

# Highlands' Newspaper

**FREE**

Volume 9, Number 4

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Thursday, Jan. 27, 2011

FRI	SAT	SUN
42 \ 25F	45 \ 24F	46 \ 26F

**Fri. & Sat., Jan. 28-29**  
 • At The Bascom, Photography for Lovers with Greg Newington. for more information, call 526-4949.

**Saturday, Jan. 29**  
 • At Paoletti's Restaurant, intimate Wine Tasting at the bar at 1 pm. Great inexpensive wines from around the world, available for retail sales daily. Cheese and Crackers are served. Cost: \$20 per person refundable with case purchase.

• At Cyprus International Restaurant, live music beginning at 9 p.m. No cover.

• The Nantahala Hiking Club will take a moderate 5-mile hike to Siler Bald via the old Appalachian Trail, returning on the new AT at Big Stamp with some wandering around by the shelter and the road to the crest. Call leader Gail Lehman at 524-5298 for reservations.

**Sunday, Jan. 30**  
 • The Nantahala Hiking Club will take an easy 1.5 mile hike on the Little Tennessee River Greenway in Franklin. Meet at Macon Co. Library at 2 PM. Call leader Kay Coriell at 369-6820 for reservations.

**Monday, Jan. 31**  
 • "Beyond the Birds and Bees" at Mountain View Intermediate School Media Center. Have you ad your children had "The Talk?" Let Dr. Douglas Egge of Peadiatric Associates of Franklin, help! Girls' Program 6-7:30 p.m. Boys Program 7:45-9 p.m. Registration is required as space is limited. Call 524-3314.

**Tuesday, Feb 1**  
 • The Highlands Dialogue Winter/Spring Discussion Series continues with Infidel and Nomad by Hirs Ali. Handouts are available at the Hudson Library in the "Community Box" and 3 copies of Infidel and 1 copy of Nomad are available through the Fontana Regional Library.

## Planning B. split 2-2 on charter change;

Includes detailed comment with recommendation

Only four of the seven members were in attendance at the January Planning Board meeting whose main purpose was to discuss the proposed amendments to the ordinance connected to the Town Charter defining the Council-Man-

ager form of government.

Though the Planning Board didn't request his presence, nor did the Town Board, according to Commissioner John Dotson, who was also at the meeting, Town Attorney Bill Coward was there to explain

the reason for the changes.

His presence changed the tenor of the meeting – members were not their normal "talkative" selves – but rather more guarded and care-

• See PLANNING BOARD page 13

## BOE braces for state shortfalls in 2011-'12

At the Jan. 24 Macon County School Board meeting Superintendent Dan Brigman prepared members for what will be a grueling budget process this year.

"This year we have some very tough decisions to make in our county and throughout the state," said Brigman.

In a Powerpoint presentation, entitled "Preparing for the 2011 NC General Assembly Session," he laid out the bare facts beginning with why school districts and counties across the state are facing a dire future.

**Budget Basics — Situation Analysis**

It's old news by now, but the state is in bad shape fiscally and the ramifications will be felt more this year than ever before:

NC budget shortfall of approximately \$3.7 billion for the 2011-12 fiscal year. The cause? The end of federal stabilization funds (ARRA); end of some state taxes; end of non-recurring cuts; Economic recovery continues to be slow; the loss of Federal ARRA funds totally \$1.6 billion; the taxes set to expire June 30,

• See BOE page 7

## Girls basketball in action



Highlands Girls beat it out on the courts. This starts the game at Swain. Highlands won.  
 Photo by Stephanie McCall

## Fire Dept. hiring full-time employee

A combination of increased calls and the downturn in the economy has the Highlands Fire & Rescue Department looking to employ another officer rather than just relying on volunteers.

At the Jan. 19 Town Board meeting, Fire Chief James Manley told the board the department needs another full-time employee to both help with paperwork as it

• See FIRE DEPT. page 7

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## Most 'Parking Study' projects set for 2011-'12

At a worksession last Wednesday, for FY 2011-2012 budget purposes, the Town Board finalized what projects it would implement from the parking study.

The parking study suggestions were forwarded to the Planning Board as well as to the Main Street Program's Design Group and were then considered by the Town Board.

Since most project require money, they won't be implemented until the next year budget cycle.

Wayfinding signs were the first item on the list and though Town Manager Jim Fatland suggested hiring a graphic artist and allocating \$3,000 now to begin work, Commissioners Amy Patterson and John Dotson suggested waiting until after April 30, the date the new flag design will be picked, before spending any money.

The board said the Main Street Project Design group could work on verbiage, size of signs, colors, etc., but to wait on everything else. Placement for signage was already determined in the parking study.

Much talk centered around the trees on Main Street leaning toward using trees more natural to the area

• See PARKING STUDY page 7



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# • THE PLATEAU'S POSITION •

## • FORUM •

### Citizens: It's time to speak up



**Kim Lewicki**  
Publisher

**R**umblings from dissatisfied citizens still reeling from the Erika Olvera case (which is still active) and Joe Cooley's termination are beginning to gain in decimeters.

Due to the aforementioned events, which occurred during the first and third quarters of 2010, Highlands' town government has been cast in a shadow of suspicion – and that shadow is lengthening.

Now add the habit of putting completed issues back on the Town Board agenda if the vote doesn't go as *orchestrated* and the practice of filling positions with Town Manager Jim Fatland's past acquaintances, and you've got a sour mix of doing business at Town Hall.

Citizens' faith and trust has greatly diminished.

It's been more than two years since the town adopted the resolution to change its form of government from the hybrid Mayor-Council form to a hybrid Council-Manager form. Highlands fit the required criteria based on the number of services it provides its citizens and the number of people it employs – more than 25.

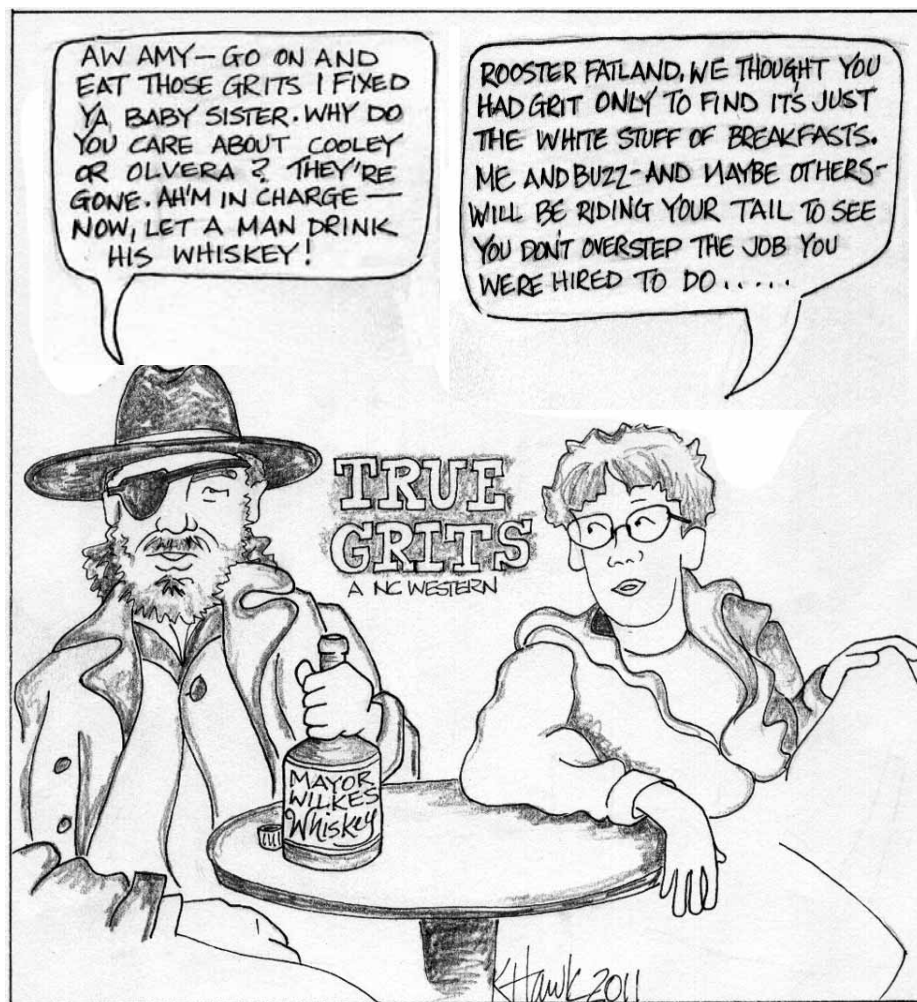
The issue was finalized with a unanimous vote at the Aug. 20, 2008 Town Board meeting to adopt a hybrid form of the Council-Manager government – with the understanding that the form could revert back in two years. By state statute, once a form of government is changed, it must stand for two years. That two years is up.

Under that hybrid form, due to the laws and legislation they must uphold, the board agreed the Police Chief and the Zoning/Watershed/Stormwater administrator should continue to answer to the Town Board – though their day-to-day business should come under the Town Manager.

It is that hybrid form that Mayor David Wilkes, Town Manager Fatland and three other commissioners – Gary Drake, Dennis DeWolf and Larry Rogers – want

•See FORUM page 15

## • 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.

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## • LETTERS •

### Regarding recent actions of Highlands Town Board ... and about 'over-alls'

Dear Editor,

I'd like to comment on two issues recently circulating in our newspapers. Actually, I'd like to comment on a lot more than two issues, but will restrain myself (this time).

First, Town Commissioners Patterson and Dotson seem to be the only two Town Board members who remember why they were elected; to represent the citizens and residents of this town, their best interests, and the best interests of the town itself.

If the Town Manager is to be given sole power in all the decisions of governance, why do we have or need a Town Board at all? And why would he or she be called Town Manger? The correct title would be Dictator, King or Autocrat. To me, the whole idea is absurd, not to mention threatening.

With all due respect to Commissioner DeWolf, his comments in favor of an all-powerful Town Manager were and are naïve and, in a way, sound more like passing the buck of what should be his responsibilities as an elected representative to someone else.

As a tax paying, voting, full-time resident of this town, I personally do not want decisions, both large and small, that will directly affect my life, my welfare, my freedom, my everything, in the hands of one person, especially someone I had absolutely no say in hiring in the first place.

One last point; if we let one person have control of town government, I fear that good and conscientious commissioners will resign and potential future ones will not seek the office. Why would they want to be mere window-dressing?

Second, in great fear and trepidation of stirring the pot, especially Ms. Audrey Keener's pot, I'd like to say this: I know the point of the recent bear and bear hunting letters was not at all about "fashion," but it is fashion (not bears and hunters) I'd like to address. And specifically, over-alls.

For 40 years, I lived and worked on a large piece of wooded property close to a town the size of a peanut in dirt poor, rural Mississippi. Everybody in the county wore over-alls and still do. Me included.

We lived (and hunted) in the words, we lived a rural life and over-alls were and are the most logical and sensible working

•See LETTERS page 6



## • OBITUARY •

### Bertha Fay Edwards Girard

Bertha Fay Edwards Girard, age 97, of Durham, NC, formerly of Brevard, NC, died Tuesday, January 18, 2011. She was born in Macon County, the daughter of the late Mack Daniel Edwards and Perdita Bolick Edwards. She was married to the late Harold Addison Girard. She was a member of Brevard United Methodist Church. She had worked in a paper mill for 45 years. She loved to garden (much more than house work) and was known for her excellent road work and bizarre method of performing same in the rain. She knew the importance of liming apple trees, loved to wear Pith helmet, rubber galoshes and culottes. She loved to travel and keep in touch with her many relatives, she loved music - thought the Beatles harmonized well. She loved the ocean, lakes, ponds, creeks and streams.

She is survived by two daughters, Virginia Johnson and husband Leon "John," and Jerry Taylor and husband Lee; two grandchildren, Dianna Lee Taylor and husband Sean Smith and Christopher Harold Taylor. She was preceded in death by a granddaughter, Sarah Elizabeth Johnson, who died in 1982. She was the last of the children of Perdita and Mack Daniel Edwards. She was preceded in death by her siblings, Dan, Virginia (Sis), Truie, Floyd, Troy, John, Eric, Cecil, Bruce, and Felicia.

Funeral services were held Saturday, January 22 in the Chapel of Bryant-Grant Funeral Home in Highlands, with Paul Edwards officiating. Burial was in Horsecove Cemetery. Pallbearers were Lee Taylor, Chris Taylor, Terry Edwards, Paul Edwards, Joel Waldon, and Sean Smith.

Memorials may be made to Hospice of Wake County, 250 Hospice Circle, Raleigh, NC 27607. Bryant-Grant Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements.

### Highlands Police Dept. recognized



At the Jan. 19, Town Board meeting, Mayor Pro Temp John Dotson presented Highlands Police Chief Bill Harrell a plaque from Triple AAA recognizing the work his department has done to make Highlands the number one "Traffic Safe" community for a town with less than 10,000 in population for the fourth year in a row.

At Wednesday nights Town Board meeting, Police Chief Harrell presented Officer Ronnie Castle with a framed certificate from the NC Department of Justice's Criminal Justice Education and Training Standards Commission. He exceeded requirements for the recognition by completing more than 720 training hours. Awards are based upon a formula which combines formal education, law enforcement training, and actual experience as a law enforcement officer.



Photos by Kim Lewicki

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...on this day from the History Guy

**Jan 27, 971**

The Chinese War Elephant Corps of the Southern Han is soundly defeated by crossbow fire from Song Dynasty troops. The use of elephants in war began to decline as a result.

Maybe you can, but I can't explain the loss by the elephant, I mean, I'd have a grave concern about a dust up with a pachyderm, but on the other Han, perhaps someone who's Chinese can.

Were they very disappointed, and did they become disoriented?

Would I be too far wrong to say victory was purchased for a Song?

It was obvious, even elementary, it was the beginning of the end of the Elephantry.

It's often true, you know, surprises often come with a bow.

## Wildlife Commission reaffirms its support for hunting with dogs

Last week, the Wildlife Resources Commission unanimously adopted a resolution reaffirming its longstanding support for hunting with the use of dogs.

"We support the use of dogs in hunting in North Carolina where such hunting is consistent with the sound conservation of our state's treasured wildlife resources and not contrary to the protection of the private property rights of its citizens, said Gordon Myers, executive director of the Commission. "Hunting with dogs is a part of a centuries old tradition in North Carolina and the members of the Wildlife Resources Commission determined that it was important to clarify their position regarding those practices."

The partnership of hunters and hunting dogs, commissioners affirmed, has long been a central thread of North Carolina hunting culture, and thousands of hunters, young and old, use dogs to pursue grouse and quail, waterfowl and woodcock, deer and bear, rabbits and squirrels, foxes and bobcats, and raccoons and opossums.

For more information on hunting in North Carolina visit [www.ncwildlife.org](http://www.ncwildlife.org).

## • LAUGHING AT LIFE •

### Where do you stick your tongue during winter?

I spoke with a true Highlander yesterday who told me a bear that frequents his property showed up the other day carrying a Miami Heat flag, wearing an overcoat, goulashes and a hat. The bear dropped by to wave goodbye before heading for Florida to avoid the cold and hunters.

Way back when Highlands got slammed with its first bad cold front and it was snowing sideways with 35 mph winds and 13 degrees, I began to worry. Did I open that water valve in the back bathroom or not? Last summer I was forced to put on a new roof so this year I'll worry about water trapped in my pipes and not water leaking into my home. Pipes are a better worry.

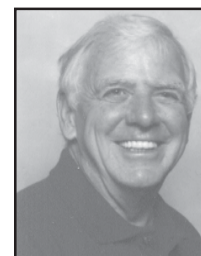
As predicted by those weirdo weather gurus who study squiggly line patterns and the sex life of certain caterpillars to forecast weather, it's another bitter, bitter winter. Two bitters is bad cold, three bitters is bad, bad cold. Even Floridiots are buying space heaters from Home Depot to stay warm. Hey, for nine bucks, how can ya go wrong?

I use the weather stone for predictions. When it's white, it's snowing, when it's wet, it's raining and if it sticks to your hand, it's below zero. This system works well and it's cheap. I do cheap.

And where is Al Gore now that we need him. I could use another pep talk about how this planet is heating up so fast that Florida will be under water soon. Please, Al, lie to us some more, especially now that we could use you. Even Al had to turn off his pool heater 'cause it couldn't keep up with all this cold. Ask me if I'm feeling sorry for him. (Ha)

Moving on, the one thing I envy Highlanders for is the many wonderful places they have to stick their tongues during winter. Back when I lived in Louisville, KY, I stuck my tongue in some awesome places. Once, on a field trip to Washington, DC, I got to stick my tongue to the door handles of the Supreme Court. I felt honored. Hey, I was president of a tongue-sticking club and my job was to find frozen metal at famous places and inform team members. Could I make this up? I know, I know, you hope so.

Does anyone remember when a whole different set of crackpots predicted



**Fred Wooldridge**

**Feedback is encouraged!**  
email: [askfredanything@aol.com](mailto:askfredanything@aol.com)

the next Ice Age was coming soon? Sooner or later, a crackpot will guess right and become a world renowned genius. I hope it's not Al Gore 'cause he's such a dork. Like with the new post office, global warming is about money and not about truth. I wish folks weren't so gullible.

Kim and Jim Lewicki sent me video of the Highlands' dancers from the Christmas parade. Thanks!

While most would be watching those dancers, I was awestruck there were no leaves on the hardwoods....ugly, ugly, ugly. Someone should videotape the entire parade from start to finish and sell it to us Floridiots who could download it for a price. Hey, I'd pay five bucks to see the whole thing. Well....maybe two.

Moving on to really important stuff, I've known a lot of winos and bums in my other life as a cop. Some people lovingly call them homeless. Here's the difference. The homeless don't have alcohol on their breath. Would you believe I've never met a homeless person? Well, maybe two.

A couple of times I had to go to Brooklyn to buy heroin and this is what I've learned from the winos and bums living on those cold streets. Write this down.

If your house heat is turned up all the way and you're still shivering, here's a cheap solution. Remember, I do cheap. First, get naked (that's the fun part) and then take old newspapers you've accumulated and wrap your body, attaching it with tape or string. If you use old Highlands' Newspapers, be careful where you place my picture 'cause I'm very sensitive. Now put your clothes on and "Ta Da" you can turn down the heat and be comfortable.

At night, you can also pin old magazines between two layers of blankets on your bed and get rid of your blanket heater. Remember, you read it first in the totally free, take no prisoners, Highlands' Newspaper.

PS - Use rubbing alcohol to clean the newsprint off your privates.

• Read Fred's column on-line all winter at [www.highlandsinfo.com](http://www.highlandsinfo.com), click on LOCAL NEWS

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## • THE VIEW FROM HERE •

### Keep unused drugs; but just for an emergency and just for personal use

Despite what the drug companies and family doctors say, I think it's a good idea to keep unused prescription drugs around the house.

Let's be honest; not every patient is going to take every single dose prescribed. I'm not sure I ever completed a prescription. Some prescriptions are intended to be taken but only as needed. That's the case with anti-inflammatory medicines and narcotic pain. The intention is that a patient takes them only as long as needed. The only question is what to do with the left overs?

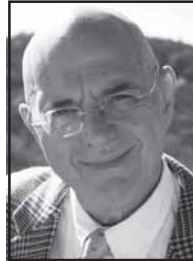
The general suggestion among doctors and drug companies is to dispose of any unused medicine. It's impossible to return them to the drug store with an explanation, "Sorry, Frank won't be needing these." No. You bought 'em. You own 'em. Sure you can follow directions and flush them down the toilet. It doesn't come out of the doctor's pocket. And unless you're raising gold fish in the septic tank, the drugs won't cause any harm down there.

There is another option; save them. Let's say you're a runner, and as is the case with most runners, you overdo it from time to time. You went to your doctor, who prescribed Celebrex. You paid about a dollar per capsule and have 10 left over. Your earlier injury wasn't the first and probably won't be the last. When you suffer a similar injury, do you want to wait for an appointment, pay for an office visit, and go the pharmacy, for Celebrex?

A few months earlier, you had flushed perfectly good Celebrex down the toilet. It's six o'clock at night. Your ankle is throbbing and swelling like a grapefruit, and all you have is aspirin. It's even more important to save narcotic pain medicine, because if you happen to experience a second injury or a flare up of gout, and you threw out the Percocet from your appendectomy, you are going to hate yourself long before dawn.

When I went down on my mountain bike and struck a large rock with my thigh, I spent several sleepless nights before asking a colleague for a prescription. He wrote a prescription for two narcotics, a mild one and a more powerful option for pain unrelieved by the first. I took one Demerol tablet that night, and slept for the first time in a week. I didn't need a second one, but the one I took convinced me to keep the others intact for future needs.

Giving left over pills to your neighbor is a little less clear. It could be construed as practicing medicine without a license, or if any money changes hands, as narcotic traf-



**Dr. Henry Salzarulo**

**Feedback is encouraged.  
email:**

**hsalzarulo@aol.com**

ficking. It's best to avoid the practice. Of course, if your best friend calls and tells you she takes Lortab for her migraines, and she's having one and she's out of medicine, and you have a few left over from your root canal, sharing like the humanitarian thing to do.

On the other hand, narcotic abuse is a terrible problem in the United States. We all know that there are patients who feign severe pain in an attempt to secure narcotic medicines, either to satisfy their own addiction or who resale

them with a 1000% mark up. The mistake is thinking the modest supply you put away in case of emergency is going to end up on the street.

I've tried to assuage the guilt you may feel for hoarding a few drugs. If it seems wrong, if you have small children, or if your husband's nephew broke in last summer looking for drugs, the convenience of immediate relief may not justify the risk.

### TOWN BOARD MEETING AGENDA

**COMMUNITY BUILDING  
WEDNESDAY, FEB. 2  
7PM**

1. Call to order Mayor David Wilkes
2. Public Comments
3. Approve agenda
4. Approve Minutes of Meeting
5. Reports
  - A. Mayor
  - B. Commissioners
  - C. Committees
  - D. Town Manager
7. Public Hearing: Revision to Town Ordinances for Consistency with Town Charter Amendment for Council-Manager Form of Government
8. Consider Approval for Drug Free Policy
9. Audit Contract for FY Ending June 30, 2011
10. FY 11 Budget Amendment
11. Closed Session: Personnel
12. Adjourn

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... LETTERS continued from page 2

clothes. I still wear over-alls, even in Highlands, even in so-called "downtown" Highlands.

The only reason I bring this up is because I don't want anyone, Ms. Keener included, to accuse me to my face or behind my back of being a "Highlands Wannabee." I am not and I don't wannabee.

Nor will I poke my non-local nose into anyone's bear hunting experience. In return, please don't sneer at me if you see me in the grocery or post office or on the street in my over-alls. I come by them legitimately and they are not a costume.

If I am working outdoors in over-alls, but need to quickly go to town for something, I am not going to change my clothes into something more "presentable" for the sake of appearances. First, that would be hypocritical and second, I am not embarrassed by my over-alls, or anyone else's.

And last but definitely not least, please don't accuse me of missing the point of the subject of the bear letters. I did not. It's just not the point I am addressing, and have no desire nor intention of becoming entan-

gled in that controversy. There are too many other controversies I prefer.

Alice Nelson  
Highlands

The facts about  
the Blue Valley  
'Wilderness'  
designation

Dear Editor,

Blue Valley, also known as Overflow Creek WSA (wilderness study area), is being considered for an important National legislative change the likes of which we have not seen since 1987 when it was first designated by Congress and approved by the Forest Service.

It currently is managed as a wilderness area even though it could change at any time at the discretion of the Forest Service especially when leaned on by special inter-

est. (Some of you may remember Rep. Charles Taylor and his desire for logging the area.) So what's the big deal? No one seems interested in logging or disturbing this area so why does it need action now? Why not leave well enough alone?

As the daughter of a forester and avid backpacker/hiker of this area I will try to convey the answers to these and other questions that have come up about this area.

Blue Valley has approximately 6,000 acres and provides clean water as the mother of the headwaters of the Chattooga and 3,509 acres are roadless. Only 315 acres of old growth forest remains due to logging in the area in times past. Some of you may think that's plenty and how much forest do we need really? To answer this briefly you can look down at this area from the NC 106 pullout. I urge you all to take a look and pause for thought not just take a picture.

While you peer into this "wild land" so close to civilization and think about the biodiversity it contains; try to picture ancestors who lived here before you simply and in tandem with this piece of the woods, and then try to visualize what it might look like with gapping areas where no trees are standing and little to thrive on the destruction.

Oh it will come back as any wound will heal, but it will never be quite the same. It will not look or operate just as it was before the infliction and no human or animal will be able to live on the desecrated area for some time. The habitants of the area will move to the areas not affected and will pressure that area and deplete it faster causing population to diminish or vanish.

In the west, where more acreage has been protected and earlier, this is less visible and recuperation speedier but in the east we have less to work with and more populous thus putting pressure on what we do have so ANY disturbance to the balance has greater affect to all.

So isn't there enough protected forest? The answer is NO not if you truly want to maintain its wild balanced state. As it stands now, many can argue it is minimal. Mess with any of it and it will be changed for a long time. \

Now is the time to protect this area under the guidelines set forth by the Congress. The best protection is under the designation of "Wilderness Area" period. This designation in the east of the US allows for all areas of use prior to designation be "grandfathered in" except for off-road vehicles and mountain bikes. Chainsaws will also be forbidden except to maintain and manage the campsites. The roads, campsites, and the use of motorized vehicles on these roads are allowed and all activities that people have enjoyed will continue.

Rep. Heath Shuler is ready to take this area and an area similar located in Buncombe County to the floor to be protected forever. It will remain intact for not just one generation but many more.

It's a rare opportunity politically and the Macon County Commissioners can

move this forward or walk away. Unfortunately, they have for a year been using the bait and switch game to avoid making this very important decision. Thanks to one commissioner, Brian McClellan, who has been steadfast on his view that this area stay protected for economical as well as environmental reasons we will bring this forward for a vote at the Tuesday, Feb. 8 Macon County Commission meeting.

I urge all Macon County citizens to write or call each commissioner and let them know their thoughts about Blue Valley's future as we know it.

Here are the commissioners contact data:

- Brian McClellan, Chairman  
Representing District I  
8 Mount Lori • Highlands, NC 28741  
787-2131 Home • (828) 342-0379 Cell  
Ron Haven, Representing District II  
17 W. Palmer Street • Franklin, NC 28734  
(828) 369-8086  
Robert (Bobby) Koppers, Representing District III • Vice Chairman  
1652 Rose Creek Road • Franklin, NC 28734  
(828) 524-1954  
Mr. Kevin Corbin, Representing District II  
P.O. Box 7588 • Franklin, NC 28744  
(828) 524-7799  
Ronnie Beale, Representing District II  
177 Sloan Road • Franklin, NC 28734  
369-5044 Office • 524-4168 Home  
Lee Hodges  
Highlands/Macon County Resident

Tucson Tragedy: A  
Teachable Time

Dear Editor,

The adage "When all is said and done, more is said than done" does not apply in the recent Tucson event. Much, much more needs to be said. The American public's awareness, understanding, and information regarding mental illness is woefully lacking and outdated.

Let's look at a few facts regarding mental illness.

Mental illness is a brain disorder. Compare it to diabetes, an endocrine system disorder; or asthma, a respiratory system disorder. Like others, it is a treatable disorder.

Mental illness affects one in five families.

Mental illness most frequently strikes between ages 18-22.

The incidence of violence among the mentally ill is no higher than the general population. It is negligible among those receiving treatment.

Seeking treatment or receiving treatment for a mental illness should not be a CEM (Career Ending Move). Pilots taking anti-depressants are now allowed to fly.

Marijuana is not an innocuous substance. It produces permanent changes in the brain and can be a precipitating factor

• See LETTERS page 13

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Stylist: Christa Hooper,  
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## ... PARKING STUDY continued from page 1

than those already on Main Street; and a tree that a UPS truck could pass underneath.

The planters to house the trees were also discussed – the estimated cost for 11 planters strategically placed at the tip of certain parking spots to offset ones already in place – is \$55,000. That cost includes a six-inch high concrete curb and gutter and grates around the tree trunks. The planters will not be in lieu of any parking spaces.

Commissioners agreed to a mid-block crosswalk, possibly in the vicinity of the town-owned property in front of the old Galax Theater, and extending the crosswalk directly across the street from that point. This was considered a good idea because the crosswalk could direct visitors to the public bathrooms proposed in Town Square, a short distance away.

Considered a safety issue, commissioners hope the crosswalk will entice people to cross the street at that point there rather than “every which way” as they do now. They acknowledged this concept could cause problems because it’s likely up to four parking places could be lost – though that number could be less.

Commissioner Gary Drake wanted everyone to know that he was not for the idea solely because of the potential parking space loss.

“I’m for the trees and planters but not the mid-block crosswalk,” he said. “The retail value of a parking space is \$120,000 a year.”

Commissioner Dotson said the mer-

## ... BOE from page 1

2011 which equal \$1.3 billion; budget non-recurring cuts of \$300 million; the required funding for state health plans and state retirement plans totaling \$500 million – all of which means makes for a 2011-12 deficit of \$3.7 billion

“For the third year in a row, public school budgets have been cut but given the current state of affairs, from the state’s point of view, with approximately 40% of the state’s overall budget tied up in public schools, it’s tough to reach spending cut targets without impact to public schools,” said Brigman.

### Basic Facts

State funds total about \$7.2 billion of public school funding — about 65% of the money schools spend to operate each year.

The rest of the money school systems rely on to operate come from their respective counties called Local Funds which typically make up 25% for a school system’s budget. Another 10% comes from the Federal government.

Recently Governor Bev Purdue made two announcements: — there will be no extension of temporary taxes will be in the Governor’s budget; and all state agencies are to submit plans for 5, 10 and 15% cuts

So what does that mean for K-12 education in North Carolina in terms of dollars cut? A 5% cut would equal \$394,485,753; a

•See BOE page 16

chants who will likely complain are the ones directly in front of the crosswalk, but that also means pedestrians will enter and leave the crosswalk directly in front of their stores, which could be a good thing.

Commissioners also discussed making Spring Street between Fourth and Fifth a one-way street and building a curb, gutter and sidewalk with parking along one side of the street.

The board didn’t decide which direction to make the street – some people want it to

## ...FIRE DEPT. continued from page 1

pursues a lower insurance rating for the entire fire district as well as help respond to fire and rescue calls.

Including all calls – Fire & Related and Rescue & First Responder — there was an increase in 91 calls in 2010 over 2009; 65 more fire and related calls and 26 more rescue and first-responder calls.

Fire related calls inside the town limits increased by 37%; 63% outside the town limits. Estimated fire loss inside the town limits was zero; estimated fire loss outside the town limits was \$4.7 million.

Rescue and First Responder calls inside the town limits increased 35%; 65% outside the town limits.

“With the economy this past year, and jobs hard to come by, it’s been hard to ask our volunteers to come out on all the calls,” said Chief Manley. “During the day 10 might come and at night 18 might come.” There are 28 members, and though that represents an increase over last year, the department is still two members short of its 30-member goal.

Manley said Standard Operating Procedure requires that two fireman be on a truck before rolling to a call. Another full-time employee would enable the two men at the

go the same direction as Church Street; others believe two adjacent one-way streets should be counterflow to each other.

Commissioner Dennis DeWolf said he’s heard that people want it to be a counterflow situation. They decided a decision on the direction could be taken up at a later date. The project will cost \$110,000. Some say it shouldn’t happen unless a round-about is installed at NC 28 and S. 4<sup>th</sup> Street.

A node of some kind was also discussed at Fourth and Main at the proposed T-Shirt Factory location.

station to handle the call and then if volunteers are needed, they can be called.

The person will be needed 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday; must have five years experience with the department, have a CDL license and be first-responder certified.

All the money spent at the fire department comes solely from the fire tax whose rate is determined by the department and OK’d by the Town Board before it is sent to the Macon County Fire Commission’s director Warren Cabe who must then get the final OK from the county commission each year.

The amount allocated Highlands for FY 2010-2011 is \$339,880.

The amount is derived from the fire tax rate of .009, which is based on the \$100 of assessed valuation of taxable property in the Highlands Fire District which was \$3,845,974,224 in 2009.

Since the fire department buildings are owned by the town and since the town carries workmen’s compensation insurance on all the firefighters (volunteers and employees) as well as health insurance for the current full-time employee, the department

“We need to beautify that intersection,” said Patterson. “There is a lot of wasted space there, too, and it might be where we can gain a parking place or two, as well to make up for any loss due to a crosswalk.”

Commissioners agreed a professional street-scape engineer might be needed to help with that particular intersection.

The two items that could be completed right away were a painted sidewalk along the street-side edge of the Mountain Fresh parking lot and signage requiring right turns only onto to Main Street from Third Street.

– Kim Lewicki

keeps the town abreast of its plans.

The fire department reimburses the town for all workmen’s compensation expenses from the fire tax money.

Manley said the fire tax will not be raised to pay for the position. “We can afford this with the tax money we now get,” he said.

Due to its response time, and the mutual aid it gets from the Cashiers-Glenville, Sato-lah and Scaly Mountain fire departments, Highlands has a rating of a “5” within the town limits and a rating of a “9” outside the town limits. Response time will also improve with the additional fireman. Response time will also improve with the additional fireman.

Manley said it’s likely those ratings will come down next year, which means lower insurance premiums, but it takes a lot of fact-checking and paperwork which needs to be sent to the state.

“The new firefighter position is needed to assist in getting a better rating from the state as well as serving as additional personnel for the Fire Department.”

The department wants to fill the position right away.

– Kim Lewicki

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## • COACH'S CORNER •

### National Football League is truly National

Ask any network executive what the most popular and lucrative sport in the nation is and the answer will be, without question, the National Football League. Despite the increasing ticket prices and bad economy, the NFL has been more popular than ever this year and has been a

major cash cow for network and satellite television.

This weekend's fantastic pair of games certainly did nothing to change the perception that the NFL is at the top of the sporting world right now, and as we prepare for a Super Bowl featuring two of the most storied franchises in league history, let's look at some of the reasons for the NFL's place at the top.

First and foremost, the NFL is hugely popular right now thanks to the tremendous amount of parity that exists in the league. Whereas Major League Baseball is primarily about the New York Yankees and the Boston Red Sox, the National Football League has seen plenty of change at the top.

In the past 10 years alone there have been 10 different representatives from the NFC in the Super Bowl. Even perennial also-ran franchises such as the Arizona Cardinals and the beloved New Orleans Saints have obtained NFC Championships during this time period while MLB franchises



**Ryan Potts**  
tryanpotts@hotmail.com

such as the Pittsburgh Pirates and Kansas City Royals have wallowed in misery. This phenomenon is primarily due to the salary cap, which allows teams to rebuild much faster than in baseball and even the NBA.

Another factor helping with parity in the NFL is the amount of talent available in the draft each

year and franchises that can discover "diamonds in the rough." For example, the Saints Super Bowl run was fueled not only by Drew Brees and Reggie Bush, but also 7<sup>th</sup> round WR Marques Colston, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> round offensive linemen Carl Nicks and Jahri Evans, an undrafted free agent lineman in Anthony Hargrove and a rookie kicker in Garrett Hartley. These types of signings turned a franchise around in a hurry in a way that does not occur often in other leagues.

The other primary reason for the NFL's success may seem like the opposite of parity, but while the NFC has shown tremendous parity, the AFC has been dominated in

recent years by three franchises that have created a standard for consistent greatness.

The New England Patriots, Pittsburgh Steelers and Indianapolis Colts have provided consistency in the league and have been successful enough to provide a "favorite" for each year. Every great underdog story has its superpower that every team is gunning for, and the Patriots, Steelers and Colts have provided that throughout the past ten years. These three great teams have won enough to provide the challenge, but they have also lost enough to keep things interesting and to promote the image of parity that the league has been identified with in recent years.

In closing, I find it simply amazing that a franchise with the storied history of Green Bay will have had 15 years since its' last Super Bowl appearance. In ten days they will face the Pittsburgh Steelers, winners of two Super Bowls since 2005 and the most successful franchise in the NFL since the merger. At this point I don't want to fancy a guess as to who will win, but I know this much...the world will tune in to find out.

## • HIGHLANDS SCHOOL BASKETBALL •

### Lady Highlanders win two

**By Ryan Potts**

The Highlands Lady Highlanders defeated Swain County and Hayesville this weekend before dropping a hard-fought conference matchup to Hiwassee Dam on Tuesday.

Friday night, Highlands traveled to Bryson City to face Swain County and came away with a 49-41 victory. Emily Munger led the Lady Highlanders with 17 points and Taylor Buras added 12.

Saturday night, the Lady Highlanders hosted Hayesville and built an early lead that they would never relinquish. Marlee McCall scored 17 for Highlands, and Munger and Buras added 17 and 11 respectively.

Tuesday night Highlands faced archrival Hiwassee Dam in a huge conference showdown. While the Lady Highlanders built a lead of 8 points on several occasions, the hot shooting of the Lady Eagles was able to counter each Highlands run. Late in the game the Lady Eagles hit several three pointers to finish up a 56-48 final score.

Hiwassee Dam finished the game hitting 10 three pointers. Emily Munger scored 29 for Highlands and Courtney

Rogers scored 11.

The Highlander boys participated in a pair of thrilling games over the weekend, the first coming in Bryson City as the Highlanders trailed by as many as 14 points and by 5 points with just 40 seconds to play. However, 5 straight points from Josh Delacruz set the stage for Sophomore Taylor Osteen, who managed to rebound his own miss and score at the buzzer to give Highlands a 59-58 victory. Delacruz led Highlands with 19 points.

On Saturday, Highlands found themselves on the other side of the coin, as they led throughout the game against a tough Hayesville team but lost on a shot at the buzzer when a loose ball found its way into the hands of a Yellow Jacket player. Delacruz led Highlands with 15 in the 42-40 loss.

Tuesday, Highlands hosted conference foe Hiwassee Dam and played well early, trailing 13-11 at the end of the first quarter. However, a 4-point second quarter doomed the Highlanders, as they failed to score consistently in a 58-39 defeat. Delacruz scored 12 and Michael Shearl added 11 in the defeat.



Marlee McCall at Hayesville.

Photo by Noel Atherton

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## • HEALTH MATTERS •

### Cosmetic problems of the eyelids

**By Dr. Robert Buchanan**  
Center for Plastic Surgery

**C**osmetic remodeling and rejuvenation of the eyelids has changed dramatically in the last few years as we have better defined the anatomy of the area, the forces on these and how changes occur over time. This has allowed us to develop better techniques that provide results that are more natural.

Both aging and inheritance cause cosmetic problems of the eyelids. Those due to aging are, by far, the most common. They result from changes in both the lids themselves and the surrounding tissues. Unfortunately, until very recently, all modification of this area was to treat the external appearance, not to correct the cause, return the tissues to their natural positions, or provide support against further change.

Direct aging of the eyelids results in loose, crinkly skin with all the other signs of aging that the skin in general exhibits. All the other changes are due to aging of the surrounding structures. Several things determine the eventual appearance. The most obvious is gravity. It, and the muscles surrounding and within the lids, constantly pull on the lids and the tissues around the eyes. How these respond depends on the strength of the support structures and their attachments.

The two muscles most responsible for the appearance around the eyelids are the same ones that make us look angry and/or tired. They cause lines between the brows and in the medial lid area and, because of deep attachments medially, the brow to fall more laterally. This worsens the wrinkled appearance laterally and pushes the brow into the upper lid, causing loss of youthful definition of the area.

As gravity pulls on the lower lids, ligaments to the underlying bone cause bulging of the orbital tissue, including fat, and flattening of the cheek.

The fat, and even the bone of the orbit, atrophy with age. This adds to the cosmetic deformity. Previous techniques to rejuvenate the eye removed the fat that appeared to be

bulging. Since that was not really the problem, and the residual fat and other tissues continued to atrophy, the eye eventually looked sunken and hollow.

The last change of aging of the lids is stretch of the tendon that attaches the lateral corner of the lids to the bone. This causes the eye to appear less wide and rounder.

To reverse these changes, we first look at what has caused your problem. If the brow is the cause of your upper lid problems, then a brow lift may be all that is needed. If there is still too much skin in the upper lid, then removal of the excess usu-

ally solves the problem. Previously, when we avoided the brow and just removed skin and fat, we actually made the problem worse, since removing enough skin to make a difference, actually pulled the brow down further.

Instead of removing fat as we did until just a few years ago, I use the fat to fill areas of tissue loss. In the lower eyelids, instead of simply removing what appeared to be excess skin from below the lids, I now remove it mainly beside the eye after elevating the eyelid and the entire cheek. This tissue is stabilized to the bone to keep it from falling again. The corner of the eye is also resuspended to bone in its normal position. This not only returns the youthful appearance to the eye, but is safer than the older procedures.

Congenital problems are due mainly to abnormalities in the amount of fat in the lids or the way the upper lid muscle attaches to the skin. Fat can be either too plentiful or lacking. Lack of proper muscle attachment causes droop of the lid or an exaggerated oriental appearance. The problem determines the correction.

Eyelid rejuvenation is one of the most

common procedures Dr. Buchanan does. Cosmetic consultations are complementary at the Center for Plastic Surgery in Highlands. To learn more visit

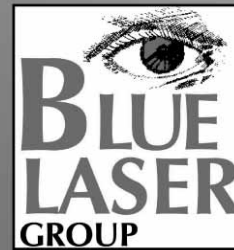
[www.PlasticSurgeryToday.com](http://www.PlasticSurgeryToday.com), or [www.TodaysFacelift.com](http://www.TodaysFacelift.com).

You can contact Dr. Buchanan at 828-526-3783.



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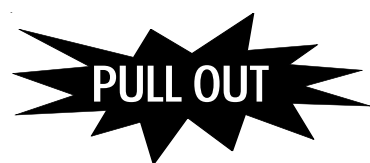
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# On going and Upcoming Events

## Ongoing

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

## Mon. & Thurs.

• On the Mat Yoga at the Episcopal Church of the Incarnation on Main Street. Upper Level Jones Hall. Mon., and Thurs. at 10:45 a.m. Bring your mat. 828-482-2128. \$10/hour. (12/31)

## 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.

## Mondays

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

Church at Fifth and Main streets.

## Tuesdays

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

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

## Tues. & Thurs.

• Study Hall at the Literacy Council of Highlands in the Peggy Crosby Center from 3 to 5 p.m. Come do your homework, projects use the resources on site and get help from a tutor. For more information, contact Faviola Olvera at (828) 526-0925.

## Wednesdays

• The Highlands Mountaintop Rotary meets at 7:30 a.m. in the dining room at the Highlands-Cashiers Hospital. Enter the hospital in the main or emergency entrance and follow the signs downstairs. Visitors

are welcome. Meetings end at 8:30 a.m.

• 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. Call 828-524-6777 or 706-746-9964.

## Thursdays

• Al-Anon meeting, noon at the Episcopal Church on Main and Fifth streets.

## Every Third Saturday

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

## Saturdays

• At Paoletti's Restaurant, intimate Wine Tasting at the bar at 1 p.m. Great inexpensive wines from around the world, available for retail sales daily. Cheese and Crackers are served. Cost: \$20 per person refundable with case purchase.

• At Cyprus International Restaurant, live music beginning at 9 p.m. No cover.

## Fri. & Sat., Jan. 28-29

• At The Bascom, Photography for Lovers with Greg Newington. for more information, call 526-4949.

## Saturday, Jan. 29

• The Nantahala Hiking Club will take a moderate 5-mile hike to Siler Bald via the old Appalachian Trail, returning on the new AT at Big Stamp with some wandering around by the shelter and the road to the crest. Meet in Franklin at Westgate Plaza, opposite Burger King, at 10:00 a.m.; Drive 24 miles round trip. Bring water, lunch, wear sturdy shoes. Call leader Gail Lehman at 524-5298 for reservations. Visitors are welcome, but no pets please.

• Otto Community Blood Drive at the Otto Community Center from 8 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Call Phyllis Castle at 524-9307 to make your donation appointment. Walk-ins welcome, however. Bring photo ID. All presenting donors will be automatically entered into a drawing for a chance to win one of three, three-night oceanfront vacation rentals at The Islander Suites on Emerald Isle!

## Sunday, Jan. 30

• The Nantahala Hiking Club will take an easy 1.5 mile hike on the Little Tennessee River Greenway in Franklin. Meet at Macon Co. Library at 2 PM. Bring water, a snack if you wish; wear sturdy shoes. Call leader Call Kay Coriell at 369-6820 for reservations. Visitors and children ten or older are welcome but no pets please.

## Monday, Jan. 31

• "Beyond the Birds and Bees" at Mountain View Intermediate School Media Center. Have you and your children had "The Talk?" Let Dr. Douglas Egge of Pediatric Associates of Franklin, help! Girls' Program 6-7:30 p.m. Boys Program 7:45-9 p.m. Registration is required as space is limited. Call 524-3314.

Tuesday, Feb 1

• The Highlands Dialogue Winter/Spring Discussion Series continues with Infidel and Nomad by Hirsi Ali. Handouts are available at the Hudson Library in the "Community Box" and 3 copies of Infidel and 1 copy of Nomad are available through the Fontana Regional Library. Isobel Allen will coordinate the discussion. The Highlands Dialogue's Tuesday discussions are held at the Civic Center from 10-11:30 a.m. For more information about the Highlands Dialogue or any of our upcoming discussions, please e-mail John Gaston johngaston@aol.com or Karen Hawk hwkncrw@earthlink.net.

## Friday, Feb. 4

• American Red Cross Blood Drive at Lowe's of Franklin, Georgia Highway, Franklin, 9:30 am to 2 pm. Please call 349-4654 for more information or to schedule an appointment. Walk-Ins Welcome, appointments preferred! Donors are encouraged to donate as soon as weather and travel conditions permit. There is a special need for type O and type B blood donors. All presenting donors have a chance to win one of two pairs of Delta Air Lines tickets!

## Sunday, Feb. 6

• The Nantahala Hiking Club will take an easy 1-mile hike in Black Rock Mt. State Park in GA on an easy loop trail around Taylor Lake plus a visit to the overlook above Clayton. Bring water, a snack if you wish; wear sturdy shoes. Meet at Smoky Mountains Visitors' Center in Otto at 2 pm; drive 26 miles round trip. Call leader Kay Coriell at 369-6820 for reservations or alternate meeting place if coming from Highlands, Cashiers, or Clayton. Visitors and children ten or older are welcome but no pets please.

## Tuesday, Feb 8

• At The Highlands Dialogue's Tuesday discussion, Karen Hawk: "The Burqa: Anti Slavery or Pro-Choice?" article from Sept/Oct 2010 The Humanist — handout. Handouts will be available at the meeting previous to the discussion (if not sooner) and at the Hudson Library in the Community Box available during library hours. The Highlands Dialogue's Tuesday discussions are held at the Civic Center from 10-11:30 a.m. For more information about the Highlands Dialogue or any of our upcoming discussions, please e-mail John Gaston johngaston@aol.com or Karen Hawk hwkncrw@earthlink.net.

## Friday, Feb. 11

• Valentine's Dinner and Dance, 6-9 p.m. at Highlands Country Club's Hudson House. Line Dance and Swing Dance Lessons after dinner. All ages welcome. Buy tickets early or buy that night! Children \$5, Adults \$10. Call 787-1958 for info.

## Saturday, Feb. 12

• The Nantahala Hiking Club will take a moderate 4.6 mile hike, with an elevation change of 1,000 feet, on the Appalachian Trail from Long Branch to Glassmine Gap to Rock Gap in the Standing Indian Area. Meet at Westgate Plaza in Franklin (opposite Burger King) at 10AM; drive 25 miles round trip. Bring water, lunch; wear sturdy shoes. Call leaders Bill & Sharon Van Horn at 369-1983 for reservations. Visitors are welcome but no pets please.

## Feb. 19-April 2

• At The Bascom, view Regional Art Leagues annual exhibition. Call 526-4949 for more information.

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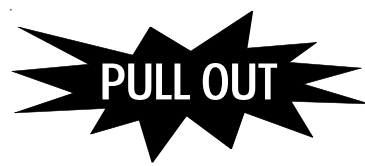
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# On going and Upcoming Events

## Saturday, Feb. 19

• Chess and Checkers Challenge at the Rec Park 1-4 p.m. Come support Highlands School's 5th Grade Class. The class is earning money for its annual 5th grade trip to Charleston, SC. "Can you beat a 5th grader?" Sign up early to reserve your game! \$20 entree fee (plus \$5 if you lose!) Call 787-1958 for info.

• Birdhouse Auction and Final Bidding/Silent Auction at the Rec Park. Personally designed and decorated, these bird houses are on display now at local banks. Bid now at silent auctions.

## Sunday, Feb. 20

• At the Episcopal Church, "Bach's Well-Tempered Clavier, BK1 (1-12)" at 2 p.m. featuring pianist Robert Henry. Donations accepted.

• The Nantahala Hiking Club will take an easy 1.2 mile hike on Lakeside Dr. walking trail in Franklin. Meet at Macon Co. Health Center on Lakeside Dr. at 2 pm. No driving from here. Bring water, a snack if you wish; wear sturdy shoes. Call leader Kay Coriell at 369-6820 for reservations. Visitors and children ten and older are welcome but no pets please.

## Tuesday, Feb 22

• At The Highlands Dialogue's Tuesday discussion, Peter Ray: Doonesbury: A 40 Year Retrospective. Handouts will be available at the meeting previous to the discussion (if not sooner) and at the Hudson Library in the Community Box available during library hours. The Highlands Dialogue's Tuesday discussions are held at the Civic Center from 10-11:30 a.m. For more information about the Highlands Dialogue or any of our upcoming discussions, please e-mail John Gaston johngaston@aol.com or Karen Hawk hwkncrw@earthlink.net.

## Thurs.-Sun, Feb. 24-27

• The Highlands-Cashiers Players present "You Know I Can't Hear You When The Water's Running," at the Martin-Lipscomb Performing Arts Center at 7:30 p.m. and 2:30 on Sunday.

## Sat., Feb. 26

• At The Bascom, Winter Barn Dance honoring police, firefighters and EMS from 7-10 p.m. Tickets are \$5. Call the Chamber of Commerce at 526-2112 for more information.

• The Nantahala Hiking Club will take a moderate four-mile hike, with an elevation change of 800 feet, to Turtleback Falls/ Rainbow Falls/ Stair Step Falls. Mostly gentle slopes, but also a couple of steep ascents of 100 yards or so. Meet at Cashiers Wachovia Bank (in back) at 9 a.m. drive 16 miles round trip. Bring water, lunch, a camera if you wish; wear sturdy shoes. Call leader Walker Taylor at 743-6977 for reservations. Visitors are welcome but no pets please.

## Tuesday, March 1

• At The Highlands Dialogue's Tuesday discussion, Robert E. Smith: "Exploiting Doubt" from Merchants of Doubt by Naomi Oreskes and Erik Conway (2 copies available through the Fontana Regional Library). Handouts will be available at the meeting previous to the discussion (if not sooner) and at the Hudson Library in the Community Box available during library hours. The Highlands Dialogue's Tuesday discussions are held at the Civic Center from 10-11:30 a.m. For more information about the Highlands Dialogue or any of our upcoming discussions, please e-mail John Gaston johngaston@aol.com or Karen Hawk hwkncrw@earthlink.net.

## Fri.-Sun., March 4-6

• The Highlands-Cashiers Players present "You Know I Can't Hear You When The Water's Running," at the Martin-Lipscomb Performing Arts Center at 7:30 p.m. and 2:30 on Sunday.

## Saturday, March 5

• The Nantahala Hiking Club will take a strenuous 12-mile hike to Mt. Cammerer from Deep Creek Ranger Station. Meet at the Huddle House at Sylva at 8 am; drive 120 miles round trip from Sylva. Bring water, lunch, wear hiking boots. Call leader Don O'Neal

at 586-5723 for reservations. Visitors are welcome but no pets please.

## Sunday, March 6

• The Nantahala Hiking Club will take an easy 2.2 mile hike on the Standing Indian Campground loop trail. Meet at Westgate Plaza in Franklin (opposite Burger King) at 2 pm; drive 30 miles round trip. Bring water, a snack if you wish; wear sturdy shoes. Call leader Kay Coriell at 369-6820 for reservations. Visitors are welcome but no pets please.

## Tuesday, March 8

• At The Highlands Dialogue's Tuesday discussion, Lewis Doggett: The Red Book; Carl Jung's Diary of the Unconscious (Note: 1 copy available through the Fontana Regional Library). Handouts will be available at the meeting previous to the discussion

(if not sooner) and at the Hudson Library in the Community Box available during library hours. The Highlands Dialogue's Tuesday discussions are held at the Civic Center from 10-11:30 a.m. For more information about the Highlands Dialogue or any of our upcoming discussions, please e-mail John Gaston johngaston@aol.com or Karen Hawk hwkncrw@earthlink.net.

## Tuesday, March 15

• At The Highlands Dialogue's Tuesday discussion, Martha Porter: "Batter My Heart", 10 a.m. at the Civic Center. Handouts will be available at the meeting previous to the discussion (if not sooner) and at the Hudson Library in the Community Box available during library hours.

## First Winter Barn Dance at The Bascom draws an energetic crowd!

On January 22, the community came out for a fun-filled night of music, clogging and square dancing at The Bascom's first Winter Barn Dance of the season. Friends, families and neighbors gathered to listen to Highlands' own "4118," learn to square-dance with the Highlands Drifters and relive a memorable Highlands' tradition.

The first Bascom's Winter Barn Dance was sponsored by The Bascom, The Highlands Area Chamber of Commerce and Visitor Center, the Highlands Historical Society, Bill and Sara Mann, Mountain Fresh Grocery, Ugly Dog Pub and Sam Call Productions.

The next Winter Barn Dance, honoring police officers, firefighters and EMS is on Saturday, February 26 from 7-10 pm. Tickets are \$5 per person and can be purchased at the door. Admission for honorees is complimentary. Food and beverages will be available for purchase. Don't miss it.

## Winter is heating up at The Bascom:

Discover Art Cinema. This Saturday at 2 pm, sit back and enjoy our feature presentation: *Frank Lloyd Wright, Part One*. Frank Lloyd Wright was the greatest of all Ameri-



Highlands celebrated with a gathering of music and dancing at The Bascom's first Winter Barn Dance of the season. The Bascom is open year round. Winter dates are from January 7- April 2. The galleries and The Shop are open Fridays and Saturdays from 10 am-5 pm. For more details on all Bascom winter activities, visit [www.thebascom.org](http://www.thebascom.org) or call 526.4949.

can architects, a man who believed he was destined to redesign the world, creating everything anew. His architectural achievements were often overshadowed by the turbulence of his melodramatic life. This riveting film brings Wright's unforgettable story to life. Admission is free.

During Highlands' Romance Weekend, January 28-29, Greg Newington returns to The Bascom with *Photography for Lovers*. Capture something you love about your beloved, learn how to add a sense of romance to your photos using light, filters and Photoshop.

This winter, the Youth Art program schedule at The Bascom includes "Saturday Art School" from January 29-February 10 from 10 am-12 noon; "Tuesday After School Art" through February 15 from 3:15-4:30 pm; and "Paint Like a Master" Thursdays, through March 10 from 3:15-5 pm.

The Bascom is open year round. Winter dates are from January 7th to April 2nd. The galleries and The Shop are open Fridays and Saturdays from 10 am-5 pm. For more details on all Bascom winter activities, visit [www.thebascom.org](http://www.thebascom.org) or call 526.4949.

## HCP's "I Can't Hear You ..." set to open Thurs., Feb. 24

The Highlands/Cashiers Players are hard at work for the upcoming production of "You Know I Can't Hear You When The Water's Running," by Robert Anderson. Cast and crew have been selected, and all have busy rehearsing, planning, designing, constructing, and directing for two weeks now, and on track for another outstanding play. The show is a collection of four vignettes, all with varying degrees of comedy and drama.

The large cast is made up of numerous faces that will be familiar to anyone who attends theatre anywhere in the area, everyone in this cast has spent an awful lot of time playing "Dress Up", more so than your average adult. The lengthy list includes Ralph Stevens, David Spivey, Stuart Armor, Michelle Hott, Jennifer Royce, Laura Zepe-da, Wayne Coleman, Ronnie Spilton, and

Virginia Talbot. Assuming that leaves anyone left to be in the audience, this crowd of actors will be bringing you both laughter, tears, and more than a few "I've been there" moments.

Several of the actors will be playing more than one character, giving them a chance to show off their talents, and possibly alarming the audience with just how easy some people can convincingly portray radically different personas. You'll be seeing a bit more of some actors than others, as they work together to bring Robert Anderson's script to life.

Performances will run February 24 through the 27th, and March 4th through the 6th, at the Martin-Lipscomb Performing Arts Center, on Chestnut Street, in Highlands, NC.



• SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING •

Find the light



**Pastor Lee W. Bowman**  
First Presbyterian Church of  
Highlands

During this season of Epiphany, I am reminded of the country song Suzanne Prentice came out with some years ago entitled "You Can't Be a Beacon if Your Light Don't Shine." Here are a couple of verses:

*You can't be a beacon if your light don't shine  
There's a little light in all of us by God's design  
But you can't be a beacon if your light don't shine.*

*How can you ask for truth when you do not truthful live?  
How can you ask forgiveness when you don't forgive?  
I don't mean to bring you down or speak to you unkind  
But you can't be a beacon if your light don't shine.*

*How can you ask a child to be honest and true  
When he can only judge what's right by what he sees in you?  
How can you offer vision yet walk around blind?*

*No you can't see a beacon it its light don't shine*  
The lyrics may not be compelling, but the theology's not bad. What the magi were seeking in the classic Epiphany text from Matthew, what we are seeking in our own spiritual lives, is to find that light.

Matthew knew where to find the light and as he described it, the visit to the Christ child by the magi was a fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy: *Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.* Isaiah had written those words some five centuries earlier to people who were burdened by years of living in a far country, years of performing physical labor that wore them down, years of having their hopes and dreams dashed because the promise of being home was growing dimmer and dimmer. Isaiah was telling them to get up and get on with their lives because God was moving among them in a powerful way.

In 2011 we don't have to conjure up the cataclysms of arctic cold and record floods to know what it means to be dislocated in exile. I think for Isaiah's folk it was more like what Robert Frost described as the "slow, smokeless burning of decay." Imagine this: the marriage has become a stalemate, a loved one has died and so has your future, your job is history, your kids are just one disappointment after another, your emotional energies are pulled between aging parents and needy adolescents. In short, the life you *thought* you would have is not the one you are living.

Or maybe you're stuck with toxic old tapes in your head. Your father never praised you, and you figure he was a prophet, so you seem bent on fulfilling that prophecy because you think you're good for nothing. You are enslaved by something that's nagging at your soul, and you act out that enslavement with your head down and shoulders slumped, believing you have nothing to offer the world.

Epiphany reminds us that the good news this and every day is that God is our light and has placed that light — the image of God — in every one of us. Even now God's light is ready to make more of our life than we thought possible. The question is: do we fear the light more than the threat of darkness? Writer Marianne Williamson says it this way:

Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness that most frightens us.

We ask ourselves, Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, fabulous? Actually, who are you not to be? You are a child of God. Your

•See SPIRITUALLY page 13

• PLACES TO 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.; Adult Forum -

10:45, Bucks Coffee Cafe, Cashiers

Monday: Bible Study & Supper at members' homes -

6 p.m.

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

Baptist Church

Thursday: Women's Prayer Group - 10 a.m.,

Whiteside Presbyterian Church; Healing Service at

noon

**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

3645 Cashiers Rd, Highlands, NC

Senior Pastor Gary Hewins

Sun.: 9:30 am: Adult Sunday School

10:30 am: Middle School; 10:45 am: Children's

Program., Worship Service. 12:30 pm Student Arts

Group, 5 p.m. High School

Wed.: 6pm: CBC University Program

**EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF THE INCARNATION**

526-2968

Reverend Denson Franklin

Sunday: Breakfast; 9 A.M. - Sunday School

10:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist (Rite II)

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

**FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH**

Dr. Charles Harris, Pastor • 526-4153

Sun.: Worship 10:45 a.m., ; School – 9:30 a.m.;

Wednesdays: Prayer Meeting- 6:15 p.m., Choir –

7:15-8:15 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

Mondays: 8 a.m. – Men's Prayer Group & Breakfast

Wednesdays – Choir – 7

**HIGHLANDS ASSEMBLY OF GOD**

Sixth Street

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

Wednesdays: Prayer & Bible Study – 7

**HIGHLANDS CENTRAL BAPTIST CHURCH**

Pastor Dan Robinson

221 N. 4th Street

Sunday: School 9:30 a.m.; Morning Worship 10:45

a.m., Evening Worship, 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday: Prayer Service, 6:30 p.m.

**HIGHLANDS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

Pastor Paul Christy 526-3376

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

Youth

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

**MOUNTAIN BIBLE CHURCH**

Pastor: Clayton Lopez • 828-743-9704

Independent Bible Church

Sundays:10:30 a.m. at Blue Ridge School

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

**OUR LADY OF THE MOUNTAINS CATHOLIC**

**CHURCH**

Rev. Dean Cesa, pastor

Parish office: 526-2418

Mass: – 9 a.m.: Sun., Thurs. & Fri

Saturday Mass – Mem Day through Oct. at 4 p.m.

**SCALY MOUNTAIN BAPTIST CHURCH**

Rev. Clifford Willis

Sundays: School –10 a.m.; Worship –11 a.m. & 7

Wednesdays: Prayer Mtg. – 7 p.m.

**SCALY MOUNTAIN CHURCH OF GOD**

290 Buck Knob Road; Pastor Alfred Sizemore

Sundays: School – 10 a.m.; Worship – 10:45 a.m.;

Evening Worship – 6 p.m.

Wed: Adult Bible Study & Youth – 7 p.m.

For more information call 526-3212.

**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



## ... LETTERS continued from page 6

in mental illness, especially schizophrenia. Providing more psychiatric beds and outpatient community support is an economy move, not an expense. Treatment is much less expensive in an appropriate inpatient setting or in the community than in a jail.

Involuntary commitment is not a formidable process. The process does have safeguards to protect civil liberties. Anyone who thinks an individual is a danger to themselves or others can start the commitment process simply by contacting the Magistrate, available in the County Courthouse during the day or through the Sheriff's office after hours.

If you or a loved one suffers from depression, bipolar disorder, anxiety, post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), schizophrenia or other mental disorder, you are not alone. Help is available. Addressing the problems surrounding mental illness has made great strides in the last few years, especially in our local area. We now have a "Mental Health Task Force" implemented by Commissioner Beale and Sheriff Holland. An active local affiliate of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) offers a support group, classes for families, CIT training, and is planning a Peer-to-Peer class. NAMI also offers a speaker for groups, classes and organizations. Support classes and group therapy is now available to inmates of the county jail. The reorganization of Smoky Mountain LME (Local Management Entity) with new leadership and structure to include services from Appalachian Community Services and Meridian has made help, support, and medication management more accessible and appropriate. A 24/7 Mobile Crisis Unit is available through Smoky Mountain LME to respond to crisis situations. We have a unit locally. The Macon County Libraries have a wealth of books on mental illnesses designed for the general public, individuals with a mental illness (Consumers) and families coping with a loved one's illness. NAMI Appalachian South in conjunction with Smoky Mountain and SCC has held two 40 hour classes in Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) training for Law Enforcement Officers and others involved in crisis situations where mental illness is a factor. A total of 28 officers completed the trainings. Another is planned for 2011. The Town of Franklin, the Community Foundation and the Community Funding Pool have financially supported these. The national requirement for insurance parity for mental illness equal to any other illness was a long, hard battle but is now a reality. Research into causes, treatments, accurate diagnosis, and possible prevention of mental disorders is ongoing. This needs funding, not only to prevent suffering but as cost savings to our health care system.

Soon our shock and grief regarding the Tucson tragedy will recede. The media will move our attention to another issue, but

the problem will not go away.

What's needed? An informed public and legislators. Decreased stigma. More psychiatric beds. Increased support for research. More people in pivotal positions, such as law enforcement and teachers, trained in CIT. Wining the war on drugs.

Can we prevent the Tucson Tragedy? Unfortunately, no. It's in the history books. Can we learn from it and prevent such tragedies in the future? Yes. We all have a responsibility to be knowledgeable and proactive. The adage "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure" does fit here.

Ann Nandrea  
Franklin, NC

P.S. For more information about the Family-to-Family or the Peer-to-Peer curriculums, the NAMI Support Group, or a speaker, contact me, Ann Nandrea 369-7385

## Tuscon not Tea Party's fault

Dear Editor,

The recent tragedy in Arizona resulting in loss of life and injury to so many people was horrible. For one deranged person to have caused such pain is beyond belief. What made the event even worse, if possible, were the immediate conclusions being made attributing the attack to political vitriol, combative language during the elections and the Tea Party movement. Ascribing malicious and dangerous motives to a grassroots group is, at best, mistaken, and at most, an effort to quash healthy discourse by demonizing one's adversaries. Since the Tea Party has been growing in number and influence, we have been called red-necked, rebellious and racists, among many other even more vicious names. Attempts have been made to downplay and ridicule the basic tenets upon which we stand.

As a country, our people have spent years absorbed in our own lives and allowing decisions to be made, which have begun to erode the beliefs upon which our country was founded. We, the silent majority, have permitted those choices in the mistaken belief that we had no influence on what happened ... that our one voice didn't count.

So we, average, middle-class, educated people of all ages, began to gather in an attempt to make a difference and to bring the power of the government back home to our communities and the individual. There is no rancor in our midst, just determination. We do not uphold violent behavior and disrespect, just our right to discuss and disagree.

If you ever attended one of our meetings, or stood with us on the corner as we held up signs, you would find that we are a non-combative, conscientious, conserva-

## ...PLANNING BOARD continued from page 1

ful with their questions and tone.

Commissioner Dotson, chose to only listen and when asked for comment said he'd rather not answer any questions except one that clarified that the town does have a grievance policy but it had only been in place several weeks and it was set up so employees would go through several steps prior to the last one which is going to the Town Board.

The question about the grievance policy came about when Patrick Leonard, Human Resource Director for Old Edwards Hospital-ity Group asked what policies were in place to ensure that a employee targeted for termination by the Town Manger had been afforded all avenues prior to the "consultation" with the Town Board — including possible suspension prior to termination.

He suggested including a statement to that affect in the ordinance but Coward said such language would be redundant because as a matter of course, prior to any termination the grievance procedure — which involves numerous steps — must be carried out.

Chairman Thomas Craig, Vice Chairman Mike Bryson, Leonard and Alan Marsh discussed the implications of amending the town ordinance to make the Town Manager in control of all employees including the Police Chief and the Zoning Administrator for over two hours.

The end result was wishy-washy to say the least.

Marsh and Bryson voted against the ordinance outright.

Marsh said what he's said all along — that the board that voted to change the form of government in the first place adopted the hybrid form of Council-Manager government because it felt the Police Chief and the Zoning Administrator should be hired and fired by the Town Board and not the Town Manager.

Attorney Coward said there was nothing in the minutes in 2008 indicating that was done on purpose. He suggested not changing the ordinance to make the Town Manager in charge of everything and every-

## ...SPIRITUALLY from 12

playing small does not servethe world. There is nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure around you. We are all meant to shine, as children do. We were born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us. It is not just in some of us; it is in everyone. And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others.1

*May God's love surround you, may you find a brighter day;*

*May He grant you the peace you seek in every way.*

*God's light burns in each life, in yours and mine, And you can be a beacon if you just let it shine.*

(Endnotes)

1Marianne Williamson, *A Return to Love*, (New York: Harper Collins, 1992).

one was simply an omission on his and Town Administrator Richard Betz's part — a mistake for which Coward said he takes full responsibility.

However since November when the board considered amending the ordinance, Commissioner Dotson and Amy Patterson both said they recalled discussion and the decision to have those two positions hired and fired by the Town Board due to the quasi-judicial nature of the jobs.

"But," said Coward. "It really doesn't matter what that board wanted at that time, the current board doesn't want it that way and voted 3-2 to change it."

Bryson said he didn't think changing the ordinance to give the Town Manager ultimate control "was where we need to be right now."

He, and in fact all four members, said they had been approached by numerous citizens and no one wants the ordinance changed.

Though Coward said several times he wasn't there to lobby one position over another, he said the reason the ordinance should be changed is because as it now stands it isn't related to what a "Town Manger" really means according to the General Statute. "The Town Manager is in charge of personnel — the hiring and firing of personnel — subject to his overall supervision by the Town Council," he said. "If he makes wise decisions, then the Town Board will keep him. If not, he's gone."

However, he said the ordinance can stay the way it is now. "It's legal, but that's not the purpose of having a Town Manager. The board deals with policies and the Town Manager deals with details."

Marsh said the town charter was changed when the town was in the midst of expansion and the board was covered up with details. "Things have slowed, and things are a lot easier now."

Coward said there is "wiggle room" in the verbiage of the General Statute in the description of the Town Manager's duties that says "Responsibilities as placed in his charge by the City Council." "That's your wiggle room," he said.

He also said that in the book "Governance in Council-Manager Cities" by David Lawrence, the author makes it clear that Council-Manager form of government can vary depending on a town's style, personalities, history and other factors.

In the end, Craig and Leonard voted to change the ordinance but issued a statement with their votes which sounds like they didn't want to vote in favor of changing it, afterall.

Craig was extremely concerned about having checks and balances in place. "The Town Board needs to maintain some kind of interest in what's going on. It can't just say 'That's the Town Manager's job' and that will go away if this passes," he said. "The Zoning Administrator deals with quasi-judicial rulings and with the public and the Town Board in good faith has to have an active role in the



## ... LETTERS continued from page 13

tive group who believe in the process of our government and our ability to have it work for us.

So, when we listened to the Sheriff of Pima County veer from his report, which should have been an update on an investigation, to personal comments about vitriol, Sharon Angle, Sarah Palin, and Tea Parties, we were surprised and hurt. To suddenly be placed in the spotlight as possible contributors to an act of insanity was negligent and irresponsible on the part of the Sheriff and led to further division between people of differing political beliefs. We do not appreciate the attempts by some representatives of our government to use a horrible event to drive a wedge between Americans.

Insanity has no bounds and needs no reason. Any one event could be a trigger that sets a deranged person on a violent path. If there is any change that could be made as a result of Jared Loughner's horrendous act, let it be changes in the way people handle those with possible psychiatric needs.

Our elected officials should use the common sense, with which they have been attributed, to think before they speak. Judgments about a group of people about which it seems many have no knowledge, is unacceptable. The events of January 8, 2011 in Arizona need not bring out the political correctness police, causing reasonable conversation with no evil intent to be stifled. As a group, we will continue to exercise our rights to express our opinions, to expect our elected officials to represent us, the people, and to be treated with the respect that we are due as citizens of the greatest country in the world. You are all in our constant prayers that God will give you wisdom and discernment in your decision making.

Thank you and may God Bless America!

Gail Chapman  
President of  
Mountain Patriots Tea Party

## Please stop selling 'Spice, K2' and other herbal incense products

Dear Editor,

I am writing Macon County business owners to request that they voluntarily stop selling "herbal incense" products marketed under various names including Spice and K2. As they should be aware, these products are laced with powerful designer drugs, which are synthetic cannabinoids, and adults and minors are smoking these products instead of using them as "incense."

Both locally and nationally there are increasing incidents of young people end-

ing up in emergency rooms or worse after smoking these products. This is the result of adverse health reactions to the designer drugs/synthetic cannabinoids that are contained in the "herbal" product. As I have said, this is occurring locally and includes minors purchasing these products at businesses throughout Macon County.

On Nov. 24 2010, the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency announced it would make five synthetic cannabinoids Schedule I drugs illegal within a month using emergency powers. Several states have also made them illegal under state law and the NC Legislature is considering doing this as well.

Again, I am asking are business owners to voluntarily comply with my request for the good of our community and especially our younger citizens. While I am writing you in my official capacity, I am not implying that there will be any legal repercussions if you choose not to honor my request, unless or until NC state law is changed.

While there is currently no NC state law that would require the elimination of these product from store owners' inventory, they should seek independent legal advice regarding potential Federal criminal charges as well as potential civil claims from parents and consumers or their estates.

Macon County Sheriff  
Robert L. Holland

## Understand the implications of the 'Wilderness' label as outlined in the Wildnerness Act of 1964

Dear Editor,

The proposed Zahner Wilderness in the Overlook area needs an additional 2,000 acres to qualify as a 5,000 acre wilderness area or justification for the smaller size. The existing road needs to be closed and allowed to return to a natural state. No motorized vehicles, planes, or chain saws allowed, except for medical emergencies or spraying insect infestations. No mechanical transport bans the use of mountain bikes or wagons in wilderness. The Secretary of Agriculture is to give public notice and hearings for additions to wilderness areas (Section 5 (e)).

The source of the following excerpts are from the Wilderness Act of 1964 which can be found at <http://www.wilderness.net/index.cfm?fuse=NWPS&sec=legisAct#4>

The excerpts include definition of wilderness, permitted uses and prohibitions. Sections relating to maintenance by

Dept. of Agriculture, review, changes in boundaries, and land exchanges have been omitted.

### Definition of Wilderness (section 2c):

A wilderness, in contrast with those areas where man and his own works dominate the landscape, is hereby recognized as an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain. An area of wilderness is ... an area of undeveloped Federal land retaining its primeval character and influence, without permanent improvements or human habitation, ... which (1) generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable; (2) has outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation; (3) has at least five thousand acres of land or is of sufficient size to make practicable its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition; and (4) may also contain ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value.

### Use of Wilderness Areas (Section 4a and 4b)

The purposes of this Act are hereby declared to be within and supplemental to the purposes for which national forests... and national wildlife refuge systems...

...Except as otherwise provided in this Act, wilderness areas shall be devoted to the public purposes of recreational, scenic, scientific, educational, conservation, and historical use.

### Prohibition of Certain Uses (Section 4c)

...there shall be no commercial enterprise and no permanent road within any wilderness area designated by this Act and, except as necessary to meet minimum requirements for the administration of the area for the purpose of this Act... there shall be no temporary road, no use of motor vehicles, motorized equipment..., no other form of mechanical transport, and no structure or installation within any such area.

### Special Provisions (section 4d, §2 and §6)

...Nothing in this Act shall prevent within national forest wilderness areas any activity, including prospecting, for the purpose of gathering information about mineral or other resources, if such activity is carried on in a manner compatible with the preservation of the wilderness environment.

...Commercial services may be performed within the wilderness areas designated by this Act to the extent necessary for activities which are proper for realizing the recreational or other wilderness purposes of the areas.

Nathalie Sato  
Highlands

## Did Keener see it?

Dear Editor:

In reference to Audrey Keener's letter in the Thursday, Jan. 20, edition entitled, "Wannabees"

Ms. Keener, you presented a formula for determining whether something is "truth or hearsay:" "Unless you have seen it with your own eyes and know it to be true, don't write it up as truth and don't repeat it and open up a big can of worms with it."

Please be specific that you saw this incident personally and are sure that it is true: a bear "coming across a six-foot chain link fence, attack[ing] your dogs and com[ing] right on into your home when they smell chicken being cooked for dinner."

Please also state whether you meant to imply (and whether you know this first hand) that local bear hunters shoot only "nuisance bears" and not nature bears," as defined in your letter.

From one who desires that all bears remain "nature bears."

Avary Doubleday  
Highlands

## • HOSPITAL NEWS •

### Hospital staff learns SafeServe practices



Last week, Highlands-Cashiers Hospital offered its staff and area healthcare workers from Swain, Polk, and Transylvania counties an educational food safety training seminar lead by US Foods Healthcare and Education Account Manager, Margret Downs. Upon completion of the course and satisfactory test scores, participants earned their ServSafe certification, a nationally recognized accreditation by The Food Safety Administration.

HCH's Nutritional Services manager, Kathy Owens said "The course teaches the latest knowledge concerning food safety, personal hygiene, cross-contamination and allergens, proper cooking times and temperatures, and cleaning and sanitation techniques. At our hospital, it's our top concern to insure that those meals are prepared with the highest safety and sanitation standards."

Facilities who maintain their ServSafe accreditation are given the opportunity to earn two additional points during North Carolina's Annual Food Service Sanitation Exam. Re-certification is required every three years.



## ... FORUM continued from page 2

changed. They believe Fatland (and any subsequent Town Manager) needs ultimate and complete control over all matters of Highlands, if he is to do his job well..

In a prepared statement read at the Jan. 12 Town Board meeting, Commissioner Dennis DeWolf said "... this is a summation of my thoughts and conversations with many friends outside of our community, which after further research I discovered are very much aligned with many of the statements made in the Municipal Government in North Carolina second edition ... entitled "Governance in Council-Manager Cities." What DeWolf failed to disclose – but which was disclosed by Town Attorney Bill Coward at the Jan. 24 Planning Board meeting – is that the author of the book, David Lawrence, said that Council-Manager forms of government in North Carolina are varied. He said the definition of the Town Manager's duties can depend on the history of a town, on the personalities involved ... a number of issues.

Furthermore, what DeWolf, Drake and Rogers have completely disregarded is the wishes of the people of Highlands who elected them to office. It is their bidding they should do — no one else's — not that of "friends outside of our community," not statements in a book on the subject and especially not what their egos demand or their personal agendas require.

Planning Board members – who by law must make recommendations on amending the ordinance regarding the town charter because of their relationship with the Zoning/Watershed/Stormwater Administrator – said every person who approached them on the subject prior to the their Jan. 24th meeting was against giving the Town Manager ultimate control.

Attorney Coward and Commissioner Drake have both said people should only consider the position and not the person

currently holding the position of Town Manager. But in all fairness, that's all the people of Highlands have to work with – that's all they know when it comes to the new Council-Manager form of government and like it or not the actions of 2010 and early 2011 and the personalities behind those actions weigh heavy on citizens' minds.

As Commissioners Amy Patterson and John Dotson reiterated at the Jan. 19 Town Board meeting, "The possibility of a Town Manager being unfamiliar with the intricacies of Highlands is about 100%," said Dotson. Therein lays the danger.

Patterson said the Town Manager may not have a feel for the pulse of our small town. "It's the folks who are elected who should have the pulse," she said.

At no time in its history has Highlands been "like any other town" and that's what the the Town Board should remember.

Without the Town Board's oversight, the Town Manager can hire anyone he wants, determine their compensation and he can fire anyone he wants by simply *consulting* with the Town Board in closed session. That addition to the ordinance doesn't say he *has* to do as they wish, even though Attorney Coward believes a Town Manager would be foolish not to follow the board's wishes.

Patterson said the problem with that closed session meeting with the Town Manager, at which the targeted employee is not a part, is that the issue of firing someone is rarely cut and dry.

"These issues are often nebulous not black and white, so it's difficult to know what's really going on," she said. "The manager, in a subtle way, can spin it so it sounds like we should agree with him but we wouldn't have the background." This is what happened with Zoning Administrator Joe Cooley.

As evidenced by their ability to orchestrate vote changes, what's happening under Highlands' Council-Manager form of government is that the Town Manager and the Mayor have a very intimate relationship – which isn't what the Council-Manager form of government is about – at least not as it's defined in the General Statute.

The events of 2010 and early 2011 now beg the questions: "Was Highlands ready for an authoritative form of government — one that can be routinely manipulated by one or two people at the top?" Is it big enough to absorb the impact of decisions made by one man or is it too intimate a community, despite the number of employees, to work well under the one-man rule scenario – especially when that one-man isn't elected by the people?

So the citizens of Highlands (even those in ETJ) must decide if they want the state of their town to stay on the shrouded path it is now on, or do they want to take back control?

That control can come in the form of requesting the town return to its old hybrid form of Council-Mayor where the Town Board and the Mayor wield control with a Town Administrator at the helm rather than solely the Mayor; or it can request to continue the hybrid form of Council-Manager now in place, even request that the Town Manager's duties be further diluted in whatever area the board chooses.

Citizens can also turn out for the Feb. 2 Public Hearing, where the Town Board will seek comments on whether it should amend the charter to replace the words "the Board" to "the Town Manager" throughout (127 instances in eight pages) and to include verbiage demanding that the Town Manager *consult* with commissioners during a closed session prior to firing an employee — a meeting about which the targeted employee may have no knowledge.

And specifically, relinquish the board's control over the Zoning Administrator to the Town Manager.

The Police Chief's position was relinquished to the Town Manager at the Jan. 19 Town Board meeting with a 3-2 vote to amend the ordinance. But it ONLY stands if that vote is once again 3-2 in favor of amending the ordinance at the Feb. 2 meeting. (Since the vote wasn't 4-1, the question must be asked again at the following Town Board meeting.) If the vote flips, then the ordinance will not be changed and the Town Board will have ultimate control over the Police Chief's and the Zoning Administrator's positions.

Citizens of Highlands — now is the time to speak out. If you want to take back your town, then let your voice be heard. Call on the people you elected to govern and remind them it's your voice they should be listening to, not their egos or the voices of friends in other communities.

### Mayor

**David Wilkes:**  
421-1187

### Mayor Pro Temp

**John Dotson:**  
526-5868

### Commissioner

**Amy Patterson:**  
526-2814

### Commissioner

**Dennis DeWolf:**  
526-3923

### Commissioner

**Gary Drake:**  
200-0062

### Commissioner

**Larry Rogers:**  
526-2874

## • POLICE & FIRE DEPT. REPORTS •

Highlands PD log entries from Jan 21 Only the names of persons arrested, issued a Class-3 misdemeanor, or public officials have been used.

### Jan. 20

• A little after midnight, officers assisted another agency and responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Satulah Road. It was false.

### Jan. 21

• At 1:10 a.m., officers responded to a call for service at a residence on Cottage Row due to noise outside the window. A screen had come loose and was banging against the house.

### Jan. 22

• At 3:51 p.m., officers responded to a domestic dispute between siblings at a residence on NC 106.

### Jan. 24

• At 4:30 p.m., the dept. received a call about a lost ID card.

• At 9 a.m., the dept. was called about a breaking

and entering with larceny of the Highlands School's mascot. A framed print of The Highlander was taken from the cafeteria. It is valued at \$250.

• During the week, police officers responded to 3 alarm and issued 5 citations.

Highlands F&R Dept. log entries from Jan 19:

### Jan. 19

• At 2:45 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm set off by workers at a residence on Club House Trail.

• At 11:58 p.m., he dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Satulah Road. It was false.

### Jan. 22

• At 10:51 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to assist a woman who had fallen and broken her leg at a residence on Pierson Dr.

• At 4:08 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to assist EMS with a person who was unresponsive. There was no transport.

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## ... BOE continued from page 7

10% cut would equal \$788,971,506 and a 15% cut would mean \$1,183,457,259.

When the possible state percentage cuts are coupled with the Federal ARRA money coming to an end, the potential impact across the state is huge.

The total impact based on 5% would mean the loss of \$1,132,485,753 cut; 10% would mean the loss of \$1,526,971,506 and 15% would mean the loss of \$1,921,457,259.

Though it can't be used to supplant existing costs, the new \$100,000,000 Race To The Top (RTTT) funding to each state from the Federal government will help. However, even factoring RTTT revenue, the size of the potential cuts remain severe, said Brigman.

Adding in the \$100 million brings the potential impact down to \$1,032,485,753 based on a 5% cut; to \$1,426,971,506 based on a 10% cut; and \$1,821,457,259 based on a 15% cut.

"Even if we take the most optimistic scenario and presume that only \$100 million of the \$300 million federal jobs funds (to protect teacher positions) will be spent this year, leaving \$200 million to buffer cuts, the impact remains severe," he said.

Minus the \$200 Million of federal jobs money and at 5% the potential impact is

\$862,485,753; at 10% it's \$1,226,971,506 and at 15% it's \$1,621,457,259.

What does this mean for Macon County Schools?

A 5% state reduction means the loss of \$1,511,557.00; a 10% state reduction means the loss of \$2,273,770.00 and when the loss of ARRA funding as of July 1, 2011 is factored in the loss is \$2,400,000.

Since the 1969-1970 school year, North Carolina has appropriated less and less money to its public school system.

For the 1969-1970 school year 52.5% of the state's General Fund was spent on schools. For the 2009-2010 school year, the money allocated to the public school system represented 35% of the General Fund — \$735 billion.

"Contrary to the opinion of some, resources in North Carolina are already inadequate," said Brigman. "According to the most recent NEA rankings, North Carolina is considered a 'low-spend state' when it comes to education and ranks 42<sup>nd</sup> in the nation on what it spent per pupil on education — \$8,743 as compared to the District of Columbia (Washington, DC) which spends \$17,638 per student. The national average is \$10,190 spent per pupil.

Answers to common questions.

So why are schools always on the chopping block? NC's Public School Fund is the largest chunk of the state budget's General Fund.

What about the lottery funds — won't they help? Lottery funds do help — but they make up only about 3.9 percent of the budget. And, they're designated for specific purposes — K-3 teachers, More at Four, school construction and scholarships.

Can't we just cut administration and leave teachers alone? Eliminating all administration (NCDPI, central office staff, principals/assistant principals) would total \$478 million — less than a third of the possible \$1.6 billion in targeted cuts for K-12.

Why not cut out testing? Wouldn't that save a lot of money? Cutting out all testing would save about \$11 million — far short of our needed cuts. Also, remember, NC is required to do some testing under federal and state laws.

Won't the federal Race to the Top funds help solve our budget problem? Race to the Top is providing nearly \$400 million over four years to North Carolina, but the funds are targeted for specific purposes and not for general use, and funds are a one-time allocation.

Unfortunately, just as NC schools are

showing significant progress, the budget shortfall presents a significant gap, said Brigman.

Over the next several months, as the School Boards across the state begin work on the budget for 2011-2012, worst case local option scenarios will be considered. Those will include: across the board reductions; the cutting of all but essential positions; transportation efficiencies or elimination of program; the elimination of athletic programs; and the consolidation and closing of facilities.

To prepare and combat the negative implications of the state's likely cuts, Brigman said he and his staff will become familiar with state-level strategic cut options that have been identified to limit classroom impact, and maintain necessary infrastructure; will determine how state and local reductions will directly impact each of our schools; will communicate the impact; will stay informed through news media, NCDPI and various state associations; and will reach out to legislators and key stakeholders.

Since school systems aren't revenue producing entities, they are completely dependent on federal, state and county funding. Brigman said all Macon County Schools can do at this point is try to be prepared for the best and worst case scenarios.

— Kim Lewicki

\$17 weekly

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## ... PLANNING BOARD from 13

hiring and firing of the Zoning Administrator. I have a hard time putting that decision in one man, with only the "consulting" required."

He also wanted to address the Police Chief's position but Coward reminded him that the Planning Board was only to consider the portion of the ordinance dealing with the Zoning Administrator. "The law requires a recommendation from the Planning Board even though your vote is nonbinding," he said.

As his proxy, Craig tried to enter member John Underwood's letter against changing the ordinance as a vote, but Coward said he couldn't do that because Underwood wasn't present to hear all the discussion.

Coward kept telling the Planning Board, that the Town Manager worked at the pleasure of the Town Board and if he didn't do as they desired, or at least the majority desired, acknowledging all he would need is three friends on the board, that he could be fired.

Bryson said it was unlikely that the board would fire the Town Manager if he fired an employee because "the lower man on the totem pole would be told to hit the road before the board made the decision to fire the Town Manager. He would probably just get a black mark against his name."

The board finally voted 2 to 2 to change the ordinance with the following comment entered into the record so the Town Board understands that the Planning Board members don't like the proposed amendment and don't have a positive feeling about it, but feels they don't have any other options.

"We are of differing opinions and have serious concerns about the proposed amendment to the ordinance however, we understand the importance of the Town Manager form of government and the importance of having the town ordinance and charter be in line."

For the amendment to pass, the Town Board must vote 3-2 to change it as did at the Jan. 19 Town Board meeting. The second required vote will be taken following the Public Hearing on the issue at 7 p.m. at the Feb. 2 Town Board meeting.



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# • BUSINESS NEWS •

## Macon Bank going public

The Board of Directors of Macon Bancorp has unanimously adopted a plan to convert the company to stock ownership by offering shares of common stock to eligible depositors, as of Dec. 31, 2009, of Macon Bank, its subsidiary; to other depositors opening accounts after December 31, 2009; to the bank's borrowers; to residents of the communities the bank serves; and to the general public..

The eligible depositors, other depositors and borrowers of the bank will have subscription rights (in that order of priority) superior to non-customer residents of the bank's communities and the general public. It is currently anticipated that Macon Bancorp's offering of stock will commence April 2011.

The purpose of the conversion is to raise additional capital to be invested in the bank. Thos will allow the bank to enhance the services it provides to its customers, have greater flexibility in structuring its operations, support future growth in the bank's communities, and consider expanding its operations into new markets.

The consummation of the conversion is subject to: approval of the plan by the members of Macon Bancorp by a majority vote; receipt of all required regulatory approvals; receipt of favorable tax opinions; and receipt and acceptance of subscriptions for shares of common stock with an aggregate purchase price within a range of the value of Macon Bancorp on an as converted basis to be established by an independent appraisal.

The conversion will not affect the bank's relationship with its customers. Depositors will continue to hold accounts in the bank, insured by the FDIC to the full extent legally possible, in the same amounts and with the same rates of return and general terms. The amounts, rates, maturities, collateral terms and other provisions of the loans of the bank to its borrowers will continue unchanged. The bank's normal business operations will continue without interruption under is current policies and will be carried on in its existing offices by its present management and staff.

A proxy and prospectus will be sent to each member of Macon Bankcorp as of a record date to be established for a special meeting of members to vote on the plan. Those documents will explain the plan and the proposed conversion in detail.

Macon Bank, Inc., is a North Carolina-chartered, locally owned and operated financial institution that focuses on full-service banking, including small business customers. The bank operates 11 offices in Western North Carolina. On December 31, 2010, the bank reported \$1.012 billion in assets and 179 employees.

This notice of the proposed conversion of Macon Bancorp to stock ownership is neither an offer to sell nor a solicitation of an offer to buy shares of common stock Any offer will be made only by the prospectus to be distributed at a later tie. The securities to be offered by Macon Bancorp will not be deposits or accounts of Macon Bank and will not be insured or guaranteed by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation or any other governmental agency.



• HIGHLANDS SCHOOL NEWS •

Students participate in National Smokey Bear Poster Contest

Students in Mrs. Donna Sizemore's 1<sup>st</sup> grade class put the finishing touches on their Smokey Bear Posters last week.

"We are so impressed with these posters," said Dr. Becky Schilling of the Mountain Garden Club. The students met Smokey

Bear when he visited their classroom on November 30. Before making posters, the students did additional research online about Smokey Bear and completed rough drafts of their poster designs.

"The posters are so creative

and show the students know what Smokey Bear says," said Dixie Barton, also of the Mountain Garden Club. "We are very proud of each student who participated."

This year is the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Smokey Bear/Woodsy Owl

poster contest, which is for students in grades 1-5. Entries must be sponsored by a garden club belonging to the National Garden Clubs, Inc. The deadline for entries was January 21.

The Mountain Garden Club

applauds Mrs. Sizemore and her teaching assistant, Regina Marrone, for making this contest a fun way for students to gain new skills while learning important information about forests and the prevention of wildfires.



Aislin Faust



Brandon Moss



Daniel O'Connor



Emma Grace



Ashely Espinal



Brent Sleight



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Kayleigh Hiott



Lawson Shuler



Madison Webb



Riley Stose



Rylee Johnson



Seth Staffelbach



Stephanie Barnes

Highlands School calendar changes

- Friday, Jan. 28, is now the last day of the first semester.
- Monday, Jan. 31, is now a teacher workday, student holiday.
- Report Cards will now be sent home Wednesday, Feb. 2.
- Monday, Feb. 14, is now a regular school day.
- Friday, June 10, is now a regular school day.
- The last day of school will be June 13 to make up Jan. 12.





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1 Mile

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### DINING

- 1 Brick Oven
- 2 Cyprus
- 3 Golden China
- 4 Flipside
- 5 Fresser's
- 6 Highlands Hill Deli
- 7
- 8
- 9 Main St. Inn
- 10 Nick's
- 11 on the Verandah
- 12 Paoletti's
- 13 Pescado's
- 14 Pizza Place
- 15 Ruka's Table
- 16 SweetTreats

### DINING

- 17 Wild Thyme Gourmet
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- 27 Brysons
- 28 Dusty's
- 29 Mtn. Fresh
- 30 Whole Life
- 31

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### SHOPPING

- 32 AnnaWear
- 33 Bear Mountain
- 34 Bird Barn
- 35 C.K. Swan
- 36 Custom House
- 37 Cyrano's
- 38 Drakes Diamonds
- 39 Dry Sink
- 40 Reeves Hdware
- 41 Needlepoint
- 42 Hen House
- 43
- 44 Highlands Photo
- 45 Kilwins
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- 48
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- 50 Wholesale Down
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- 52 McCulley'sCashmere
- 53
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- 58 Corey James
- 59 Bryant Art Glass
- 60 Greenleaf
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- 84 Preferred Prop.
- 85 Prestige Realty
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- 97 Larry Rogers
- 98 Macon Bank
- 99 Northland Cable
- 100 Wayah Insurance
- 101 The Car Spa
- 102 Post Office
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- 105 All Seasons Salon
- 106 CreativeConcepts
- 107 Images Unlimited
- 108 Taylor Barnes
- 109

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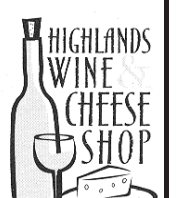
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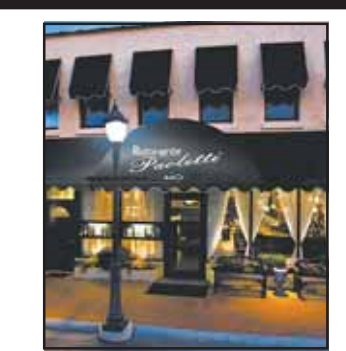


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