and Wednesdays. Bring your mat. \$7 per person per class or \$50 for a monthly pass.

- Angie Jenkins on the piano at the Old Clayton Inn in Clayton on Fridays and Saturdays for dinner.

- Beginners Clogging class Tuesday, 6-7 p.m. at the Sapphire Valley Community Center. Come have lots of fun and exercise. Call 743-7663.

- Health Tracks at Highlands-Cashiers Hospital will have Osteoporosis prevention exercise classes on Tuesdays and Thursdays of each week from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. Free with HealthTracks Membership or \$8 per class for non-members. Call Jeanette Fisher at 828-526-1FIT.

- Health Tracks at Highlands-Cashiers Hospital is offering a total body and muscle-toning workout exercise class at 9 a.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Free with Health Track Membership or \$8 for non-members. Contact Health Tracks at 828-526-1FIT.

- Health Tracks at Highlands-Cashiers Hospital is holding Pilates classes on Mondays and Wednesdays at 4 p.m. Cost of the class is \$10 per session or \$8 (each) for 10 sessions. Contact Health Tracks at 828-526-1FIT.

- A Grief Support Group is held every Friday from 10-12 at the Highlands-Cashiers Hospital for anyone who has lost a loved one through death or is dealing with a progressive illness with a loved one. If interested in attending, please contact Helen Moore (Hospice) 526-0727 or Martha Porter (Chaplain at HCH) at 787-1463.

- Every Tuesday Weight Watchers meets at the Highlands Civic Center. Weigh-in is at 5:30. The meeting starts at 6 p.m.

- Live music at Fressers in Helen's Barn. featuring Cy Timmons 6 p.m. until.

- Live music at Cyprus Restaurant every Friday at 9:30 p.m.

- Children's classes resume at Bascom-Louise Gallery - cost is \$5 per student. Mondays: For Home-schoolers, classes are from 1-3 p.m. For 2nd to 5th graders, classes are from 3:15-4:15 p.m. Tuesdays: classes for pre-school are 11-11:30 a.m.; for kindergarten-1st grade, classes are 3:15-4:15 p.m. and for young adult independent study, classes are from 1-2:30 p.m.; Wednesdays classes are for middle school students from 3:15-4:15 p.m.

Every Tuesday

- Open Studio Night Figure Drawing Informal instruction available for beginners. Bring your sketch pad or paint box for a leisurely session of figure drawing/painting. Cost is \$12, \$10 for "Friends" of the Gallery.

Thursday, Feb. 8

- Dr. Rick Spurling "Bully Free School Zone" workshops have been rescheduled. The educators' workshop will be held at Macon Bank Corporate Center from noon to 3 p.m. (lunch provided) and the parents' seminar will be held at Franklin High School Fine Arts Center at 7 p.m.

Friday, Feb. 9

- Highlands Little League Baseball signups for ages 5-14 are at the Rec Park from 3:30-6:30 p.m. Cost is \$50 for first child, \$45 for second child. Birth certificate mandatory. Call John Shearl at 526-2251 or Monica Vinson at 526-9107.

- Angel Medical Center is sponsoring an American Red Cross blood drive from 10:30 am to 3 p.m. The hospital is located at 120 Riverview Drive in Franklin, NC. Please call 369-4166 for more information or to schedule an appointment.

Saturday, Feb. 10

- International Friendship Center Valentine's Dinner at Main Street Inn at 6 p.m. This is an auction and black-tie fundraiser. Tickets are \$100. Call 526-2590.

- Hurricane Creek at Instant Theatre on Main Street in Oak Square at 8 p.m. \$20 per ticket includes complimentary beer, wine and mixed drinks. Call 828-342-9197. Only 75 tickets available.

- The Nantahala Hiking Club will take a 3-4-mile, easy-to-moderate hike to Rough Run and High Falls. The hike is mostly on level ground except for the last 200 yards where some scrambling over rocks is necessary which could be icy. Meet at the Cashiers Wachovia Bank (in back) at 9:00 a.m. Drive 20 miles round trip. Bring a drink, lunch, and wear sturdy, comfortable shoes. Hikes are limited to 20; reservations are required. Call leader Walter Taylor, 743-6977, for reservations.

Tuesday, Feb. 13

- HIARPT's Faith and Reason. Coordinator: Martha Porter. Discussion material will be distributed at prior session. 10 a.m. at the Highlands Civic Center. Lunch will follow at 11:30 for those wishing to attend. All are welcome to attend the discussions, provided only that the material to be discussed has been seen or read. For additional information, contact Creighton Peden at cphi2@verizon.net or Dave Scheyer at scheyer@peoplepc.com.

Friday, Feb. 16

- Southwestern Community College's Small Business Center and the Jackson County Chamber of Commerce will host a seminar to help business owners and managers better understand Hispanic employees and customers from 8:30 to 11:30 a.m. The seminar will be led by Lilliana Parker of Amiga Communications, Marketing & Consulting, LLC in Fayetteville and will also focus on marketing to the Hispanic workforce. Registration is required. Breakfast is included with the \$5 seminar fee. Call 828-586-2155 by noon Feb. 15.

Friday and Saturday, Feb. 16 & 17

- Instant Theatre Company presents a Highlands first at 8 p.m. The EMan is coming to town. Al Ernst is the EMan, the big E, the King of Comedy guaranteeing to lighten your load. Straight from Las Vegas, comedy clubs and the Carnival Cruise lines, Al brings you an "All You Can Eat Comedy Buffet." Only 2 shows, 65 seats a

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BECAUSE I SAID SO rated PG-13

Fri: (4:10), 7:00, 9:10

Sat & Sun: (2:00), (4:10), 7:00, 9:10

Mon - Thurs: (4:10), 7:00

THE QUEEN rated PG-13

Fri: (4:10), 7:10, 9:10

Sat & Sun: (2:10), (4:10), 7:10, 9:10

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EPIC MOVIE rated PG-13

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Sat & Sun: (2:10), (4:15), 7:10, 9:15

Mon - Thurs: (4:15), 7:10

MUSIC AND LYRICS rated PG-13

Starts Next Wednesday Feb 14

Fri: (4:15), 7:10, 9:15

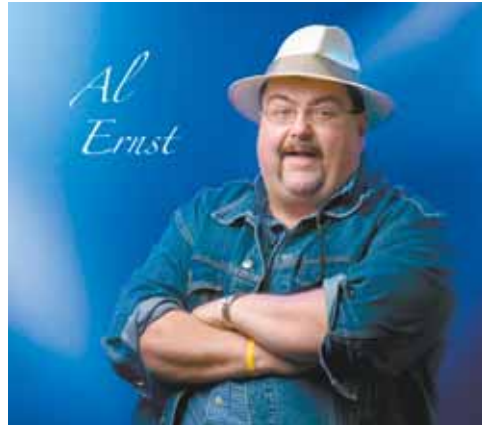
Sat & Sun: (2:10), (4:15), 7:10, 9:15

Mon - Thurs: (4:15), 7:10

• UPCOMING EVENTS •

The EMan coming Feb. 16-17 to ITC

Friday and Saturday, Feb. 16 & 17 the EMan at The Instant Theater at 8 p.m. Al Ernst is the EMan, the big E, the King of Comedy guaranteeing to lighten your load. Straight from Las Vegas, comedy clubs and the Carnival Cruise lines, Al brings you an "All You Can Eat Comedy Buffet". Only 2 shows, 65 seats a night will be available. Complimentary wine and cocktails will be offered.



night will be available. Complimentary wine and cocktails will be offered as well as EMTs will be standing by with oxygen. Make the call and reserve your space at the Laugh Buffet.

Saturday, Feb. 17

• Singer-Songwriters, Thea & the GreenMan will present an intimate unplugged concert of "Love Songs," Saturday, at 7p.m. at the Community Center on Warwoman Road in Clayton

• The Nantahala Hiking Club will take a seven-mile, moderate-to-strenuous hike on the Ellicott's Rock Trail through beautiful forest to the west bank of the Chattooga River. Meet at the Highlands Bank of America at 9:30 a.m. Drive 24 miles round trip. Bring a drink, lunch, and wear sturdy, comfortable shoes. Hikes are limited to 20; reservations are required. Call leader Jim Whitehurst, 526-8134, for reservations or more information. Visitors are welcome, but no pets please.

Sunday, Feb. 18

• The Nantahala Hiking Club will take a moderate hike on trails and backcountry roads near Coweeta Lab. Meet at 2 p.m. at the old Winn Dixie super market in Franklin Plaza on the 441 bypass. Drive 18 miles round trip. Bring a drink, a snack if you wish, and wear sturdy, comfortable shoes. Hikes are limited to 20; reservations are required. Call leader Kay Coriell, 369-6820, for reservations

Thurs., Fri., Sat. & Sun, Feb. 22-25

• "Caught in the Villian's Web," an old-fashioned melo-drama by the Highlands Community Players, evenings 7:30 p.m., Sunday matinee 2:30 p.m. Call 526-8084 for tickets and reservations.

Wednesday, Feb. 21

• Wednesday Night Chautauquas at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship in Franklin. "Life-Span Learning Curriculum." A \$5 soup-supper will be served at 5:30 p.m. (optional). Study Sessions will begin at 6:30 p.m. Call (828) 524-6777 or (706) 746-9984 with inquiries 85 Sierra Drive, Franklin. Follow the street that runs next to Hardee's (Lakeside Drive), for 1.2 miles

Saturday, Feb. 24

• The Nantahala Hiking Club will take a 4.3-mile moderate-to-strenuous hike on the Appalachian Trail from Wayah Crest to Wine Spring, with an elevation change of 1000 feet, and then on the Bartram Trail to Sawmill Gap. Great views along the way. Meet at Westgate Plaza in Franklin, across from Burger King, at 10 a.m. Drive 25 miles round trip with car shuttle. Bring a drink, lunch and wear sturdy, comfortable shoes. Hikes are limited to 20; reservations are required. Call leader Bill Van Horn, 369-1983, for reservations or more information. Visitors are welcome, but no pets please.

• Highlands Annual Chili Cook-off, Salsa, and Cornbread Competition will be held at the Conference Center from 6:30 - 9:30 p.m. Entertainment will be provided by Hurricane Creek.

HCP's 'Caught in the Villains Web'

Diane Rosazza (Geraldine Hargrave in the play) consults with costume advisor Joan Levinson about her outfit. Performance dates for the old-fashioned melodrama "Caught in the Villian's Web" are Feb. 22 - 25 and March 2 - 4, 2007, at the Martin-Lipscomb Performing Arts Center, 507 Chestnut Street in Highlands. Tickets go on sale for the general public on February 17. Call 828-526-8084 for reservations.



... SALZARULO from 7

much. Don't go off on your kid over a broken ornament and the guidance systems on Styrofoam gliders are very unreliable. Bull and I think that it might be fun to write a book, "Dad, you wouldn't last a day in my shoes." This column might be the basis for an introductory chapter. He thinks it might help him get into Rabun Gap Nacoochee School. I think it might help illuminate our motives and explain our actions in the difficult, but always entertaining, job of parenting. Please take a minute and e-mail your opinion. Rejection is OK - just don't say our effort is childish.

Here's Bull's account: "Kids' Rights" Well. You may think I was careless. Just wait. This book got started by yours truly. About two days later, my Dad was throwing an airplane, and hit an ornament, a polar bear. First, I'm not going to bore you with a story about a polar bear. My Dad calls it improving knowledge or some junk. I call it showing off. Oh, the story. It was broken. Dad said, "Go get a broom." We cleaned it up. Review. Dad's response to my accident. I call it "le freak out." Dad's break. No comment. Are you getting the Kids' rights? Do I have to spell it out for you? I'll give you some information about Dad's break. He said "D word, D word, D word," when I broke the elephant. When he broke the polar bear, "Gee, go get the broom. Ha, Ha, Ha, Ha." Don't you see the difference? I was cleaning up from Christmas and accidentally broke an ornament. He was flying a Styrofoam airplane in the living room, which Mom has said not to do. He scolded me, but laughed at his accident. That's what I mean about fair treatment for kids.

Call to advertise in the President's Day issue. • 526-0782

... REPORT from page 8

for grades third, fifth and eighth where more than 95 percent of the students were promoted. He said the three-year trend on the percentage of students performing well on the End-of-Grade reading tests is also high - steady at 90 percent. "In addition, we have highly qualified teachers in a school that is safe and orderly," he said.

Of the 34 classroom teachers, 97 percent are fully licensed; 99 percent of the classes are taught by highly qualified teachers; 27 percent of the teachers have advanced degrees - those with an advanced college degree including master's or doctorate; four teachers are National Board Certified; 27 percent have 4-10 years experience teaching and 68 percent have more than 10 years experience. Highlands School teacher turnover rate is only 17 percent compared to the county at 18 percent and the state at 20 percent..

Report card data is available for each school, for each school district, and for the state's educational system as a whole at www.ncreportcards.org.

... BRUGGER from pg 12

Iran under the Shah people became judges straight out of college. But female judges were about the first group to lose their jobs after the Islamists took power.

After many years of frustration and the slow opening up of opportunities for women, she began to take on legal cases, mostly victims of the state's repression. Even though most of her cases were not successful, they helped bring about an increase in international attention to human rights abuses in Iran. She was awarded the 2003 Nobel Peace Prize for her work.

Because of her courageous opposition to the Iranian regime, I think her opinion about how to bring democracy to Iran deserves respect: "The threat of regime change by military force, while reserved as an option by some in the Western world, endangers nearly all of the efforts democracy-minded Iranians have made in these recent years...I can think of no scenario more alarming, no internal shift more dangerous than that engendered by the West imagining that it can bring democracy to Iran through either military might or the fomentation of violent rebellion. For in the end, the Iranian Revolution has produced its own opposition...They must be given the chance to fight their own fights, to transform their country uninterrupted."

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• POLICE & FIRE REPORT •

The following is the Highlands Police Dept. log entries for the week of Feb. 2-7. Only the names of persons arrested or public officials have been used.

Feb. 2

- At 9:15 a.m., a motorist was cited for exceeding a safe speed at N.C. 28 and Club Drive.

- At 10:45 a.m., officers were called to investigate a nuisance dog.

Feb. 3

- At 10:20 a.m., officers were called to assist EMS.
- At 9:59 p.m., officers issued a motorist a citation.

Feb. 4

- At 5 p.m., officers issued a motorist a citation for speeding.

Feb. 5

- At 5:30 a.m., officers investigated a call of an assault at a residence on Stoney Creek Circle.

Feb. 6

- At 12:30 p.m., officers were called to investigate the illegal use of a debit card.

The following is the Highlands Fire & Rescue Dept. log entries for the week of Feb. 3-7

Feb. 3

- The dept. responded to an accident at U.S. 64 east and the hospital entrance where a driver of a car hit a utility pole. EMS transported the victim to the hospital.

Feb. 4

- The dept. responded to a chimney fire at a residence on Harris Drive. There was extensive damage to an exterior wall. The dept. returned to the home when the fire rekindled later that day.

Feb. 5

- The dept. provided mutual aid to Cashiers. The call was cancelled en route.

- The dept. provided mutual aid to Cashiers to assist with a structure fire.

Feb. 7

- The dept. responded to an accident at Hickory and Mirror Lake roads where a truck slid into the lake. There were no injuries.

New face at police dept.



Officer Tim Fish

Highlands Police Department's newest officer is Tim Fish, 40, from Franklin. Fish retired from the Macon County Sheriff's Dept. as a Captain after 17 years.

"I was thinking about getting out of law enforcement all together, and then this opportunity became available," he said. "This will be a nice change, maybe not as hectic."

Fish is married to Lynn, a secretary at South Macon Middle School and they have two daughters ages 14 and 9.

He has known Chief Bill Harrell since they were in school together and worked with him often as co-law enforcement officers in Franklin.

• SERVICE DIRECTORY •

Small Group Personal Training



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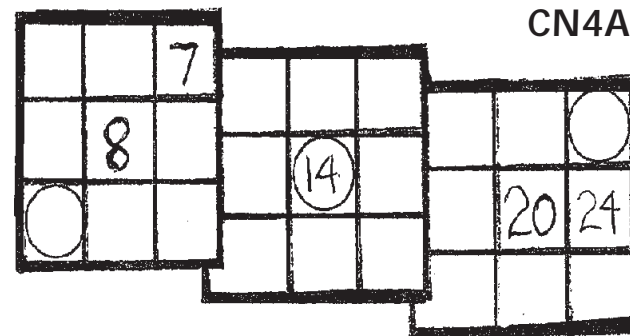
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PseudoCube[©]

CN4A



THE SETUP:

The cube has 27 consecutive numbers in it, arranged in three layers with 9 numbers each. These numbers are arranged in a special pattern: For each layer, the sum of the three numbers in each row, column or diagonal, is 3 times its center number. Eight diagonals connect all 3 layers by running through the center number of the middle layer. Each diagonal contains 3 numbers equaling the total of the three center numbers. One of the diagonals is shown with circles.

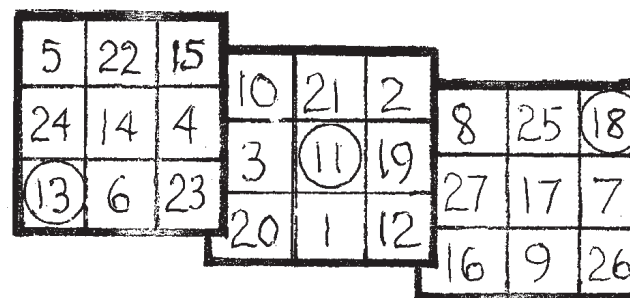
THE CHALLENGE:

Start with the three center numbers for each layer and two other numbers. Now pour a cup of coffee, pick up a pencil and eraser and try to figure out where the other 22 numbers belong. Good Luck!

The first correct solution emailed earns a coupon for a FREE cup of coffee from Buck's Coffee Cafe on Main Street.

Email: pseudocube8@aol.com

Solution for Feb. 1 puzzle # DN1B



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