

Highlands' Newspaper

FREE

Volume 8, Number 8

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Thursday, Feb. 25, 2010

FRI	SAT	SUN
38 \ 20F	40 \ 21F	42 \ 25F

This Week in Highlands

Every Thursday

• Census 2010 Application Test 9:30 a.m. at the Highlands Civic Center. "Get Paid to Make a Difference."

Thursday, Feb. 25

• The Macon County Soccer Club will have a final registration date for the Spring soccer season from 6 p.m. - 8 p.m. at the Highlands Recreation Park in Highlands. For more information, contact Marlene Lane at 828-421-2175.

Thurs-Sun, Feb. 25-28

• Highlands-Cashiers Players to perform The Dixie Swim Club at PAC, 8 p.m. and 2 p.m. on Sundays. For ticket information, call 526-8084.

Sat. Feb. 27

• Friends of Panthertown Volunteer Work Day. Meet at 9:30 a.m. at the Salt Rock trailhead. Call Nina Elliott at 828-526-9938 (ext 258).

Sat. & Sun., Feb. 27-28

• Australian photographer Greg Newington will teach a one-and-a-half day field/studio workshop, "Winter Light - Using Light, Composition and Texture in Photography," at The Bascom. Cost is \$150 for Bascom members and \$175 for non-members. Registration is going on now. To register, call (828) 526-4949 ext. 100

Sunday, Feb. 28

• The Nantahala Hiking Club will take a strenuous 7.5-mile hike to London Bald from Appletree campground with an elevation change of 2000 feet. Meet at the Nantahala Club House on Carl Slagle road in Franklin at 8:30 a.m. Drive 45 miles round trip. Call Chris Shaw, 371-0183, for reservations.

Monday, March 1

• The February 22 meeting of the Macon County Board of Commissioners recessed to 6 p.m. on Monday, March 1 in the Board Room on the 3rd floor of the Courthouse. The regular meeting scheduled for March 8 has been cancelled.

March 4-March 12

• Highlands School Scholastic Book Fair beginning Thursday, March 4 in the Media Center and is a major fundraiser for the library. The hours are 8 a.m.-3 p.m. daily. The Book Fair will also be open from 5-6 pm before the PTO meeting on Thursday, March 4.

Thursday, March 4

• Highlands School Chili Supper 5th grade fundraiser 5 pm in the cafeteria.
• Highlands School PTO meeting 6 p.m. in the old gym.
• Rotary's Literacy Bingo at the Community Building 6:30-8:30 p.m. \$1 a game.

Planning Board finalizes two ordinances

Finally, the long awaited Stormwater and Abandoned Structure ordinances are on their way to the Town Board for final approval before a public hearing is set.

At the Monday, Feb. 22 Planning Board meeting, the group first discussed the Stormwater Ordinance which was presented in detail by McGill and Associates first

to the Town Board and then to the Planning Board at a previous meeting.

The reason for a Stormwater Ordinance is three-pronged - it would ensure the protection of area waterways, once on the books it sets the town up for funding, and it means the town can invoke its version before the state mandates an

ordinance, which is supposedly in the works.

Despite those reasons and after much discussion, the board voted 2-5 to approve the ordinance and send it back to the Town Board with some recommendations. Ricky Bryson and Mike Bryson voted against it.

• See PLANNING BOARD page 7

Rogers joins District 1 race

This week another candidate has filed for the Highlands area District 1 race.

On Tuesday, Feb. 23, Democrat Michael David "Bud" Rogers joined the commissioner race.

So now there will be a primary election for District 1, District 2 and the Sheriff's race when democrats vying for the ticket will face-off.

Republican incumbent Brian McClellan, Democrats Allan "Ricky" Bryson, and Rogers are vying for the Highlands area District 1 seat.

The current term is McClellan's first term in office; he unseated Bryson in the last election. Bryson had held the post for two terms. This is Rogers' first time in the ring.

The County Commission District 2 race still has three contenders, all Democrats; incumbents Ronnie Beale and Bob Simpson, and newcomer Carroll Poindexter.

Republican Sheriff Robert Holland is still up against two Democrats - Richard Davis, who was most recently a Highlands Police officer and George Lynch.

Democrat incumbent Clerk of Superior Court Vic Perry is so far running unopposed as is Democrat incumbent Todd Raby for Register of Deeds.

The last day to file is Friday, Feb. 26 at noon.

The two-party primary is on May 4, 2010. Democrat candidates for Districts 1 and 2 and Sheriff will run-off at that time.

HCP's 'Dixie Swim Club' opens Feb. 25 at PAC



The Dixie Swim Club is a comedy-drama that follows the lives of five women who have been friends since their swim team days in college. Watch how their lives and loves change over the decades, but their friendship remains constant. Pictured from left is newcomer to the HCP stage, Betsy Miller, Mary Adair Leslie, Carla Gates, Jenny King and sitting, Lee Lyons. For more on the show see page 10.

Photo by Kim Lewicki

Past BOE member speaks as citizen

During the Public Comment segment of the Feb. 22 Macon County School Board meeting, past school board member Frieda Bennett took the board to task.

"I'm back here tonight as a citizen and now I have freedom of speech," she said. "So, I will be returning to the meetings from now on to bring up issues that are of concern to me - issues I spoke of when

on the board but haven't seen anything in the newspapers about."

First she said according to 2008-09 statistics, only 18% of Macon County Schools administrators are female, compared to 57% in the state. She said 82% of the county's administrators are male compared to the state average of 42%.

"We have a lot of qualified fe-

males with doctorates who should be considered for these positions," she said.

Later, during the Superintendent's Information segment, Dan Brigman said Macon County has 26 administrators, who are Building Level Principals, Assistant Principals and Central Office Administrators, and 16 are male and 10 are female.

• See BOE page 7

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• THE PLATEAU'S POSITION •

• FORUM •

National Forests in NC proposes closures to protect special areas and historic artifacts

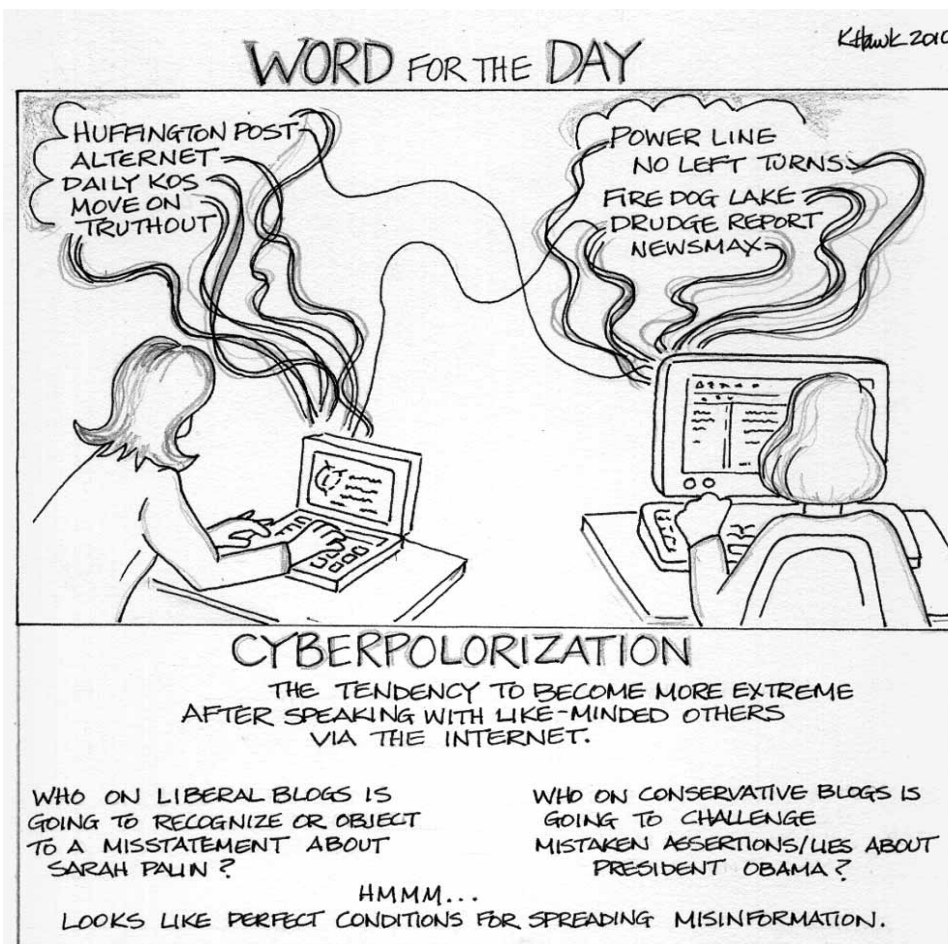
The National Forests in NC is proposing two closures to better protect special areas and historical artifacts from damage. The first order would prohibit leaving geocaches in Wildernesses, Experimental Forests or Wild and Scenic River corridors, the second would limit the possession or use of metal detectors on National Forest lands.

Under the proposal, geocachers would be still allowed to advertise and seek out "virtual" caches in these areas - virtual caches reference already existing features such as waterfalls and scenic vistas. "The reason we're implementing this order is to protect the unique wild values found in wilderness and on designated rivers, and also avoid leaving items that could conflict with research activities," said Mary Noel, the Forest Lands and Planning Staff Officer. One popular area that would be affected by this rule is the Bent Creek Experimental Forest near Asheville. A list of all affected areas is posted on the forest website (www.cs/unca/nfsnc)

Geocachers are also reminded that Federal regulations already require they get permission from the local ranger district office prior to leaving a cache anywhere on the forest. "In a recent incident an unmarked/unapproved geocache was left in an ammunition box not far from Asheville - it appeared to be a threat to public safety and cost our law enforcement personnel a lot of time investigating it," said Ms. Noel. Detailed information on geocaching requirements can also be found on the forest website.

The second rule would prohibit possession or use of metal detectors outside of designated areas. "Many archaeological sites on the forest have been significantly damaged from treasure hunting, by those who loot sites to sell artifacts, and by others just unaware that it's illegal to disturb and remove artifacts from federal land without a research permit. Existing laws protect historical sites like early farms and logging camps as well as Native American artifacts," said Ms. Noel. Several forest areas have been identified that would remain open to recreational metal detecting for modern items like coins - primarily swimming beaches. These include Lake Powha-

• HAWK'S EYE VIEW •



LETTERS-TO-THE EDITOR-POLICY

We reserve the right to reject or edit submissions. **NO ANONYMOUS LETTERS WILL BE ACCEPTED.** 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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tan Swim Beach, Jackrabbit Swim beach, Cheoah Point Swim Beach, Flanners Beach (Croatan NF) and Kings Mountain Point Beach (Uwharrie NF). Permission for one-time use of metal detectors to help find lost personal property could still be granted by Forest Officers.

Additional information on these closures can be found on the forest website (www.cs/unca/nfsnc). Comments on this proposal should be mailed before March 15 to the National Forests in North Carolina, 160A Zillicoa Street, Asheville, 28801, or sent to "comments-southern-north-carolina@fs.fed.us"

• LETTERS •

3-parter good

Dear Editor,

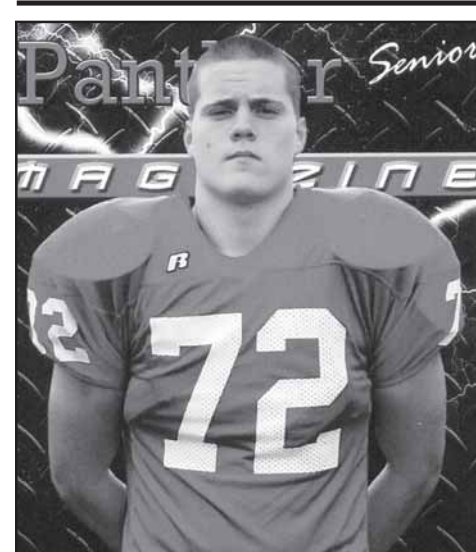
Though a departure from Fred's regular column all I can say in regards to "Tommy and Madison - Part 1" is "Whew! That's some tough stuff."

Well done, and I look forward to the other two segments.

Dan Stone

Highlands/St. Petersburg, FL

• MILESTONE •



Casey Brooks

Brooks to play football for Mars Hill

On Thursday, Feb. 11, Casey Brooks, of Highlands, a senior at Franklin High School, signed on with Mars Hill College where he will be attending on a partial football scholarship.

Casey's parents, William and Mary Brooks, work at Highlands Country Club.

• OBITUARIES •

James Nelson Scott

James Nelson Scott died early Thursday morning, February 18, 2010 at his home in Highlands, NC after an extended illness. Jim was born in New Castle, Indiana on December 5, 1926 and grew up there before moving to Indianapolis after serving in the army and marrying his first wife Mary Louise Knight. He continued to work for Herff-Jones, selling class rings and caps and gowns, moving to Gainesville, FL in the late 1950s where he continued a successful career in sales covering most all of the state of Florida schools.

He decided to move his family to Highlands, NC in the early 1970s and make a career change which included a real estate business with partner Earl Heard, the founding of Insurance Services, and an antique shop, Log Cabin Antiques, all of Highlands.

After the death of his first wife Louise and retiring, he moved back to New Castle where he married Anna Margaret Antle. After fulfilling his life long dream of restoring and owning a large older home and farm, he



moved to Naples, FL, where he played bridge, golfed and socialized with friends at Forest Lakes community and Quail Run Golf Course and County Club. He continued to spend his summers in Highlands, golfing at Highlands Country Club, of which he was a founding member, and playing bridge, as he was an accomplished player.

In addition to his parents,

Walter Cline "W. C." Calloway



Walter Cline "W.C." Calloway, age 80 of Brevard, NC, formerly of Highlands, NC, died Sunday, February 21, 2010 at Cedar Mountain House in Brevard. He was a native of Macon County, the son of the late Claude and Florence Henderson Calloway. He was a horse farmer in Ocala, Florida. He was loved by many and was very colorful. He attended Dunns Rock Baptist Church in Brevard.

He is survived by two sisters, Victoria "Vickie" Thompson and husband Bob of Jasper, GA and Doris Underwood of Cullowhee, NC; four brothers, C. L. Calloway and wife Melba of Lecanto, FL, Joe Calloway and wife Linda of Ocala, FL, Ronnie Calloway and wife Lazelle, of Brevard, NC and Donnie Calloway and wife Bitsy of Highlands, NC; several nieces and nephews also survive. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by two brothers, Junior Calloway and Scott Calloway.

Funeral services will be held Thursday, Feb. 25 at 2 p.m. in the Chapel of Bryant-Grant Funeral Home in Highlands, with Rev. Claude Nicholson officiating. Burial will be in Highlands Memorial Park Cemetery.

Pallbearers will be Mike and Dalton Calloway, Lucas Calloway, Jarret Calloway, Joey Calloway, Chris Moody, Kevin Fisher, Craig Rice, and Greg "Whitey" Johnson. The family will receive friends from 12-2 p.m., two hours prior to the service Thursday at Bryant-Grant Funeral Home in Highlands.

Memorials may be made to Cedar Mountain House Activities Dept., 11 Sherwood Ridge Road, Brevard, NC 28712. Bryant-Grant Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements. Online condolences may be made at www.bryantgrantfuneralhome.com.

Lewis and Anna Belle and his wives, Louise and Margaret, he was preceded in death by two sisters, Myla Edwards and Joyce Leraas, and one brother Mervyn Scott. He is survived by one brother, Donald Scott of New Castle, Indiana and four children, sons Lance Kevin Scott and wife Pam Smith Scott of Ponte Vedra Beach, FL, Michael Kim Scott and wife Brenda of Gainesville, FL and two daughters, Leesa Lynn Crisp and husband Chuck of Cumming, GA and Karin Ann Potts and husband Terry of Highlands, NC, as well as 12 grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren.

Funeral services were held Sunday, Feb-

ruary 21 at 3 p.m. at First Presbyterian Church of Highlands with Dr. Don Mullens, Christopher Potts, Eric Fielding, Justin Chapman, Josh Martin, Brooks Scott and Leigh Scott will serve as pallbearers.

Burial was held at Highlands Memorial Park immediately following the service.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to the Highlands-Cashiers Hospice or the Highlands-Cashiers Hospital, P.O. Box 190, Highlands, NC 28741. Bryant-Grant Funeral Home was in charge of the arrangements. Online condolences can be made by visiting www.bryantgrantfuneralhome.com.

Lois Frances Hawkins

Lois Frances Hawkins, age 83, of Clear Creek, Highlands, NC died Friday, February 19, 2010 at a Clayton hospital. She was a native of Macon County, the daughter of the late Lawrence and Lazelle Talley Bryson. She was married to William C. Hawkins I who passed away in 1985. She was a homemaker and a member of Clear Creek Baptist Church. She loved gardening and flowers.

She is survived by one son, William C. Hawkins II and his wife Sabrina of Highlands, NC; two step-sons, Dr. Larry Hawkins of Huntsville, AL and Jerry Hawkins of San Diego, CA; three grandchildren, Corbin, Hayley and Samuel Hawkins; four sisters, Opal McCall and Doris Hicks of Highlands, NC, Gail Henry of Easley, SC and Mae Ivester and her husband Dennis of Satolah, GA; two brothers, Homer Bryson and his wife Eloise of Franklin, NC and Wymer Bryson and his wife Bonnie of Highlands, NC. She was preceded in death by a brother, Wendell Bryson.

Funeral services were held Monday, February 22 at 2 p.m. in the Chapel of Bryant-Grant Funeral Home in Highlands with Rev. Walter Wilson and Rev. Everett Wilson officiating. Burial will be held at Clear Creek Cemetery.

The family will receive friends Monday, February 22 from 1-2 p.m., one hour prior to service at Bryant-Grant Funeral Home in Highlands.

Bryant-Grant Funeral Home was in charge of arrangements.

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• LOOKING AT LIFE •

Tommy and Madison -- Part 2

This gritty, gripping police drama will be presented in three parts. While the story is true, names and some locations are changed. Some readers may find this material offensive. Part one can be read "on line" or by visiting the Highlands Newspaper office at 265 Oak Street.

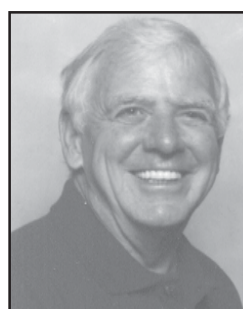
Madison Ann Knight sat quietly in the large black leather chair in Sister Mary Ellen's office. Whenever a student was called to the principal's office, it was either good news or bad news. When Sister Ellen finally entered, Madison became so nervous she began to unconsciously tap the corner of the large mahogany desk with the corner of her shoe. Madison, like most of the students at Madonna Academy, was awed by Sister Ellen. Sister was a master of discipline, extremely intelligent and a devout servant of Jesus Christ. In Madison's eyes, she represented a perfect servant of the Lord.

Sister Ellen chose not to sit behind her desk and turned the remaining leather chair toward Madison, removing any material psychological barrier between the two.

"Stop that tapping, Madison Ann," Sister sternly instructed.

"Yes, Sister," Madison replied, pulling her foot away from the desk and reverently folding her hands into her lap.

Afraid to look directly into her principal's eyes, Madison focused on the large silver cross Sister Ellen wore around her neck. The room grew quiet. The only sound was the distant shrill siren from the ambulance taking Tommy Lee William's unconscious and dying body to the hospital.



Fred Wooldridge

Feedback is encouraged!
email:

askfredanything@aol.com

"I have some good news for you, Madison. The University of Miami has offered you a full scholarship, commencing this fall. If you remain at your current grade level, there's no reason you won't be taking the bar exam in six years with the full support of Madonna Academy and the University."

Stunned, Madison looked into Sister Ellen's eyes. Leaning forward, she pursed her lips to speak.

"Before you say a word, Madison, I know you've been offered a scholarship from Emory. I recognize, at the age of 17, it's difficult to make such decisions, but remember, the decision does not have to be made right now. I personally would love to see you stay in Miami, at least for a while. It will give you an opportunity to mature."

Sister Ellen paused, then reached out to touch Madison's arm. "This is your home. Your mother represents our Academy on our legal matters and your father is a brilliant broker at Touché Ross. All your friends are here and, with a little persuasion from the Appointment Committee, there's no reason you couldn't be dubbed a debutante in your senior year. For a Catholic lady, that would be quite an achievement. Of course, the decision is yours, but I have spoken with both your parents and they would be most pleased if you stayed home with us, in the bosom of the Lord."

Madison's mind was swimming in thought, trying to digest all she had been told. Finally, after a moment, she spoke. "Oh, Sister Ellen, I'm on such a high right now and I feel so fortunate to have these choices. I'm overwhelmed by all of this and don't know what to say."

Sister Ellen reached out, touching Madison's folded hands, still lying in her lap. "Make no decision now. After graduation, go to Paris with your parents as planned. When you return, the decision will be clearer for you, I'm sure."

Sister Ellen leaned back in her chair, smiling, "Well, I have work to do and so do you."

The two ladies rose from their chairs simultaneously as if they had rehearsed it and walked toward the door together. Sister Ellen gently placed her arm around Madison as they walked. "In my 20 years here at the Academy, I have helped many students. I have many friends and acquaintances at the University. I can be of great help to you, Madison, if you choose to stay."

"Thank you, sister," is all that Madison could muster as she walked into the reception area of the outer office, her heart still pounding from the encounter.

"When did he flat line?" the intern asked.

"When we pulled him from the gurney to the table," the ambulance driver responded.

"We'll cut off his pants later," Dr. Cox ordered sarcastically, not looking at the nurse with scissors in her hand. "Stand back....clear," the doctor ordered. He placed paddles on Tommy's chest and a surge of electricity caused Tommy to lurch violently on the cold steel table in the emergency room at Jackson Memorial Hospital. Tommy lay motionless, just a short distance from where he was born.

"Damn it...clear," the doctor shouted, placing the paddles on Tommy's chest again. Tommy reacted to the increased voltage which tightened every muscle in his body. The small monitoring screen came to life with the faint sound of the beep, beep that reported Tommy's heart was pumping again. He had come to life.

Ventilating tubes were run into each lung and a large suction tube emptied the remains of Tommy's stomach. IVs in each arm would add to the already hundreds of needle marks that ran down both of Tommy's arms.

Two Miami police officers, leaning quietly against a far wall of the emergency bay, looked toward each other in disgust. "Sh—, he's gonna live," one officer whispered to the other. "Just what we need, another junkie in rehab; it's our taxes that'll keep this scum on methadone for the next 20 years."

The other officer laughed, "Nah, someone will shoot him before then."

"Let's hope so."

Four months had passed since Tommy and Madison encountered major events in their lives that changed them both forever. Tommy celebrated his birthday as a patient at the hospital. He had become partially disabled from his overdose and lack of oxygen to his brain. He was also left with a nerve disorder resulting in a slightly drooping left eye and lip. Lack of oxygen had affected his motor system and he was just beginning to walk again. Each morning at 9 a.m. and each afternoon at 5 p.m., Tommy was rolled to the Methadone Clinic in the basement of the hospital where he received his dosage under the watchful eyes of clinic nurses.

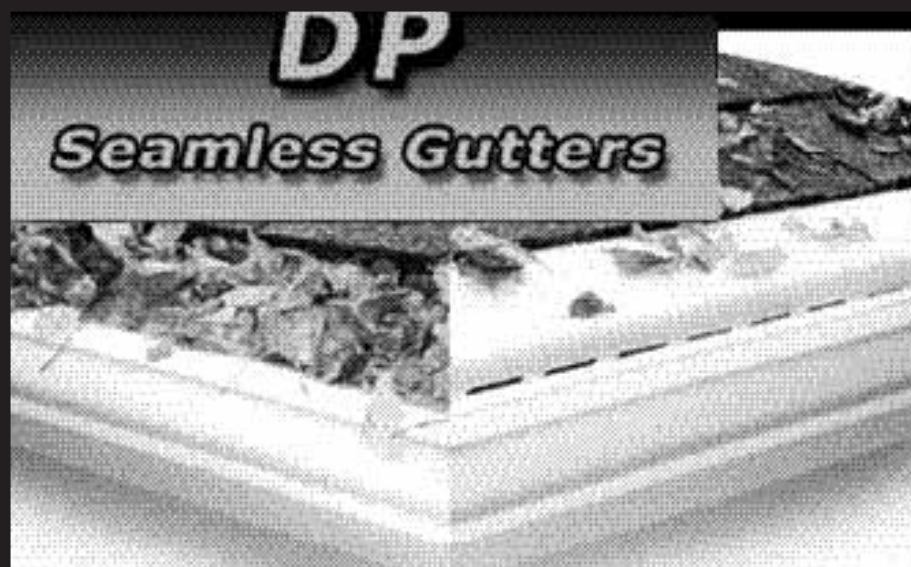
Tommy was also seeing a hospital psychiatrist twice a week for depression and fits of rage. His hospital bills had reached slight-

• See WOOLDRIDGE page 13

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• THE VIEW FROM HERE •

As interest wanes, need escalates

"Oh, no," you're saying, "not another column on Haiti!"

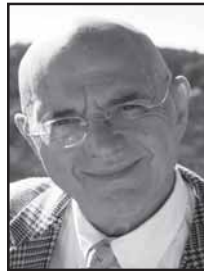
Few want to read another column about Haiti. You may have already moved to real estate ads. It's true, there is a growing sense of "Haiti fatigue." The American public has a notoriously short attention span, except when celebrities are involved. Interest in the Haitian tragedy lasted less than a month. We were fascinated with images of broken buildings and shattered bodies. Pictures of the fallen Presidential Palace became the defining image of the earthquake. CNN covered the story 24 hours a day, much as it covered Michael Jackson's death and Tiger Woods' car wreck.

There is a continuing story in Haiti, but it won't garner much coverage or attract much attention. Rehabilitation of the injured will continue, or perhaps not. Hundreds of thousands will remain homeless for the foreseeable future, and beyond. Illness will spread, more will die; the result of diseases spread by contaminated water, malnutrition, and crowded conditions.

There will be rebuilding, but Haiti's President Preval said that first the rubble must be cleared, a process he believes will take three years. If there is another major quake, more buildings fall and another ten thousand people die, our interest will be rekindled for a little while. If twenty thousand die slowly, from the diseases of poverty, we won't pay much attention.

I have been fascinated with the stories that captivate the American people, not the stories, but the sustained interest in them.

During the Clinton Presidency, there was more interest in Monica Lewinski's blue dress than genocide in Rwanda. Anna Nicole Smith intermittently captured the interest of the public and press for years. Who can forget endless footage of the Atlantic Ocean near Cape Cod while aviation experts theorized about fate of Kennedy's plane? I found myself hoping searchers would locate the wreckage quickly so cable news might move on to a fresh story. The morbid fascination with the death of Michael Jackson dragged on for weeks. I remember turning on the TV many weeks, maybe months, later to learn the story, unlike Michael, was still thriving. Maybe there had been a new revelation, or perhaps coverage had been continuous. More recently the saga of Tiger Woods' infidelity, aided by the appearance of a series of publicity seeking mistresses, dominated the news. Following his apology on Friday and



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Feedback is encouraged.
email: hsalzarulo@aol.com

for days after, TV screens showed the shell-shocked golfer standing in front of a blue draped wall. Tiger had no need to apologize to me. His life and whatever personal flaws he may suffer are none of my business. Maybe if I'd bought a Buick on the basis of his endorsement, I'd have felt he betrayed, especially if Buicks are as bad as I imagine. I just don't understand the voy-

eurism that arrests and fixes us to the lives and deaths of the famous.

It is not clear if the media feed the appetite or create it. There is no doubt the networks follow the poles and give the viewers what they want. It is equally true, that like shark fishermen, they create a feeding frenzy, not with chum, but with titillating tales.

If revelations about Michael Jackson's cardiologist fail to attract us, they will move on to another story, maybe the greed of Michael's Dad or the guest list for his funeral. Even these fascinations wane with time, but not as quickly as has the interest in Haiti. Neither slow death nor slower rebuilding is much of a story.

TOWN OF HIGHLANDS

Board Meeting

MARCH 3, 2010

AGENDA

4 PM

Call Meeting to Order
Discussion of Park Master Plan
Adjourn

7PM

1. Call to order
2. Public Comments
3. Approve agenda
4. Approve minutes of Feb. 11 & 17
5. Reports
 - A. Mayor
 - B. Commissioners
 - C. Committees
 - D. Town Manager
6. Consent Agenda
 1. Appointments to Business Advisory Group
 2. Appointments to Sustainability Advisory Committee
3. Set Public Hearing for April 7 for Abandoned Structures
4. Set Public Hearing for April 7 for Stormwater Ordinance
7. Ice Skating Proposal
8. Spring Craft Fair
9. Scholarship Fund
10. Adjourn

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from the history guy ...

Feb. 25, 1836
Samuel Colt receives an
American patent for the Colt
revolver.

Here's a new kind of problem
solver,
Samuel Colt's 6-shot revolver.
Fire 5 rounds and you still got
one more round for one more shot.
See, with this one you can shoot
half a dozen,
that's 3 bad guys, their two
brothers and one cousin,
so the job you start you can be
completing
with this new gun that is repeating.
In a rough spot? I'm advising,
get this weapon that's equalizing.

By Michelle A. Mead-Armor

I don't know when I became the keeper of the mayonnaise. It wasn't a role for which I auditioned. The job snuck up on me, as many tedious domestic tasks do. One day, John was standing, baffled, in front of the refrigerator. "I can't find the mayonnaise," he said flatly. I looked straight into the jaws of the kitchen appliance, my eyes immediately alighting on the jar in question. I handed it to John. "How do you do that?" he said. "How do you not?" I thought.

The recent ice and snow had done a number on our road and driveway. For the first few days after the big snowfall, we didn't even try to get into town. On the day we did brave the elements, we found one of our neighbors trudging up the road with her golden retriever. Ann was on her way to Atlanta, realized she'd forgotten something,

and the car slid off into a ditch on the way back up to her house. We took Ann and Rosie home, after our attempts to move her beleaguered car failed. This incident reminded us – if we needed reminding – that getting up and down our mountain was not for the faint-hearted.

John was scheduled to attend the CPAC conference in Washington, and our original plan was for me to go, too. As the due date got closer, however, several things became obvious. Since our house has no central heating, someone definitely had to stay home to keep the fireplaces running. With the roads as difficult as they were, it was an iffy proposition that anyone could make it up our road to take care of cats. I volunteered to stay home.

Now, I'll be honest with you. CPAC is not my cup of tea. As a registered Independent, being cooped up for three days with a bunch of Conservative Republicans has as

Home Alone



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

much charm for me as 50 miles of bad road in tight pantyhose. I was sorry to let John down, but at least I'd be spared the view of blue-blazered hordes of love-struck young men lining up to have Ann Coulter autograph their books, and older women throwing their big girl panties at Glenn Beck.

As John pulled out of the driveway, my emotions were very mixed.

On a practical level, how was I going to deal with no car for six days? Was it safe to go to and from the woodpile for firewood? What if I fell on the ice, and couldn't get up? Our cell phones only work on certain parts of the property. What if I got in difficulty in a place where the cell phone didn't work? Could I keep the fires going? On an emotional level, would I get lonely? Would I miss having another human being in the house? I'd lived by myself for years in New York City, but what was it going to be like in Highlands?

The first couple of days revolved around making fires. Was it cold in our house! The Franklin stove in the back hall was a monster which devoured logs. It wasn't easy to get a fire going, but once lit, the little stove blazed away merrily. The living room has always been the warmest room in the house, so the cats and I made it our headquarters. The upstairs bedroom was bitterly cold, but with two duvets it was tolerable, at least under the covers. The cats stayed downstairs for the most part, only visiting when the rays of sun streaming through the windows warmed up the bed.

The cats were puzzled. Orion and Weasel adore their Papa. I thought that his absence would make them needy and clingy, so their indifference surprised me. Orion is a darling boy, but not one of Nature's great intellectuals. He rubbed up against my knee, looked into my eyes, and meowed "Food. Cuddle. Papa. Where?" Weasel was more direct. "What have you done with Papa?" she wailed, accusingly. I was miffed. As the designated food server, litter box cleaner, and cat comber, I had a certain feeling of entitlement. I was doing all the dirty work, after all. But, no, they wanted their Papa.

I'd made sure the fridge and cupboards were full, but no one can think of everything. While making a caprese sandwich, I realized I'd forgotten to pick up fresh basil. The absurdity of it hit me. Forget about milk, bread, and fruit. Oh, no. I was out of basil. I remembered the documentary on

• See HIS & HERS page 13

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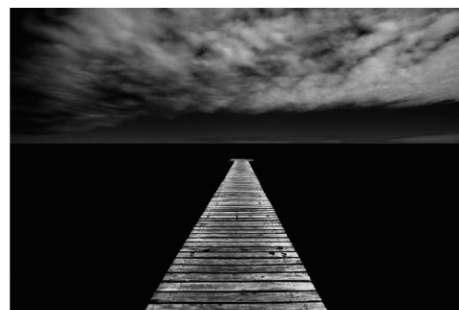
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... PLANNING BOARD continued from page 1

Since the ordinance deals with preparing sites for stormwater retention and dispersment having a certified person involved with that was discussed. "I have to be certified in earth moving to disturb land in Macon County but not in the town of Highlands," said Mike Bryson. The group recommended including requiring a certified earth mover in the text.

Town Planner Joe Cooley said that such a requirement could be included but Highlands does not have such a requirement at this time and county regulations don't apply within the jurisdictional limits of the town unless adopted through a resolution.

Currently, Macon County requires grading contractors to be licensed by the county. This requires, in part, attending an educational course.

Several members, particularly those involved in the construction business, were also concerned about who would oversee the implementation of the ordinance or decipher statistics and measurements associated with buffers and flooding. They also asked if the town was going to hire another employee to oversee its implementation.

Cooley answered both questions saying he would oversee it and reminded them that he is a licensed and registered landscape ar-

chitect. He is also a lawyer.

At first Ricky Bryson tried to delay discussing the Abandoned Structure Ordinance on the grounds that he hadn't had time to review the material, but Cooley said the Town Board wanted the ordinance addressed.

Discussion then centered around owner notification, the types of buildings the ordinance affected, how fast the town would take action and modification of the wording of the ordinance.

The town of Morrisville's Abandoned Structure ordinance was used as a template and Cooley and Planning Board Chairman Griffin Bell discussed the arrangement of paragraphs for procedural reasons.

Cooley reiterated what has been explained numerous times – that the abandoned structure issue is complaint driven and town employees won't scout for buildings, that it only applies to structures meant for human habitation and not barns and that his office would make every possible effort to handle an abandoned structure issue before any action is taken.

In the end the board voted 2-4 to send it on to the Town Board. Both the Brysons voted against the ordinance and John Underwood left the meeting prior to the vote being taken.
– **Jim Lewicki**

... BOE continued from page 1

"That percentage is higher than the one suggested by Ms. Bennett," he said.

Next Bennett asked why the School Board has refused to use PLC assessment software programs to assess teachers which can be used on an ongoing basis.

"Teachers tell me they have to spend eight out of 18 weeks assessing. You don't have to re-invent the wheel here. These programs are being used by counties in sister states and they are working well," she said.

Brigman said he wasn't exactly sure what Bennett was referring to in all her comments.

"We have PLCs underway in our district," he said. "The new NC Teacher Evaluation Instrument contains much of this framework."

According to Carol Waldroop, Director of Elementary Curriculum for the school system, PLCs are part of the new teacher evaluation program and are basically an opportunity for teachers to learn from each other.

"All the schools are scheduling time during the day for professional learning communities," she said. "Research shows that students make better growth when their teachers collaborate and use the best possible instructional techniques."

Bennett also discussed the system's reading program and using MAPS programs – online testing programs – like in other schools – where results are immediate.

"We have researched the MAPS program and will not be pursuing this due to the limitations in the data," said Brigman.

Waldroop said MAPS appears to be a great program, but the school system has limited computer access for multiple testing sessions.

"We have had to limit our on-line test-

ing because the first priority was to cover the computer skills curriculum and use the computer labs for the remediation programs we already have," said Waldroop. "With our local predictive assessments we have been able to have the reports in teachers' hands within a few days of the testing."

Bennett also discussed the state's and the county's scholastic standing.

"In 2008-09 North Carolina was ranked 47th in the nation in education," she said. "And Macon County isn't even scoring the state average. "In 2006-07 our scores were higher, so we are going downhill."

However, during the Curriculum and Instruction segment of the meeting, Pat Davis, Testing Coordinator, said the End of Course (EOC) test results from the Fall 2009 semester showed great improvement over previous years.

The state changed its testing policy and now allows for a remediation period following the End of Course tests with a retest after that, and allows the higher score to count.

"We remediated those who didn't make the required 3 or 4 level grade on the EOCs," she said. "The small amount of students remediated with a second opportunity to retest was very helpful. Not only does it help the student but it helps the school's overall proficiency scores."

In Highlands, EOC scores after remediation and retesting were as follows: Algebra I – 90/100; Algebra II – 86.4/95.4; Biology – 94.1/100; Civics – 87.5/87.5; Geometry – 85.7/85.7; and US History – 64.3/71.42.

The next school board meeting is in Highlands on March 22 at 6 p.m.

– **Kim Lewicki**

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... SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING continued from pg 12

were caught camping out for too long in the lane. Each of us has a destination and reason for living. We each have something that contributes to the overall success of the team or others. The answers to these questions are waiting for you in the Bible. Open it. Read it. Ask God for direction. But invite Him to walk with you. His Son died to provide you access to such life and truth.

Fouling Out: You only get five personal fouls before you have to leave a basketball game. With Christ there is always

new mercy. In a relationship with Christ there is new mercy every morning, great is His faithfulness (Lam. 3:23) You and I cannot do anything to cause God to love us less and we cannot work our way toward Him loving us more. In fact, "God is love". (1 John 4:8). To receive this love and forgiveness, each of us must invite Him into our hearts. I implore you to acknowledge your need of Him and His forgiveness. Begin the fantastic journey of playing the game of life with Him as your head coach today.

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• CONSERVATIVE POV •

A blast from the past

Disaster Strikes!

After many tortuous hours of research, my column on "Iran, the face of Islam" was nearing completion. I left the computer for a few hours, and when I returned, the dreaded black screen. My work was nowhere to be found. I know, SAVE IT, STUPID! In an act of desperation, I submit the column that appeared a year ago. I'll try to reconstruct the Iran column for next week.



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

ple more qualified to lead us than the boobs in power.

I remember like it was yesterday taking a bunch of people I worked with out to lunch. One of the folks was a young lady, a capable employee and a good person, who had recently attained voting age. It was campaign time and the subject of conversation turned to the coming election. She allowed that she was going to vote for Carter "because he deserves a chance".

WHAT??? We saw how that mentality worked out.

Personally, as I have explained in the past, when occurrences defy logic or any reasonable explanation, I attribute them to the supernatural. In my mind, what isn't natural is supernatural in one way or another. How is it possible that in a country where students pay \$40,000 a year to obtain the best education available, we produce and elect leaders that have put us in the mess we're in?

Well, for openers, common sense 101 isn't in the curriculum of Ivy League and other top-tier schools. Nor, evidently, are honesty, ethics and morality. Where did these qualities go? My guess is that when the kids left home for college, they still had some inkling of good vs bad, right vs wrong, up vs down. The teachings of Saul Alinski, Al Gore and other deranged souls have cleansed young minds of rational thought.

Over two or three generations, God's influence on society has gradually been replaced by man's influence. How's that working out, folks? So, throw God out of school, and unGod will and has filled the void. It's physics, my friend. That worked so well, we are in the process of throwing God out of the public square.

The result? Obama, Biden, Pelosi and Reid, not to mention Barney Frank, Chris Dodd, Eric Holder, Tim Geithner, etc.

I'm not saying these people are the collective anti-christ. I am saying that we are being governed by people who forgot, or never knew, the concept of public service, the void of which is filled with self-service.

Again we raise the question; how did these people attain public office? Those charged with the responsibility of voting for their leaders evidently had more pressing issues at the time preventing them from giving serious thought to the results of their choices. Undereducated, misdirected, caught up in the emotion of the moment? I don't know. I do know that God still rules and sometimes He punishes us, takes away our toys and puts us on our knees? Not yet? We'll see.

Are we having a good time, yet?

I believe that those of us who are privileged to have the opportunity to have their thoughts read by others have a responsibility to occasionally try to deflect reality and put things on a relatively lighter note. It is Friday morning. I have searched the news and examined my mind to find some element of good news since I submitted my last column and I am coming up empty.

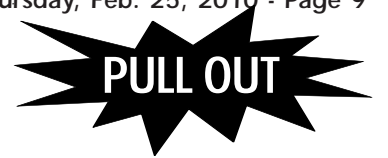
Many who are reading this column weren't around when Jimmy Carter took a crack at ruining our country. Unfortunately, I remember well the feeling I had every morning when I woke up to the reality of the state of America. There was a thing called "the Misery Index" that measured the sense of futility felt by the man on the street. As Carter's administration ground on, the index went higher and higher. I never wanted to feel that way again.

The best thing that could be said about Carter's fiasco was that it took a little while for him to do his damage. I don't think people realized how bad things were and were going to be until well into his administration. The economy went in the crapper, our status in the world was at a low point and the Misery Index prospered.

The difference between Carter and Obama is Obama started digging a hole the moment he acquired power and is feverishly digging deeper and deeper. Every day he jets to a new opportunity to talk down the economy and remind us that a catastrophe is imminent. Every newscast tells us that Iran has enough uranium to produce a bomb. North Korea tests a long-range missile. Not his fault but his responsibility. He wanted it, he's got it.

How did we get in this shape? How is it possible that the voters at one time or another have elected Obama, Biden, Pelosi and Reid who ended up running our country? Not trying to be disrespectful or anything, but I swear in a week I could interview the readers of this paper and find peo-

Ongoing and Upcoming Events



NEW POLICY

For-Profit Businesses and NonProfit Organizations requesting Promotional or Press Release space, must agree to an advertising arrangement. Without an arrangement, only a listing in the upcoming events calendar will appear for NonProfits but no listing will be accepted for For-Profit Business events.

To request ad rates and a publication calendar, email highlandseditor@aol.com

SUBMISSION DEADLINE:
Mondays at 5 p.m.

Rotary Bingo returns

Expand a child's world through Literacy Bingo on Thursday, March 4th in the Highlands Community Building from 6:30 to 8:30 pm. The Rotary Club of Highlands and Highlands Literacy Council have partnered to offer Literacy Bingo as the first Rotary Bingo of the year.

Our format is the same: \$1 per card per game and there will be 15 games with the last game a full card Bingo and a Cash surprise! Half the money paid to play Bingo becomes prizes and the other half goes to Literacy. All donations and table ads given to Literacy Bingo go to Literacy.

Literacy Bingo is family entertainment – play one card or half a dozen and get ready for an evening of fun and a lot of laughs. Refreshments are free and will be served by young people in Literacy programs.

Literacy classes and tutoring are held in the Peggy Crosby Center and serve children, students and adults through donations by people whose interest is helping others learn to read; read better; tutoring for students and families looking for literacy competence.

The Literacy Bingo theme is simple: Expand a Child's World through Literacy.

The Rotary Club of Highlands is li-

Ongoing

• At Health Tracks at Highlands-Cashiers Hospital, various exercise classes all week long. Call 828-526-1FIT.

Sundays

• Aftershock Youth meets every Sunday Night at 6:30 p.m. downstairs at Cullasaja Assembly of God at 6201 Highlands Road, Franklin, NC. Contact youth ministers Seth & Sarha Henegar at 828 369-7540 ext 203.

• Christ Anglican Church, Highlands-Cashiers will be sharing facilities with Whiteside Presbyterian Church (PCA) of Cashiers, beginning with the first Sunday of the New Year, Jan. 3, 2010. Whiteside PCA is located at 621 US Highway 64(W), Cashiers, NC 28717. The service time for Christ Anglican will be 9 a.m. each Sunday morning, starting on January 3. Everyone is invited to come and be part of this historic symbiosis of two orthodox Christian churches. Watch these pages for new worship and teaching opportunities.

Mon. & Wed.

• Pilates Classes at the Jane Woodruff Clinic, 1st floor, at H-C Hospital taught by Sandie Trevathan at 4 p.m. A mat class for all levels. For info call 526-5852. (4/15)

Mon. & Thurs.

• Yoga On the Mat at the Episcopal Church of the Incarnation on Main Street. Enter through single door facing Mountain Fresh. Upper Level Jones Hall. Winter Hours: Monday at 8:30 a.m. and Thursday at 10:45 a.m. Bring your mat. 828-482-2128. \$10/hour. (4/29)

Mon., Wed., Fri.

• Heart Healthy Exercise Class at the Rec Park. 8:30-9:30 a.m. \$20/month.

• Step Aerobics with Tina Rogers at the Rec Park, 8-9 a.m. \$10 per class or \$50 a month.

First Mondays

• Participate in your hospital by joining the Auxiliary of the Highlands-Cashiers Hospital. Auxiliary meetings are held the first Monday of each month at 10 a.m. at the hospital.

Mondays

• Closed AA meeting, 5:30 p.m. at the Episcopal

Church at Fifth and Main streets.

Tuesdays

• Tuesday After School Classes for grades K-6 are held weekly at The Bascom in Highlands. To register or for more information, visit www.thebascom.org or call (828) 526-4949 ext. 100.

• Clogging Lessons at the Rec Park. 5 p.m. Leather shoes recommended and tap shoes can be ordered. For more information, call Joyce Doerter at 877-6618. \$30/mth.

• Highlands Rotary Club meets at noon at the Highlands Conference Center.

• Closed AA Women's meeting, 5:30 p.m. at the Episcopal Church at Fifth and Main streets.

Tuesdays & Wednesdays

• Zumba Classes at the Rec Park. Aerobic/dance/toning. No dance experience necessary. One-hour. \$5/class. Tuesdays, 11:30-12:30, Wednesdays Zumba Gold/Beginner, 9:30-10:15 a.m. Call Mary K. Barbour at 828-342-2498.

Wednesdays

• Wednesday Preschool Creativity Classes for Parent and Child (ages 2 1/2-5) are held weekly at The Bascom in Highlands. To register or for more information, visit www.thebascom.org or call (828) 526-4949 ext. 100.

• A FREE After School Program at Highlands United Methodist Church. Children are picked up at school, taken to the church, have a snack, helped with homework time and supervised playing on the playground and participate in a music program. Children are dismissed at 5:30 pm in time for dinner in the fellowship hall. For information, call 526-3376.

• The Highlands Mountaintop Rotary meets at Ruka's Table at 163 Main Street in Wright Square in Highlands at 7:30 a.m. Visitors are welcome. If you are new to the Highlands area we invite you to join us for breakfast and our meeting.

• Men's interdenominational Bible Study at 8:30 a.m. at First Baptist Church.

• The Homegrown Buds, a homeschool 4-H club,

meets at noon at the Macon County Library on Siler Road in Franklin at 1 p.m.

Wednesdays & Fridays

• Open AA meeting at noon at the Episcopal Church at Fifth and Main streets.

Every 3rd Wednesday

• Study sessions at the Universal Unitarian Fellowship Hall in Franklin. A \$5 soup-supper will be served at 5:30 p.m. Study sessions will begin at 6:30 p.m. For more information call 828-524-6777 or 706-746-9964.

Thursdays

• Al-Anon meeting, noon at the Episcopal Church on

• See EVENTS page 10

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Feb.26-March 4

COP OUT

rated R

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Saturday: 2:10, 4:25, 7:10, 9:25

Sunday: 2:10, 4:25, 7:10

Mon + Wed: 4:25, 7:10

Tues + Thurs: 2:10, 4:25, 7:10

SHUTTER ISLAND

rated R

Friday: 4:30, 7, 9:30

Saturday: 2, 4:30, 7, 9:30

Sunday: 2, 4:30, 7

Mon + Wed: 4:30, 7

Tues + Thurs: 2, 4:30, 7

VALENTINE'S DAY

rated PG-13

Friday: 4:20, 7:05, 9:20

Saturday: 2:05, 4:20, 7:05, 9:20

Sunday: 2:05, 4:20, 7:05

Mon + Wed: 4:20, 7:05

Tues + Thurs: 2:05, 4:20, 7:05

PERCY JACKSON AND THE OLYMPIANS: THE LIGHTNING THIEF

rated PG

Friday: 7:10

Saturday: 2:10, 7:10

Sunday: 2:10, 7:10

Mon + Wed: 7:10

Tues + Thurs: 2:10, 7:10

THE WOLFMAN

rated R

Friday: 4:20, 9:20

Saturday: 4:20, 9:20

Sunday: 4:20

Mon + Wed: 4:20

Tues + Thurs: 4:20

"You Are Not Alone" Learn about Mental Illness

NAMI Family-to-Family Education — a free, 12 session program for relatives and friends of people diagnosed with a mental illness — will be offered in Franklin from 6:30-9 p.m. starting March 16.

Sponsored by NAMI Appalachian South, the local affiliate of the National Alliance on Mental Illness, the course provides up-to-date information about bipolar disorders, schizophrenia, clinical depression, obsessive-compulsive disorder and other mental illnesses.

Trained family members teach the course, which balances education and skills training with self-care, emotional support and empowerment. The curriculum, developed by a clinical psychologist with an ill family member, is a best practice model and has been taught nation wide.

Some comments from previous attendees:

"It let me know that I am not alone".

"I felt like I had been under water for a long time. The Family-to-Family class let me surface and take a deep breath."

"It helped save my son's life."

"Finally, concrete information about biological brain disorders. It changed my life".

"By far the most pertinent, informative and family oriented class I have ever taken".

This extensive curriculum covers:

• Coping skills, and handling crisis and relapses

• Listening and communication techniques

• Problem solving, setting limits and rehabilitation

• Understanding the experiences of someone living with a mental illness

• Medications and their side effects

• Connecting to and receiving community services and

• Advocacy and fighting discrimination.

Class size is limited. Pre-registration is required. To register or learn more contact:

Ann 828 369-7385, Debbie 912 481-2339, or Carl 706 746-5139

Funded by a grant from Macon County Community Fund and a gift from the Neidig Family Foundation.

PULL OUT

Ongoing and Upcoming Events

Main and Fifth streets.

1st & 3rd Thursdays

• NAMI Appalachian South (National Alliance on Mental Illness) will have a support group meeting the first and third Thursday of each month. For information contact Carole Light, Ph.D. at 828-526-9769 or Ann Nandea at 828-369-7385

Every Third Saturday

• The Highlands Memorial Post #370 of the American Legion meets at the Shortoff Baptist Church. Breakfast is at 9 am. Meeting is at 10 a.m. All veterans are invited to attend.

Every Fourth Saturday

• Friends of Panthertown work days, are the fourth Saturday of each month. (Time and location varies). Volunteers needed to maintain trails. For more information, contact Nina Elliott at 828-526-9938 (ext 258).

Saturdays

• Saturday Art School for grades K-8 is held weekly at The Bascom in Highlands. To register or for more information, visit www.thebascom.org or call (828) 526-4949 ext. 100.

• At Cyprus International Restaurant, live music begin-

ning at 9 p.m. No cover.

• At Highlands Wine & Cheese, Falls on Main, Wine Flights from 4-6:30 p.m. Five wines, artisan cheeses and specialty foods. \$19 per person.

• 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.

Thursday, Feb. 25

• The Macon County Soccer Club will have a final registration date for the Spring soccer season from 6 p.m. - 8 p.m. at the Highlands Recreation Park in Highlands. Parents are encouraged to print out the registration form online and bring it with them to the registration. Children age 4 and up are welcome and will be placed on teams according to age. The registration fee is \$50 for players returning from the fall season and \$60 for new registrations. The registration fee covers uniform (jersey, shorts and socks), state registration and referee fees. A \$5 discount is available for siblings. All new players must provide a photocopy of their birth certificate. For more information visit <http://www.maconsoccer.net> or contact Marlene Lane at 828-421-

2175.

• An American Red Cross Adult CPR/AED and First Aid Basics course will be conducted by the Macon County Public Health Center. The course will be held on Thursday, 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 pm at the Macon County Public Health Center at 1830 Lakeside Drive. Participants must pre-register and pre-pay at the Macon County Public Health Center before Monday, Feb. 22. Call Jennifer at 349-2439.

Thurs-Sun, Feb. 25-28

• Highlands-Cashiers Players to perform The Dixie Swim Club at PAC, 8 p.m. and 2 p.m on Sundays. For ticket information, call 526-8084.

Friday, Feb. 26

• Macon County Mental Health Task Force will meet on Friday from 9-11 a.m. in Meeting Rooms A/B at the Health and Human Services Building in Franklin.

Sat. Feb. 27

• Friends of Panthertown Volunteer Work Day. Meet at 9:30 a.m. at the Salt Rock trailhead. Anyone interested in volunteering is welcome to attend - no previous experience is necessary. Tools will be provided. Participants should bring a day pack with lunch, water, warm clothes, rain gear and work gloves. For directions and details about upcoming work days go call Nina Elliott at 828-526-9938 (ext 258).

• Franklin Panthers 10U Travel Baseball Team will be holding try-outs on Saturday at Noon at the Little League Field in Franklin. Anyone interested should make arrangements to attend. For more information please contact Chris Schofield at 828-371-2001.

Sat. & Sun., Feb. 27-28 or Mon.-Tues., Mar. 1-2

• Australian photographer Greg Newington will teach a one-and-a-half day field/studio workshop, "Winter Light - Using Light, Composition and Texture in Photography," at The Bascom. Cost is \$150 for Bascom members and \$175 for non-members. Registration is going on now. To register, call (828) 526-4949 ext. 100 or visit www.thebascom.org.

Sunday, Feb. 28

• The Nantahala Hiking Club will take a strenuous 7.5-mile hike to London Bald from Appletree campground with an elevation change of 2000 feet. Meet at the Nantahala Club House on Carl Slagle road in Franklin at 8:30 a.m. Drive 45 miles round trip. Call Chris Shaw, 371-0183, for reservations.

Monday, March 1

• The February 22 meeting of the Macon County Board of Commissioners recessed to 6 p.m. on Monday, March 1 in the Board Room on the 3rd floor of the Courthouse. The regular meeting scheduled for March 8 has been cancelled.

March 4-March 12

• Highlands School will have a Scholastic Book Fair beginning Thursday, March 4 in the Media Center and is a major fundraiser for the library. The hours are 8 a.m.-3 p.m. daily. The Book Fair will also be open from 5-6 pm before the PTO meeting on Thursday, March 4.

Thursday, March 4

• Rotary's Literacy Bingo at the Community Building 6:30-8:30 p.m. \$1 a game.

WCU Faculty Showcase at First Presbyterian March 7



The music committee of First Presbyterian Church and the music department of Western Carolina University will co-sponsor a faculty showcase concert at 4 p.m. on Sunday, March 7. Featured will be Eldred Spell, flute, Judith Gilbert, flute, and Andrew Adams, piano. The free concert will take place at First Presbyterian Church, 471 Main Street. Handicap entrances are located on Church Street and on 5th Street.

HCP's 'Dixie Swim Club' a fun night out



The Highlands-Cashiers Players' mid-winter production will help you forget your winter blues.

The Dixie Swim Club is set in a beach house on the Outer Banks on the North Caroline shore - home for one weekend each summer to a group of five women who have known each other since their college swim team days.

Each character is a distinct personality type and again, HCP and director Rick Siegel has done a great job casting the play.

Jenny King, who plays Sheree, is the athletic, organized, mother-hen who keeps everyone straight. Betsy Miller, though new to the HCP scene, seems at home as Lexi, the self-absorbed, nipped and tucked friend, who changes husbands regularly. Carla Gates plays Dinah, the hard-drinking, career woman of the bunch who has no use for marriage. Lee Lyons, is perfectly suited as Vernadette,

who is as quirky and as colorful as they come. Mary Adair Leslie, does a great job segueing from Sister Jeri (nun) to mid-life, single Mom.

The banter between the girls spans decades and illustrates the ups and downs of their lives both with humor and poignancy.

As usual, the set is great - sunroom with a "view" and all. The view was painted by artist Diane McPhail and really adds dimension to the scenery.

So romp through the ages with this cast of five friends and forget - at least for a couple hours - that it's still winter in Highlands.

The show opens tonight, Thursday, Feb. 25 at 7:30 p.m. and is catered by Oak Street Café. It continues through the weekend and then is on stage again next week Friday, Saturday and Sunday, March 5-7.

For ticket information, call 526-8084.

Greetings again from San Juan, Argentina!

• Tucker Bates is the Highlands Rotary Exchange Student from Highlands School. This is his second story about life in Argentina.

By Tucker Bates

It's actually late summer here, with temperatures still occasionally exceeding 110. Even during summer break, life here has been as busy as ever. From the day school ended in late October until now I have spent much of my time traveling. I'll start there.

The day school ended I boarded a bus to Cordoba, several hours to the east, to begin a 17-day journey south through Patagonia with other Rotary exchange students. This trip is famous throughout Rotary, and I had been looking forward to it months before even leaving for Argentina!

In Cordoba we met up with 50+ other students: 30 Germans, 10 Americans, four Belgians, four Frenchmen, two Canadians, and a Norwegian or two. Our multicultural group boarded a very nice, double-decker bus. (A note about the bus: For the entire trip, four of us Americans commandeered the front-most part of the bus' upper level, which was surrounded by glass on 3 sides. It was as if we were cruising through Patagonia in our personal IMAX theater ... amazing!)

After 20+ hrs we arrived in Puerto Madryn, a small coastal city famous for the whales that come to breed nearby. On our second day in Puerto Madryn, all of exchange students piled on a boat and went whale watching in a nearby bay. Whales were everywhere and soon became comfortable with the boat. They began jumping out of the water and smacking their tails close enough that it splashed some of the kids! A little sunburned but very happy, we all loaded back on the bus and headed for Calafate.

After another 20+ hrs we arrived in Calafate. At that point we were getting pretty deep into Patagonia. Snow-capped mountains surrounded us and it was actually getting cold. "Parque Nacional los Glaciares" is home to the glacier Perito Moreno, one of the only glaciers in the world that is not shrinking. The first day there the whole group went out to see and take pictures of the glacier.

The second day a group of us paid a few more pesos and returned to the glacier to go on a mini trek. We took a boat to the base of the glacier and, with our crampons on, set off onto the glacier. We slowly hiked for about an hour up and down the frozen waves of ice that lined the glacier until we came across a small table covered with glasses. One of the guides then chipped ice from the glacier and the other pulled out a big jar of whiskey, much to the delight of the Europeans. So there we were standing on top of a glacier in the middle of Patagonia drinking whiskey that was another one of those "only in Argentina" moments.

We left Calafate and headed to Ushuaia, the "town at the end of the world." We finally arrived in the middle of the night after a 30+ hour bus/ferry ride and promptly went to sleep. The next day we went down to the sea side and hopped on a boat in the Beagle Channel to go see some wildlife. After seeing countless sea lions, seals, and birds we returned back to the town. We cruised around Ushuaia for the rest of the day and began our trek back north the next day.

36+ hours later we unloaded in the small town of Esquel to spend the night. We had a free afternoon to explore the small town that reminded me of home. After a very good night's sleep we got back on the bus and headed to our next stop, Bariloche. We drove "the scenic route"



(which roughly translates as "road from hell") through the Los Alerces Parque Nacional where our huge tour bus became stuck in the thick mud! We all got off and walked to a nearby field to eat our picnic lunch. We arrived a little later than expected that afternoon back in Bariloche.

Bariloche is the "boliche" (night club) capital of Argentina.

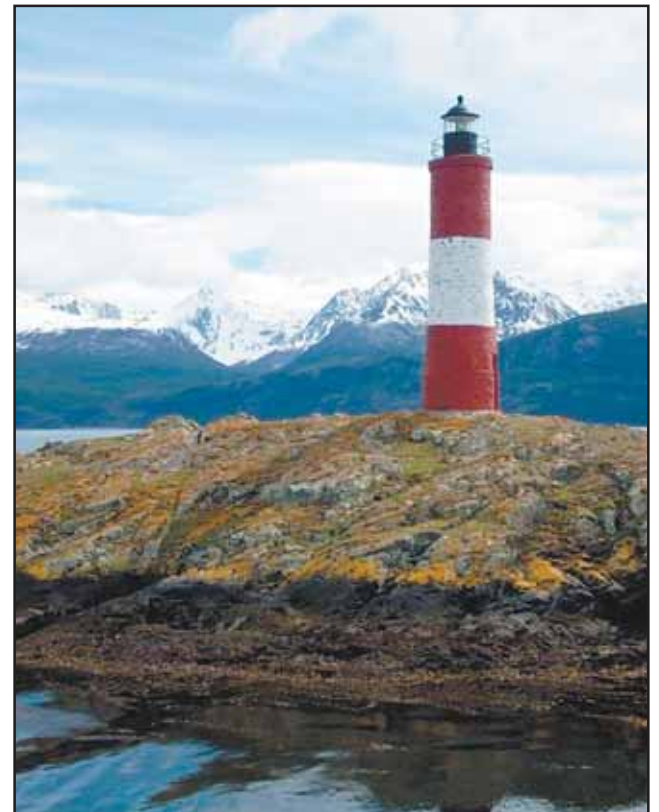
On our first night, all of the 50+ exchange students went out to dance! We went to a five-story club designed like a cave ... incredible! We essentially took over the club and danced until around four in the morning! After visiting another National Park, we got back on the bus to make the long trek back up to Cordoba and finally back home again in San Juan.

I'm now in my 4th and final month of summer break. What time hasn't been spent traveling has been used to improve my Spanish at the pool, indoor soccer fields, and the gym (all intended to keep the dulce de leche (sweet coffee) and asados (barbeques) in check.)

Because of the extreme temperatures, these activities often occur later in the day until around 10 p.m.



Bariloche -- the nightclub capital of Argentina



The Patagonia Lighthouse

I'm pleased to report that my Spanish is much improved, but I still appreciate the patience of my friends and trainers as I learn more specialized vocabulary. And while learning the vocabulary of Argentine soccer was relatively easy, learning to play like an Argentine has been a very different story!

School starts back in the middle of March and I'm actually ready to return to my classes and friends. My classmates were very tolerant of my limited Spanish during the first part of the year, and now I'm looking forward to becoming even better friends with them.

I have been here for nearly six months with only four remaining! As more time passes it also seems to go by that much faster. Many thanks for your support and prayers. Every message and letter is appreciated. Mi amor a todos!

• SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING •

What does basketball have to do with the Bible?



Pastor Gary Hewins
Community Bible Church

As I write this article, the regular Highlands basketball season is about to come to end and the post season will soon begin. I have really enjoyed going to this year's basketball games. There is a real sense of community. The teams act as a rallying point for a lot of great families, teachers and coaches. It's cool! Congratulations on a fun season to all the Highlands basketball teams, cheerleaders and coaches!

I have played basketball for the majority of my life. Believe me when I say there are many spiritual life lessons to be learned between the baselines. Many say it is the greatest game on earth. So what does basketball have in common with living out life and experiencing an authentic relationship with Christ?

Double-dribbling: Living life on purpose means that you know why you are alive and for what purpose you exist. Most of us get into trouble when we become double-minded. The word "double" comes from the word doubt. Do you have doubts about why you here? Do you doubt how real God can be to you? Double mindedness is a lot like double-dribbling. It causes you to have to give up possession of what you need most, the opportunity to reach your own goal. You and I exist to receive love from God and to enjoy Him throughout your life. There is no one like Him. We all need a real relationship with Christ. *Double-minded men and women are unstable in all they do*—(James 1:8).

Taking a Charge: Many basketball fans enjoy seeing a defensive player who will not give up his position as his opponent comes at them with the ball. A good defensive player takes a charge for the team. In life things seem to charge at us all the time, such as financial stress, relationship problems, sickness or the loss of a loved one. How are we to stand up under the weight as these huge opponents charge at us. How about God taking the charge with you? He is really into helping us with things like this. *Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm in the faith...* (Eph. 6:13-14). I can't imagine living without God's help in dealing with charging problems.

Three Second Violations: The day is approaching when this life will end. When each of us look back on our lives what will we see? What will others say about us in our absence? Hopefully we didn't just stand around. Hopefully we had a mission, a direction, a purpose. In basketball, a three second violation really means you

• See SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING page 7

• PLACES OF WORSHIP •

BLUE VALLEY BAPTIST CHURCH

Rev. Oliver Rice, Pastor (706) 782-3965
Sundays: School – 10 a.m., Worship – 11
Sunday night services every 2nd & 4th Sunday at 7
Wednesdays: Mid-week prayer meeting – 7 p.m.

BUCK CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH

Sundays: School – 10 a.m.; Worship – 11
Chapel of Sky Valley
Sky Valley, GA
Church: 706-746-2999
Pastor's residence: 706-746-5770
Sundays: 10 a.m. – Worship
Holy Communion 1st Sunday of the month
Wednesdays: 9 a.m. Healing and Prayer with Holy Communion each service

CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER DAY SAINTS

NC 28 N. and Pine Ridge Rd., (828) 369-8329
Rai Cammack, Branch President, (828) 369-1627

CHRIST ANGLICAN CHURCH

Rector: Jim Murphy, 252-671-4011
Worshipping at the facilities of
Whiteside Presbyterian Church, Cashiers
Sunday: Holy Communion - 9:00 a.m.
Sunday: Adult Forum - 10:30, Bucks Coffee Cafe, Cashiers

Monday: Evening Bible Study and Supper - 6:00 p.m., members' homes

Wednesday: Men's Bible Study - 8:30 a.m., First Baptist Church, Highlands

Thursday: Women's Prayer Group - 10:30 a.m., members; homes

CLEAR CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH

Pastor Everett Brewer
Sundays: School – 10 a.m.; Worship – 11
Prayer – 6:30 p.m.
Evening Service – 1st & 3rd Sunday – 7 p.m.

COMMUNITY BIBLE CHURCH

www.cbchighlands.com • 526-4685
Pastor Gary Hewins
3645 U.S. 64 east, Highlands
Sundays: 9:30am Sunday School; 10:30 am; Children's/Family Program; 10:45 Worship; 5 p.m., Middle and HS student ministries;
Tuesdays: 9:30 a.m. Women's Bible Study
Wednesdays: 5 p.m. Dinner, 6 p.m. Children/student/adult programs

EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF THE INCARNATION

The Rev. Brian Sullivan – Rector: 526-2968
Sunday: Breakfast; 9 A.M. - Sunday School 10:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist (Rite II)
Sunday Service on Channel 14 at 10:30 A.M.
Monday: 4 p.m. Women's Cursillo Group
Tuesday: 8 a.m. Men's Cursillo Group 4:30 P.M. Education for Ministry
Wednesday: 6:30 P.M. Choir Practice
Thursday: 10 a.m. Holy Eucharist (Chapel) 10:30 a.m. Daughters of the King
• Sunday Service on Channel 14 Sun. at 10:30 a.m.

FIRST ALLIANCE CHURCH OF FRANKLIN

Rev. Mitch Schultz, Pastor • 828-369-7977
Sun. Worship 8:30 & 10:45 a.m.; 6: p.m. (nursery provided)
Sun. school for all ages 9:45 a.m.
Wed: dinner 5 p.m. followed by children's Pioneer Club 6 p.m.; Jr & Sr 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 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

Dr. Lee Bowman, Pastor
Dr. Don Mullen, Parish Associate 526-3175
Sun.: Worship – 11 a.m.; Sun. School – 9:30 & 9:45.
Mondays: 8 a.m. – Men's Bible Discussion & Breakfast

Wednesdays – Choir – 7

HIGHLANDS ASSEMBLY OF GOD

Sixth Street
Sundays: School – 10 a.m.; Worship – 11
Wednesdays: Prayer & Bible Study – 7
HIGHLANDS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
Pastor Paul Christy
526-3376

Sun.: school 9:45 a.m.; Worship 11 a.m.; 5 p.m. Youth Group

Wed: Supper; 6; 7:15 – children, youth, & adults studies; 6:15 – Adult choir

(nursery provided for Wed. p.m. activities)
Thurs: 12:30 – Women's Bible Study (nursery)

HOLY FAMILY LUTHERAN CHURCH – ELCA

Chaplain Margaret Howell
2152 Dillard Road – 526-9741
Sundays: Sunday School and Adult discussion group 9:30 a.m.; Worship/Communion – 10:30
HEALING SERVICE on the 5th Sunday of the month.

MACEDONIA BAPTIST CHURCH

8 miles south of Highlands on N.C. 28 S in Satolah
Pastor Matt Shuler, (828) 526-8425
Sundays: School – 10 a.m.; Worship – 11
Choir – 6 p.m.

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

MOUNTAIN SYNAGOGUE

St. Cyprian's Episcopal Church, Franklin
828-369-9270 or 828-293-5197

OUR LADY OF THE MOUNTAINS ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

Rev. Dean Cesa, pastor
Parish office, 526-2418
Sunday Mass – 9 a.m.
Saturday Mass – Mem Day through Oct. – 6 pm

SCALY MOUNTAIN BAPTIST CHURCH

Rev. Clifford Willis
Sundays: School – 10 a.m.; Worship – 11 a.m. & 7
Wednesdays: Prayer Mtg. – 7 p.m.

SCALY MOUNTAIN CHURCH OF GOD

290 Buck Knob Road; Pastor Alfred Sizemore
Sundays: School – 10 a.m.; Worship – 10:45 a.m.; Evening Worship – 6 p.m.
Wed: Adult Bible Study & Youth – 7 p.m.
For more information call 526-3212.

SHORTOFF BAPTIST CHURCH

Pastor Rev. Andy Cloer.
Sundays: School – 10 a.m.; Worship – 11
Wednesdays: Prayer & Bible Study – 7
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP
85 Sierra Drive • 828-524-6777
Sunday Worship - 11 a.m.

Child Care - 10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
Religious Education - 11 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.
Youth from 8th - 12th grades meet the second Sunday of each month from 5 - 7:30 p.m.

WHITESIDE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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

... WOOLDRIDGE continued from page 4

ly over \$400,000, paid for by Dade County taxpayers. Tommy received three whole-some meals a day and clean sheets on his bed every day. He wore doctor's scrubs, given to him by the night nurses who had grown fond of him. He also had two teeth filled by the hospital's dentist intern.

Tommy's rehabilitation was coming to an end. Once released, he would return to the hospital twice daily for his Methadone, a clinical drug substitute for heroin, and would continue receiving therapy for motor and muscular control as an outpatient. Tommy Lee was making his comeback and would return to the streets of Liberty City with a vengeance.

Madison went to Paris with her parents and, as Sister Ellen suspected, was influenced to stay in Miami and attend the University. Her transition from Madonna Academy's little princess to an unknown college freshman was a smooth one. She was well liked, not only by her fellow freshmen, but several juniors and one senior had actually taken Madison under her wing, making sure she made all the right decisions on campus.

Rumors had already started that Madison would be invited to pledge for Alpha Beta Capa after the first semester, to the chagrin of several seniors who commented, "Oh, God, not another Catholic." Madison had also been invited to join the University's Junior League for Women, a pompous group who, nonetheless, did remarkable charity work within the Miami area, particularly in the depressed areas of Liberty City and Liberia to the north.

Madison's first assignment was to assist a young mother of four fatherless children. Darlene Washington had her first child at the age of 14 and had been on welfare all of her adult life. Since the death of her mother, Darlene was forced to quit her job and care for her children, two of whom had not reached school age.

Having Madison's assistance was a god-send for the Washington children and Darlene and Madison had grown fond of each other. Because of Madison's Christian influence, Darlene would dress herself and her children each Sunday morning to attend the 2nd Avenue Baptist Church where she assisted in the Bible school program. Madison would sometimes attend herself and the pastor would chuckle to himself, looking out over a sea of black to see Madison's white face standing out like spilled milk on black parchment.

Darlene could not read or write well, but she knew her Bible. As a little girl, her mamma read from the Bible each evening after dinner. Darlene wanted to get her GED but couldn't find the time to attend night school. Madison had convinced her parents that Darlene was worth their attention.

With the Knight family's financial assistance, the two youngest Washington children attended a Christian day care cen-

ter out of the Liberty City area. Darlene had returned to work part-time as a short-order cook at Tyrone's Soul Food Emporium and had enrolled at night school, attending twice a week while neighbors volunteered to watch her children. Often Madison would volunteer to baby sit, arriving at the Washington apartment with arms full of homework.

Madison's parents worried about her being in such a high-crime neighborhood after dark and arrangements were made for a paid off-duty campus policeman to stay with Madison when her volunteer work took her out at night. When Madison babysat the Washington children, she was only eight blocks from Tommy's pad.

Part three, the final chapter, will be presented next Thursday.

... HIS & HERS continued from page 6

the Donner party we'd recently watched on PBS, and felt humbled.

On Friday, I had a special treat. My good friend, Button, and I decided to have a girls' day out. Since the road was still a stinker, I emptied the contents of my handbag into a knapsack, and with the aid of two walking sticks, trudged ½ mile down the mountain to the Dillard Road, where Button was waiting for me. What a wonderful day! We trudged around Highlands, had a splendid lunch at **The Sports Page**, took in a few shops, but mostly just hung out and chatted. We should do this more often, even when I'm on mayonnaise duty.

The hike back up the mountain was less easy – uphill most of the way. While stopping for breath, I took in the sounds of the mountain, mostly the gurgling of water coming from defrosting snow. How seldom we make ourselves quiet enough to hear nature! It's our loss.

John should be back tomorrow. The living room is cleaner, and I've had plenty of time to catch up on old episodes of **Law & Order**. The mountain of e-mails haunting the in-box of my computer has gone down, too, although why people are trying to sell me products to enhance a body part I don't even possess escapes me. My piles of **Glamour** magazines are rather obsessed with that sort of thing, too, as the cover teasers seem to prove. "Men's new sexual needs", "Let's talk about sex!", and "Sexy & Happy at 20, 30, 40" are just a few of their topics. I guess if you take the last one to heart, at 59, I shouldn't expect to be either sexy or happy. Sigh.

When I was a teenager, my mother encouraged me to read **Mrs. Mike**, a real-life love story set in the Canadian wilderness about a Mountie and the city girl from Boston whom he marries. What Katherine Mary Flannigan went through makes my six days look awfully tame. I wonder if she was expected to know where the mayonnaise was, and of course, there's that burning question. Did she ever run out of basil?

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• BUSINESS NEWS •

CPR taught at hospital



Karen Hendricks, RN and Director of Educational Resources at Highlands-Cashiers Hospital (left) demonstrates proper Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) techniques to Ernest Curtis of Highlands (right) during an educational course held at the hospital's Jane Woodruff Clinic last Wednesday. The course taught to staff, volunteers and community members is part of an ongoing program of continuing education provided by HCH's education department. Hendricks, an approved provider of continuing nursing education, states "By becoming an approved provider, our facility can provide our nurses the convenient opportunity to obtain continuing education credit and improve their skills." This CPR course, offered monthly, is also open to members of the community. In addition to the CPR training, HCH also offers courses in Advanced Cardiac Life Support, Pediatric Advanced Life Support, First Aid, Automated External Defibrillator (AED), and a variety of other courses related to nursing clinical practice. For a schedule of courses contact the Education Department at HCH. Please call: 526 1243 or 526-1247.

MC Schools awarded district accreditation

Dr. Daniel Brigman announced today that Macon County Schools System was granted District Accreditation from the AdvancED Accreditation Commission, the national commission that confers the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (SACS CASI) accreditation seal. This means that the district and all of its schools are accredited, and that Macon County is recognized across the nation as a quality school system.

The accreditation process involves three ongoing components: 1) meeting high quality standards; 2) implementing a continuous process of improvement; and 3) engaging in quality assurance through internal and external review. The district's accreditation is for a five-year term with regular monitoring of progress and reporting occurring during the term.

"District Accreditation as conferred by the AdvancED Accreditation Commission provides Macon County Schools a nationally-recognized mark of quality for our district and all the schools within our district," shared Dr. Brigman. "It demonstrates to our community our commitment to excellence, our openness to external review and feedback, and our desire to be the best we can be on behalf of the students we serve."

Dr. Mark Elgart, President/CEO of AdvancED, said, "District Accreditation is a rigorous process that focuses the entire school system on the primary goal of creating lifelong learners. Macon County Schools System is to be commended for engaging in this process and demonstrating a commitment to continuous improvement."

Parents and interested community members can learn more about the District Accreditation Process at www.advanced.org.

• *The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (SACS CASI) is a nongovernmental, voluntary agency that accredits nearly 13,000 public and non-public institutions throughout the world. SACS CASI serves 11 Southern states – Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia, as well as the countries of Mexico, Central and South America, islands of the Caribbean, and other geographic areas.*

State awards County tax office for achievement, progress



Commission Chair Ronnie Beale presenting Joseph E. Hunt Distinguished Jurisdiction Award for Small Counties to the Macon County Tax Office. Beale is pictured with Tax Administrator Richard Lightner and some of the department's staff.

At Monday's Macon County Commission meeting, the tax assessor's office was commended for receiving the Joseph E. Hunt Distinguished Jurisdiction Award for small counties for the third time.

The award is given each year to the counties and tax officials for achievement in areas of property tax assessment and or collection, and the implementation of a project or endeavors that enhance the overall effectiveness of a county tax department.

The department won the award in 2006, 2007 and in 2009.

Incorporating YOTTA, a computerized-assisted mass appraisal software to access and update all property records in the field, helped snag the award for the county.

Macon County is the first county in the state to use this third party software program. It cost the county just \$25,000 – substantially less than the \$500,000 to \$1 million it would have cost to replace the county's system with new software.

Now appraisers can access and update all property cards, GIS maps, aerial maps, GPS location, property improvement pictures, sales data, zoning, flood maps, and other vital information in the field.

The records can then be updated with a series of menu-driven screens and stored until uploaded in the county's main computer system. The system gives all appraisers the information they need at the property site they are reviewing.

The improvements continue the modernization of Macon County's records and service to the general public.

Over the years, the county tax office has been a leader in the state with technology development and implementation; property digital pictures being available on the web and in the field, electronic property maps and cards in the field, searchable data base on the web.

Despite the downturn in the economy last year, Tax Administrator Richard Lightner and Finance Director Evelyn Southard reported tax payments "were real close to last year."

"In fact, we are a little ahead of this time last year," said Lightner. "In 2009 we had 97.7% of property taxes paid and so far we are a little ahead in 2010."

Other than motor vehicles, the budgeted levy for property tax for 2009-2010 was \$22,695,000. The budgeted amount for prior years (unpaid but still collectible) is \$600,000.

Motor vehicle taxes continue to lag behind real property tax payments. At the end of January about \$600,000 has been paid of the near \$100,000 billed. Southard said about \$355,000 is outstanding.

As of July 1, 2011, a new software program will be in place statewide which will ensure vehicle taxes are paid. With this centralized system, when people pay for their tags, they will have to pay for the tax at the same time, said Lightner.

The commissioner commended the tax administrator and his department for it continued good work.

– Kim Lewicki

POLICE & FIRE REPORTS

The following are the Highlands Police Dept. log entries from Feb. 11. Only the names of persons arrested, issued a Class-3 misdemeanor, or public officials have been used.

Feb. 11

• At 11:30 a.m., officers responded to a two-vehicle accident at U.S. 64 and S. 2nd Street.

Feb. 17

• At 8:20 a.m., officers responded to a call about a truck in the road at S. 4th and Main streets.

• At 10:58 a.m., officers responded to a two-vehicle accident at Raoul and Rocky Hill roads.

During the week, police officers responded to 6 alarms and issued 1 citations.

The following are the Highlands Fire & Rescue Dept. log entries from Feb. 17:

Feb. 17

• At 11:18 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to assist EMS with a medical call at a residence on Rainbow Road. The victim was taken to the hospital.

Feb. 20

• At 11:19 a.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a resident on Country Club Drive caused by a broken water line.

Feb. 21

• At 1:29 a.m., the dept. responded to a one-vehicle accident on N. 4th Street. There were no injuries.

• At 8:19 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to assist EMS with a medical call at a residence on Pine Street. It was cancelled.

Feb. 22

• At 4 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Country Club Drive. It was cancelled by the alarm company.

Feb. 23

• At 1:23 p.m. the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Dog Mountain Road. It was false.

• FROM THE STUDENT'S EYE •

How to enjoy the wind in your hair

It started with one week at Blue Ridge School and ended with a photo fit for "America's Most Wanted," but the difficulty of getting my license paid off! North Carolina is definitely one of the more challenging states in which to become a licensed driver. However, the long and complicated process makes our state one of the safest places to drive your car.

Between driver's education, a written long test, a six hour lesson, a vision and road signs test, another short written test, a year of practice, and finally a road test: getting your driver's license can seem like a daunting task. I find the wide-open view from the driver's seat well worth the hassle.

Week one on the road to freedom will be



Ashlyn Ward

spent in a classroom filled with scary tests, scarier looking classmates, and a growling stomach. No fear: driver's ed (while cleverly disguised as terror) is actually a blast. The long lectures, quizzes, and movies will more than prepare you for the one hundred question written test. Although you can opt out of this class and simply take a two hundred question test, I highly recommend the course. It will help immensely with future tests and questions you have while driving, such as: who has right of way and exactly why you should wear your seatbelt. If you bring a notebook, pencil, and your "listening ears", you'll be well equipped for this class. Despite appearances, the other students merely want to pass the class and will not eat

you. Don't forget a lunch and remember to smile at your fellow students, you'll be sharing the road with them soon enough.

Before you know it, you'll be out of the classroom and into the driver's seat. Six hours with the instructor is a long time, but the experience of driving while sharing a brake with your fearless passenger is invaluable. You'll be sharing the car with other license hopefuls. While this means having an audience for your mistakes, you'll also share the joy of your accomplishments. I recommend holding in screams of terror and taking mental notes of the instructor's wisdom, because your turn comes quickly.

The final hour at the Department of Motor Vehicles is nerve wracking, but painless. I was welcomed with a smile and treated like an adult. First you'll answer 20 questions on the computer (all of which will look familiar after that first week you spent in driver's ed). Then you'll take a combined vision and road signs test (ditto). After the tests, the DMV officer will talk to you about rules, such as the 5 am-9 pm curfew for first 6 months and the accompanying adult rule, as well as answer any questions you may have.

The year of having a constant "backseat driver" is the longest part of the process. No longer do you share the car with a relaxed teacher and students who are just as confused as you are: instead you'll be sharing the vehicle that seems to shrink moment by moment with your nervous parent and siblings who are unsympathetic to your slow driving. Believe it or not though, these car rides make for great bonding time. You've never realized that there could be so much to learn about guiding four wheels to a destination, but driving under all this pressure will do wonders for you in the long run.

Finally, the big day has come. After this, you will no longer depend on your parents for all of your transportation needs, and you can blast that stereo as loudly as you wish. Take a deep breath as you get in the car and then let it out. Less trouble than a trip to the grocery store, take two at the DMV is a piece of cake. We simply drove around the block, practiced braking, backed up, and did a three point turn. (You're in luck, NC doesn't even require parallel parking!) Back inside, sign your name, hand over \$15, and smile for the camera. Your time spent in that stuffy classroom, taking tests, and biting your nails is over. Welcome to the road!

The final step is waiting for your plastic masterpiece to arrive in the mail. At this point, you've already taken that first turn out of the driveway by yourself, figured out carline at school, discovered why adults cringe when it comes time to fill the gas tank, and enjoyed the feeling of wind blowing through your hair. You are in the driver's seat. After more than a year of written tests, teachers, parents, and road tests, the fun's just begun. Congratulations on your license! Now go check the mailbox and remember: the laughing will subside, everyone's picture looks awful.

Food Pantry available for 'emergency food' or weekly groceries



Friday, Feb. 19, The Girls' Clubhouse worked with Sara Mayer at The Food Pantry bagging rice and beans. Pictured above from left are Veronica Garcia, Meredith Garren and Claudia Lewis. Left is Shannon Welch, Elizabeth Houston and McKinley Mosely.

The food pantry located on Spring Street is open each Monday afternoon from 3:30-5:30 p.m. It is operated by volunteers who come from every church in the community and the community at large. It is sponsored by The International Friendship Center and Highlands United Methodist Church and is open to anyone in the area who needs food on a regular basis or in an emergency situation. The pantry is arranged like a grocery store and clients are allowed to choose from the shelves.

Many local churches accept food or donations from members and deliver to the pantry. The public is invited to donate food items, especially dry beans, rice, cooking oil and canned fruits and juices, which can be left at the entrance to the fellowship hall of the Methodist Church on Main Street.



Photos by Kim Lewicki

With funding from individual donations, churches and grants, volunteers shop for food from Manna Food Bank and local businesses. They try always to have fresh produce, meat and/or eggs in addition to boxed and canned items.

There are many dedicated volunteers who give much time and effort, but more are always needed. There are many ways to help. Each week, food is unpacked and placed on the shelves by a team of volunteers. Others unpack produce and prepare it for display, still others shop for the food, and others spend one Monday afternoon a month operating the open pantry.

Anyone who could volunteer to help in any way for this very important project might call Mary Heffington at 526-3671 or Jane McDade at 526-9588.

NOTICE

An account has been set up at First Citizens Bank for Dan and Sabrina Rogers. In December, their 3-year-old son was diagnosed with ALL. Currently, he is in critical condition in the pediatric unit at Chapel Hill. They have five children living at home. If you would like to make a donation to the family, go to First Citizens Bank. For more information, call Rhonda Oakley at 526-1435.

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• CLASSIFIEDS •

Department application process. CLOSING DATE: Until Filled CONTACT: Highlands Police Department, Capt. R.L. Forrester, 310 Oak Street. Highlands, NC 28741. (828) 526-8734.

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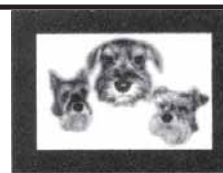
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• HIGHLANDS SCHOOL BASKET BALL •

HS Basketball season wraps up with hard fought games

By Ryan Potts

The Lady Highlanders hosted their second straight opening round game in the state playoffs on Monday but fell to Cherokee 43 to 36. It was a bittersweet ending for the Lady Highlanders, who finished the season with a 14-12 record.

The Lady Braves held Highlands to just 2 points in the first quarter, but Highlands was able to tie the game at the half 15-15. What was a back and forth game swung in Cherokee's favor in the fourth quarter, as the size of the Lady Braves wore down the smaller Highlands team. Courtney Rogers, Emily Munger and Taylor Buras all scored 8 points for the Lady Highlanders.

The Highlanders traveled to Robbinsville to face the Black Knights in the first round of the state playoffs on Monday. Highlands defeated Robbinsville earlier this season at the Walhalla Christmas Tournament, and were hoping for a similar result on Monday night.

Highlands started strong, grabbing an early 9-2 lead on the strength of a three point play by Logan Schmitt and the inside scoring of Josh Delacruz. Unfortunately, Robbinsville responded, going on a 14-1 run to take a 16-10 lead. Robbinsville led by as many as 11 points in the first half, but an 11-3 run by Highlands to close the half left the visitors trailing by only 3 points.

The second half saw Robbinsville establish dominance on the offensive glass and eventually pull away to a 59-45 victory. Delacruz led Highlands with 14 points and Schmitt added 11 as the Highlanders finished the season with a 10-16 record.



Senior Susan Johnson at the Blue Ridge game.



Taylor Buras at the final playoff game against Cherokee.
Photo by Noel Atherton



Senior Night at Highlands School last week featured seniors with Coach Brett Lamb and their parents from left, Manager Bobbi Jo Talley, Brie Schmitt #22, Kate Marie Parks #50; Susan Johnson #14 and Jessica Gagne #52.
Photos by Stephanie McCall



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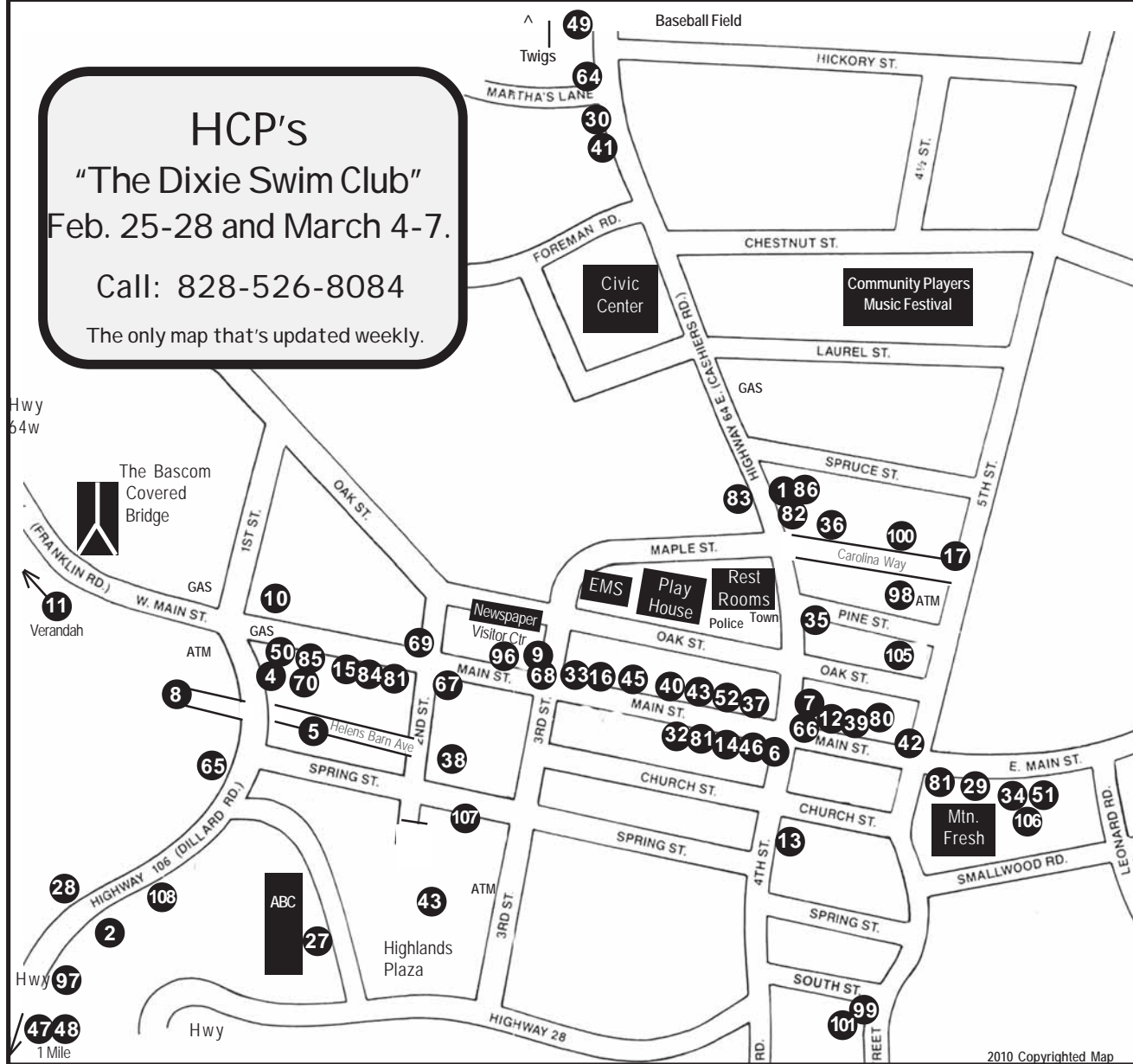


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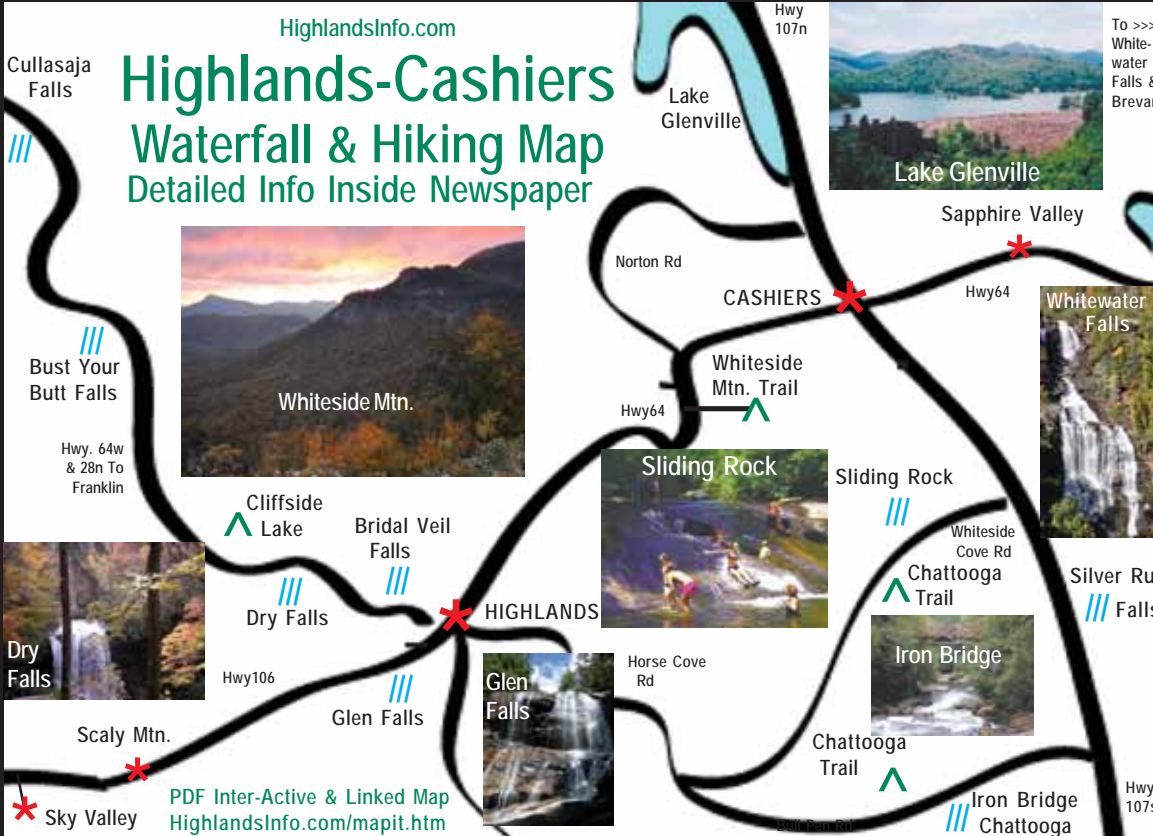


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