

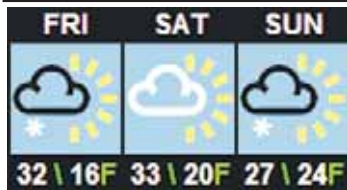
Highlands' Newspaper

FREE every Thursday

Volume 9, Number 12

PDF Version - www.HighlandsInfo.com

Thursday, March 24, 2011



Thurs.-Sat., March 24-26

• Operation Medicine Drop-off at Highlands Pharmacy and Main Street Pharmacy from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Turn in prescription and over-the-counter medicines.

Friday, March 25

• Highlands-Cashiers Hospital will offer a special reception and hospital update to area Realtors interested in learning more about the hospital at 10 a.m. and will include refreshments. To RSVP, call 526-1434.

Saturday, March 26

• Operation Medicine Drop-off at Bryson's Foods and Mountain Fresh Market from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Turn in prescription and over-the-counter medicines.

• At The Bascom, Winter Barn Dance honoring veterans from 7-10 p.m. Tickets are \$5. Call the Chamber at 526-2112.

• The Satolah, GA, volunteer fire department annual benefit at the firehouse on Route 28. Food at 5, bluegrass at 7. Pork barbecue or grilled chicken with all the trimmings, \$7 per plate for adults, \$10 for a combo plate.

Beginning March 28

• The Hudson Library Parking Lot will be closed for 4-6 weeks for construction. Patrons are asked to use parking spaces on Main Street and to follow the pedestrian walkway to the side entrance of the building. Construction will take place for 4-6 weeks.

Tuesday, March 29

• At The Highlands Dialogue's Tuesday discussion, from 10-11:30 a.m., Bill West: Poet Discussion. For more info e-mail John Gaston john.gaston@aol.com.

Thursday, March 31

• Bonsai workshop at the Highlands Biological Station 1-3 pm with Dr. Bob Gilbert. \$20 per person. Registration is required. Call Cyndi Banks at 526-018.

Town Board cleans up 'personnel' issues

Personnel on the town's nine boards as well as two town positions were discussed at length at the March 16 Town Board meeting.

Talk began at the previous Town Board meeting when Inter-

im Town Planner Mark Maxwell told the board that there were several terms that had expired or were set to expire this year. That night, Linda Clark was reappointed to the Planning Board to serve a second term as was Dixie Barton to

the Appearance Commission. Thomas Craig's second term on the Appearance Commission had technically expired June 1, 2010 and though the board considered reappointing him to a third term,

• See PERSONNEL page 15

MC Schools poised for new Social Studies standard

Freshmen entering high school for the first time in 2012-13 will be the first students required to pass two U.S. History courses to receive a high school diploma under the new Social Studies Standards approved this morning by the State Board of Education.

The two required U.S. History courses mean that students will need a minimum of four credits in social studies and 22 credits overall (local districts may require more credits than the state minimum) to graduate.

"Our students cannot become productive citizens without an understanding of the people and events that have shaped our nation and our world," State Superintendent June Atkinson said.

• See SOCIAL STUDIES page 14



Gary Wein and Doug Landwehr of the Highlands-Cashiers Land Trust, Hillrie Quin, director of the Highlands Greenway erect 'Sunset' sign.

Theft of sign undermines mission of three Highlands organizations

The Highlands-Cashiers Land Trust has been considering developing educational kiosks on its properties open to the public, but several episodes of theft and vandalism at Sunset Rocks – one of 43 properties protected by the

Land Trust – is giving them pause.

The sign, which was vandalized about two months ago and discovered stolen last week, and a bench which was ripped from its anchor about 1 1/2 years ago and

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Sunshine laws help citizens and journalists pursue open government

By Kathleen O. Davis
Carolina Public Press

www.carolinapublicpress.org

The N.C. Press Association and the N.C. Attorney General's Office's published a guide to help North Carolina residents understand our rights to an open government.

For news reporters, examining public records and inquiring about government activities is a regular part of their trade. But North Carolina's sunshine laws supporting open government practices are not just for journal-

• See SUNSHINE page 8

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• THE PLATEAU'S POSITION •

• LETTERS •

Aren't you embarrassed?

Dear Editor,
Congratulations on covering the town of Highlands in many respects. However, I looked at the last issue and didn't see Mr. Swanson's column and thought you had finally gotten embarrassed enough to quit printing it. Unfortunately, that page had just slipped out of the paper.
You could just print his name every week and we would all know his arguments. Otherwise keep up the good work

R. Floyd
Boone, NC

Democracy in the U.S.A.

Dear Editor,
Congratulations to Mayor David Wilkes for presiding with dignity and authority over a vigorous and energetic exercise in democracy at the March 16th Town Board meeting in our great little town of Highlands. The debates were spirited even passionate at times, but civil, and respect was shown by all who participated, and for that all Highlanders should be proud.
Mayor Wilkes's closing comments before the contentious vote was cast were particularly poignant and well spoken, calling for renewed unity and a pulling together of all the board members along with the citizens of Highlands.
Thank you to Gary Drake, John Dotson, Larry Rogers, Dennis DeWolf, and Amy Patterson for your service to our community, and for allowing all the citizens' voices to be heard as part of the discourse. Your jobs are not easy and the community is appreciative of the fact that you are willing to take time away from your families and businesses in order to serve.

• HAWK'S EYE VIEW •



I personally feel a great sense of pride in our community for how this exercise was conducted in a joint effort by many to achieve a more perfect local governance for and by the people.
Charlie Dasher
Highlands

On criticizing letter writers

Dear Editor,
This in response to Bryan Buckley's comment about the people writing letters he said contained false statements about the job Town Manager Jim Fatland has been doing.
Mr. Buckley spoke during the Public Comment portion of the March 16 Town Board meeting criticizing local letter writers on the Town Government issue.
He was backing Commissioners Gary Drake and Larry Rogers and Mayor David Wilkes, while I am not backing these elected officials.
I do not think one man (Town Manager Jim Fatland) should have that much authority, especially with his hiring track record.

I am glad the vote was 3-2 in favor of leaving the town ordinance the way it is with the Town Board having hiring and firing power over the Police Chief and the Zoning Administrator.
If Mr. Buckley would like, I can show him everything I wrote in my last letter is all true. All I wrote in my last letter was info that was giving to me from the Town Hall. So if it is false then that would be because the Town Hall gave me false info.
At the March 2, 4 o'clock meeting, Commissioner Drake praised the job Fatland is doing saving the town money. Jim Fatland makes \$106,000 plus \$500/month vehicle allowance. Chuck Young the town's new Accounting Supervisor is paid \$65,000 a year. I am not sure what our past Town Administrator Richard Betz was paid, but I believe he did both those jobs. I am fairly sure that Mr. Betz did not make \$170,000 plus. So where are the savings?

Skip Keener
Highlands

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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• OBITUARY •

Neal LaVerne Harrington

Neal LaVerne Harrington, 81, of Highlands, NC died Saturday, March 5, 2011 in the Highlands-Cashiers Hospital. Born in Dade County, FL he was the son of Denton and Thelma Neal Harrington. He was a retired maritime shipping executive.

He is survived by one son, Stephen Harrington and Vibeke of Miami, FL; former wife, Judith Harrington of Steamboat Springs, CO and two grandchildren, Christopher Harrington of Wilmington, NC and Kristina Harrington of Boston, MA.

Funeral services will be held at a later date in Miami, FL. Bryant-Grant Funeral Home is in charge of local arrangements. Online condolences may be made at www.bryantgrantfuneralhome.com

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Operation 'Medicine Drop Off' is Friday and Saturday in town

The Highlands Police Department with other law enforcement agencies and the newly birthed Highlands Community Drug Free Coalition/Gilliam's Promise will stage prescription drug take-back events in Highlands March 24-26.

On March 24-26, Highlands Pharmacy and Main Street Pharmacy will be accepting unused prescription drugs from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Also on March 26 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., there will be take-back drug drop-offs at Mountain Fresh Market and Bryson's Foods.

In 2010, its first year, Operation Medicine Drop retrieved and destroyed more than two million dosages of medication at nearly 200 take-back events across North Carolina.

When excess medications are kept around the home, they create dangerous opportunities for prescription drug abuse or accidental poisonings.

The average North Carolinian fills 14 prescriptions annually which adds up to more than 127 million prescriptions filled statewide each year. Studies show that as much as 40% of the drugs dis-

persed are never used.

Since 1999, about 4,500 people in North Carolina have died from prescription drug poisoning. More than 75% of all unintentional poisonings are by over-the-counter and prescription medications.

About 40% of injuries from unintentional poisonings occur in children under five years old

One in five teens has abused prescription stimulants and tranquilizers.

In 2004, the United States Geological Survey identified 100 different pharmaceuticals in surface water.

Significant contamination is occurring in North Carolina and in more than 80% of US waterways that have been tested.

When medications are flushed or thrown away in the garbage, they can contaminate water sources.

For more information about Operation Medicine Drop Off visit www.ncsafekids.org or call 888-347-3737.

• CORRECTIONS •

In the March 10 issue of Highlands' Newspaper, Robert Tucker was referred to as a Landscape Architect for the Hudson Library renovation project. He is a Landscape Designer, however, not a Landscape Architect.

In the March 17 issue in the story "Town asked to ban electronic gambling" we stated that John Underwood joined Tony Potts in requesting the Town Board address the electronic gambling issue. It was Thomas Craig not John Underwood. Furthermore, the request was not to necessarily ban those businesses, but to decide where they should be allowed in town.

We regret our errors and are happy to set the record straight.

• **Note:** Though the SUP was approved for the Wright Square electronic gambling location, the site owner refused to rent to them so the business owners have since decided to set up shop elsewhere in Highlands.



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Town of Highlands

2011 Town of Highlands Scholarship Information

- 1. The Town of Highlands Scholarship Application Deadline is April 15th. Applications received after this deadline will not be accepted.
- 2. Highlands First Annual Three River Fly Fishing Tournament May 11-14, 2011.
- 3. Scholarship Fund Golf Classic Monday, June 20, 2011 at WildCat Cliffs Country Club.

All funds raised benefit the Town of Highlands Scholarship Fund. All applications can be accessed at www.highlandsnc.org. For more information, feel free to contact the Town of Highlands at 828.526.2118.

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• LOOKING AT LIFE •

Naked at 37,000 feet

Just hangin' out



Fred Wooldridge

No, no, no, I'm not a member of the Mile High Club. Shame on you if you're thinking that way. Anyway, this event was most definitely not on my bucket list and it only happened because of good luck.

The li'l missus and I were planning our fifth annual pilgrimage to Dubai to visit our baby....oops, I mean our youngest son. For us, a trip to Dubai takes much advanced planning and patience. We began with our pilot son studying cargo weight and passenger loads on flights weeks ahead of time, attempting to pick a date when an aircraft was light. Even then, nothing is certain. We live in the world of standby but we wouldn't trade our lives with anyone.

Once a date was picked, usually a hump day, we're locked in. We began to hold our breath, occasionally taking in air to remain alive. Load patterns were checked twice a week. We prayed. We wrung our hands. We tried not to think about it. We've been stranded at the New York airport before, not certain we'll even get a flight the next day. We wrung our hands some more. If the plane got filled with cargo, we're eliminated. Even toilet paper has priority over us. We're always the last to board. It's an adventure.

On this trip, our prayers were answered. First we discovered we would be flying the giant A380 Airbus if we did get on. We also learned there were seats available in first and business class. We waited. The New York airport was packed with travelers. Time ticked by. Finally they paged us. The ticket agent smiled, "You're cleared for first class." Whoa! We had 30 minutes to check our luggage and get to the gate.

Now I know there are loads of wealthy folks living in Highlands who have flown first class on the A380 but I'm not one of them. In case you've forgotten, I live on a police pension which does not include spending \$17,000 per person for a round trip ticket to Dubai.

When you're flying as "staff," service

by the cabin crew is a crapshoot. Some crew members pour on the service and attention, knowing a captain's family is on board. Others take a different view and direct their attention to those who paid the 17 grand. Again, we were lucky and treated like royalty. Whoa, again!

I wasn't dirty but, seeing the crew was treating us so well, I

asked if I could shower, telling my attendant I didn't have an appointment. The cute little flight attendant with the big smile said, "You may go in now, sir, if you desire." Whoa, again....and again!

Taking a shower at 37,000 feet was not on my bucket list, but what the hey, I could quickly add it. I grabbed my flight pajamas provided by the airline and headed for the showers. Another attendant, assigned only to shower duty, was waiting to give me a full tour of the area. The bathroom was huge, measuring about five by nine feet. After instructing me on use of the shower, she said, "Should you have difficulty or need help, push this button and I will come immediately." Stunned, I looked to see if she was kidding. She wasn't.

Taking off all my clothes and standing buck-ass naked in an airplane was strange. It gave new meaning to the term "hangin' out." I stepped into the shower and closed the curved clear glass shower door behind me. I had five minutes of water to get this done. Once I was soaking wet, I realized I had not brought soap in with me. Am I a rookie, or what? If I wanted to do this right, I would have to leave the shower and traipse across the heated floor to grab a liquid soap tube. I thought, "This is so weird. What if the plane hit an air pocket and dropped 5,000 feet? I would be plastered to the ceiling in my birthday suit." Being the weirdo I am, I almost wished it would happen, knowing no one would have that scenario on their bucket list.

Feedback is encouraged!
email:
askfredanything@aol.com

• THE VIEW FROM HERE •

Are the innocent the ones who agree with us?



Dr. Henry Salzarulo

**Feedback is encouraged.
email:**

hsalzarulo@aol.com

It is impossible to predict at this time if UN intervention, led by the US, will ultimately result in greater or lesser loss of life. We are hung up on the idea of "innocent life," but who is to say who is innocent. Are rebels more innocent than forces loyal to Gadhafi? Are Nigerian mercenaries less innocent than Libyan army soldiers? For that matter, are Gadhafi's mercenaries less innocent

than our mercenaries? Does the fact that we call them security contractors bestow innocence?

The largest provider of security contractors, Blackwater, changed its name to Xe Services, LLC after its brand was tarnished by atrocities committed by its employees in Iraq.

It is difficult to identify the innocent, unless we define them as those who agree with us.

In the current conflict we share common purpose with al-Qaeda. In 1980, we shared common purpose with Afghanistan's Mujahedeen. American forces are still dodging bullets from weapons we supplied to them. Our common enemy was the Soviet Union, whose forces were not innocent, and who therefore deserved death. Thirty years later, it is our former allies who are guilty, so we'll kill them. A friend of mine, an Army retiree, puts it this way, "Kill them all and let God sort it out."

The military was reluctant to step into the Libyan tar pit, but civilian leadership decided to support and participate in the current conflict. Support in the US will remain strong as long as no Americans die. Secretary of State Gates has promised that the US will surrender its leadership role within days to the British, French, or NATO. The coalition with include just enough Arab participation to create an air of legitimacy, support for which we will pay handsomely.

Nobody likes Gadhafi. Everyone believes he is evil and probably deranged. Most people would like to see him gone. Few people have given adequate thought to what might replace him. I'd personally like to see him gone. I'd rather he be as-

sassinated, if that would end the bloodshed, but I'd rather his blood be on the hands of Libyans than on ours. Then we would be able to deal with what followed instead of being responsible for it.



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Who would have guessed that the United States and al-Qaeda would find themselves as allies? We seem to have a common goal in Libya, at least for the moment.

I recently reported Wikileaks communications which date as far back as 2008, suggesting an influx of Islamic militants into Derna and Benghazi in eastern Libya.

The leader of the defense of the rebel stronghold in Derna, Abel Kari-mal-Hasadi was captured by US forces in Afghanistan in 2002. A Libyan born al-Qaeda leader, Abu Yahya al-Libi has endorsed the revolution. It is apparent that al-Qaeda is not alone in its opposition to Col. Gadhafi. They are joined by the wretched poor and hopeless eastern Libyans, by seekers of democratic reforms, and by peace loving Islamists, if there can be such a thing, who seek a Muslim state under Sharia law.

It is hard to reconcile the notion of freedom with Sharia law. To us, at least, freedom of religion, with the guarantee to worship or refrain from worship as we choose is fundamental, as is the right of women to enjoy full participation. Now others have joined the fray, and in doing so, joined forces with al-Qaeda. United Nations resolutions 1973, in effect, declare war on Libya. Warriors include forces from Britain, France, and the US.

The Arab League, at least for the moment, supports intervention, although their initial support was limited to the establishment of a no-fly zone. The UN resolution is considerably more robust. Libyan air defenses have been devastated by a barrage of Tomahawk missiles. Advancing Libyan forces have been strafed and bombed by coalition jets. The original intent was to protect innocent civilians. The mandate has been expanded to protect rebels, including al-Qaeda fighters.

• CONSERVATIVE POV

Let the sun shine in...

“We have more to fear from the NEA than Al Qaida.” So says Neal Boortz, Libertarian talk-show host. And he is not referring to the National Endowment for the Arts. Boortz is not my favorite t/s/h, but he may be right on this one. The National Education Association has long been a target of my derision, for which I have taken frequent beatings by career educators.

I have maintained for years that the teachers union has made a mockery of education, and schools operate for the convenience of the employees, to the detriment of the children. Detractors claim that I don't know what I'm talking about and they have been involved in teaching for pick a number of years and they have never seen any evidence that education has suffered, blah, blah.
OK, I admit it. I know nothing; how-

ever, I know someone who does. His name is Bob Chanin and in 2009, Bob retired from his job as head legal counsel of the NEA after 41 years of service. I'd say that qualifies him as one who would know the truth. His farewell speech at the NEA convention in San Diego was interrupted repeatedly with standing ovations. And why not? He was feeding raw meat to the crowd.

And what was Bob telling the folks that got them so excited? In his own words: “The reason that the NEA is an effective advocate is not because of creative ideas, it is not because we have a vision of a great public school for every child. NEA and its affiliates are effective advocates because we have power and we have power because there are more than 3.2 million people who are willing to pay us hundreds of millions of dollars in dues each year because they believe we are the unions that can most effectively represent them, the union that can protect their rights and advance their interests as education employees.”

He does everything but connect the dots. They take money from teachers, about \$1,000 per year, as I understand it, convince enough legislators that education employees do such a stellar job that they are worth greater salaries and much more benefits at a much lower cost (to them) than us common mortals, and, oh, by the way, we did contribute a sizable sum to your re-election campaign, and thanks for your support. And the beat goes on. Such a deal.

Besides directly influencing legislators, what else does the NEA spend their hundreds of millions of dollars on every year? You saw, unless you live under a rock, the hoards of demonstrators in Madison, WI recently, trashing the State Capitol building and generally making major nuisances of themselves. Those folks, and others like them in other locations, were bussed in and put up by somebody, and my guess is the NEA.



**Don Swanson
Feedback is
encouraged. Email
swandonson@dnnet.net**

Another use of NEA funds (actually your money, which you pay to the State, that is paid to the teachers, that is paid to the NEA in dues) is described in a recent article in One-NewsNow. “A social research group is exposing a radical sexual ideology that was on display at a United Nations meeting. The two-week annual gathering of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women recently concluded in New York City.

Austin Ruse, president of the Catholic Family & Human Rights Institute, reports that one of the side events there included a panel discussion where Diane Schneider, a representative with the National Education Association (NEA), said that graphic sex education needs to be taught in the classroom. Speaking to a panel on combating ‘homophobia’ and ‘transphobia,’ Schneider stated: ‘Oral sex, masturbation and orgasms need to be taught in education.’

According to Ruse, the NEA representative did not stop there. ‘She went on to say that comprehensive sex education is “the only way to combat heterosexism and gender conformity,” he reports. She said that ‘gender identity expression’ and sexual orientation are a spectrum, and those who are opposed to homosexuality are stuck “in a binary box that religion and family create.”

So while the NEA lobbies the UN (boy, there's a pair to draw to), in the real world, education in the US is in dismal shape. Where we used to lead the industrialized world in educating our kids, we are now rank somewhere in the '30s. Perhaps the NEA should be more concerned about the quality of the folks in leadership these days.

A friend of mine, a recently elected State Senator, showed me a copy of an email he received from a middle-school principal, pleading with him to reward state education employees for their fine

• See SWANSON page 16

• Salons & Spas •

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• COACH'S CORNER •

Charlie Sheen + March Madness = Winning

Ladies and Gentlemen, I would like to take a moment today to salute one Mr. Charlie Sheen. Sheen has successfully done what can only be done on rare occasions by turning his train wreck of a life into a national phenomenon. A blitz of media interviews have thrust Sheen and his awesome quotes into the nation's vocabulary, and today is no different. In honor of Sheen, we will classify some of the events of this weekend's NCAA tournament into some of Sheen's best.

Weak — The Big East. Yikes, anytime Sir Charles Barkley is this right on something we have to identify it. The Big East only has 2 out of the 11 teams invited to the NCAA's remaining in the Sweet 16, and those two teams made it by virtue of beating other Big East teams.

Duh, Winning — The ACC. On the other hand, 3 out of 4 ACC teams invited made it to the Sweet 16. Not bad for a conference that was supposed to be having its' worst year in a long time.

Epic Winning — Coach K is now 79-22 all time in NCAA tournament games, and just won his 900th game.

I'm not Bi-Polar, I'm Bi-Winning — The city of Richmond, VA has two teams in the Sweet 16 in Richmond and Virginia Commonwealth. VCU in particular has been a huge surprise, as they were lambasted by the media talking heads for being included in the tournament and

have responded by winning three games in a row in the postseason. Coaches Chris Mooney and Shaka Smart will likely be movin' on up to a high major program at the end of the season after this run.

Come on bro, I got tiger's blood — Arizona's Derrick Williams will be a top 5 pick in the NBA draft this summer, and he has played like it in the tournament. First, Williams collected a game saving block against Memphis, and then followed that up with a game winning three-point play against Texas. Duke will have their hands full with Williams in the round of 16.

Borrow my brain and say "Whoa, can't handle it" — Butler's Brad Stevens has managed to get his team back to the Sweet 16 a year after losing the best player in school history. The Bulldogs have a decent chance to get back to the Final Four as well, which is amazing considering that they had a so-so regular season this year.

I'm here and I'm ready. They're not. Bring it — Ohio State has steamrolled their first two opponents in the tournament this year, and looks the part of the #1 overall seed. The Buckeyes have great inside play with Jared Sullinger, and if Jon Diebler and David Lighty continue to hit threes then



Ryan Potts
tryanpotts@hotmail.com

the Buckeyes will be going back to Columbus with a title.

I've got mad energy for days — BYU's Jimmer Fredette just keeps going, and they might need another 40 point game out of him to get past Florida in what is a rematch of last year's first round matchup between the Gators and the Cougars

The only thing I'm addicted to is winning — UNC is now an incredible 9-0 in games not decided until the final 2 minutes. This is an incredible stat when you consider that UNC relies heavily on freshmen and sophomores.

What you come to discover is, it isn't how you get there, it's that you get there — FSU may have won a couple of ugly games, but their defense has been smothering this postseason and they should be close to getting star Chris Singleton back to full strength.

And Finally,

I have to tell them that last night was a shameful train wreck filled with blind cuddly puppies — The Officials in the NCAA tournament have been atrocious. We have had a lot of close games, and the poor officiating doesn't make anyone feel very confident when a game is that close.

• HIGHLANDS SCHOOL SPORTS • with Ryan Potts

Ladies soccer dominates Tallulah Falls

The Highlands Lady Highlander soccer team hosted the Tallulah Falls Lady Indians last Thursday in their home opener in the 2011 season and served notice that despite being young, they were still a force to be reckoned with.

The Lady Highlanders started strong right off the opening kick, winning several corner balls and putting intense pressure on the Lady Indian defense. Finally, just 6 minutes into the contest, Junior Jenny Coram put a foot on the ball in the box and past the Lady Indian keeper to give Highlands a 1-0 lead. Highlands continued to dominate possession and win set pieces throughout the first half, and a goal by Rebekah Parks off of an Emily Munger corner increased the Highlands lead to 2-

0. Highlands received three more goals in the first half, with one coming from freshman Mary Gillan Renfro, one coming from Munger and another from Coram.

The second half saw the Lady Highlanders play a little less aggressive, but Highlands still dominated the possession. Two second half goals from Sophomore Hayden Bates accounted for the final margin of 7-1. Despite allowing a goal, Freshman Goalkeeper Ann Marie Osteen has only allowed one goal in 160 minutes of action this season, and the Lady Highlander defense, led by Seniors Amy Fogle and Ana Damien was terrific. The Highlanders will visit Tallulah Falls on Friday before hosting Rabun Gap on Saturday afternoon.

Highlander Track has a strong start

Both the Highlands School Middle School and High School track teams competed last week in what were their first meets of the season. Saturday, the Highlands Middle School track team competed at Rabun Gap, and in the words of Coach Steve Massey "greatly exceeded expectations."

Highlights of the meet included 7th grader Colin Weller completing the 3200m run in 14:12, 7th grader Remy Adrian winning the 110m hurdles as well as the 330m hurdles, and 8th grader Kirstyn Owen finishing 2nd in two sepa-

• See HS SPORTS page 12

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... THEFT continued from page 1

pushed over the side of the mountain, represent a partnership between the Highlands-Cashiers Land Trust, the Highlands Plateau Audubon Society, and the Highlands Plateau Greenway Trail.

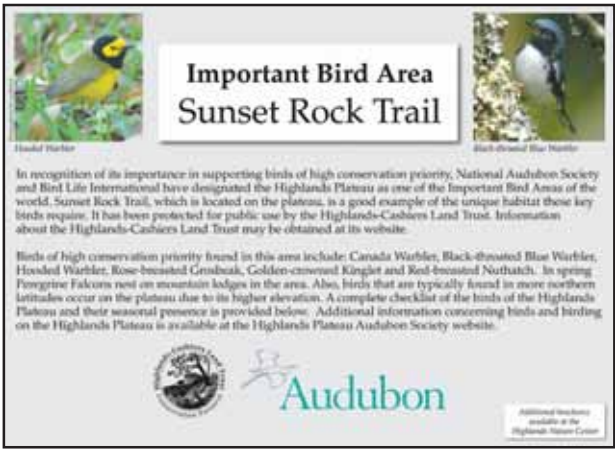
The connection is simple. The sign and the bench were on Land Trust property put there for the enjoyment and education of the public. The sign discussed the Highlands Plateau Audubon Society's Important Bird Area project while linking it to the Greenway Trail — a “roadway” to experience both the flora and fauna preserved by the Land Trust. The bench was simply a place to sit while enjoying the view.

The missions of the Land Trust, the Audubon Society and the Greenway Trail is to protect land and preserve habitat for the enjoyment of the public and the preservation of the birds that are threatened or potentially threatened.

The Highlands Plateau Audubon Society, in conjunction with Audubon North Carolina, is undertaking a long-term project to monitor bird populations on the Highlands Plateau. The sign vandalized and stolen from Sunset Rocks explained the Highlands IBA project — specifically the species being tracked on the Highlands plateau.

The Highlands area was designated an IBA Project because of its abundance of migratory birds. It is one of the state's most important sites for the Blackburnian Warbler, Golden-crowned Kinglet and Rose-breasted Grosbeak. The endangered Peregrine Falcon was re-introduced to the area and is now nesting on the cliffs of Whiteside Mountain. Studies of birds and their habitats have been conducted at the Highlands Biological Station since the 1880s.

The Land Trust has protected more than 2,000 acres in and around Highlands from development and like Sunset Rocks and Sunrise Rock represents the organization's



Sign vandalized and later stolen from the Land Trust property on Sunset Rocks explained Highlands IBA, and Greenway Trail association.

interest in allowing public access so all might enjoy the protected properties forever.

Sunset Rocks, was donated by the Ravenel family in 1914. The 10 acres overlook the town of Highlands to the west (Sunset Rocks) and Horse Cove to the east (Sunrise Rock). The view from Sunset Rocks has been the most popular vista in Highlands for generations.

“I am afraid that such acts of vandalism and theft will discourage organizations, such as the Land Trust, from providing these educational and recreational amenities on their private lands to the public,” said Highlands-Cashiers Land Trust board member Doug Landwehr. “Sunset Rocks draws large amounts of tourists, which translates to economic benefits to the Town of Highlands, and the Highlands-Cashiers Land Trust wants to make it a pleasant and educational venue for the public.”

Due to the large amount of protected land in the Highlands area, five birding trails — one of which is Sunset Rocks — have been included in the NC Birding Trail.

The NC Birding Trail is a statewide and national web-based, print and advertising endeavor to attract birding eco-tourists to NC.

At the March 3 Main Street Project meeting, Sherry Adams, with the NC Dept. of Commerce's Main Street Project noted that Eco-Tourism had become a huge industry across the nation and Highlands, due to its special environment was poised to capitalize on “nature” tourism.

America's 46 million birders spend \$32 billion annually generating \$85 billion in overall economic output and \$13 billion in state and federal taxes

“Birding is a very important economic boon to areas such, as Highlands, which are fortunate enough to have unique birding and birding habitat,” said Landwehr. “Thus, I believe the community profits in many ways from the efforts of Highlands-Cashiers Land Trust, the Highlands Audubon society and the Greenway Trail to protect the natural environment.”

The Highlands-Cashiers Land Trust is the oldest land trust in North Carolina and among the first 20 in the United States.

According to Land Trust representatives, rapid residential, recreational and business growth is encroaching on many natural areas on the Highlands Plateau and sur-

rounding areas, resulting in loss of habitat and fragmentation of the forests. In addition, air pollution, run-off and sedimentation of waterways are of increasing concern.

The Highlands Plateau Audubon bird surveys are important in understanding how these changes impact birds, especially the ones that are highly dependent on the forests, mountains and streams around Highlands.

The initial Highlands IBA survey sites are located in the Nantahala National Forests along Rich Gap Road and in the Flat Mountain area. Additional sites will be added in the future so as to obtain a more representative view of the overall Highlands plateau.

Members of Highlands Plateau Audubon will visit IBA sites several times during each spring breeding season, during bird migrations and during winter. “Point counts” are carried out in a standardized manner to determine bird species and their frequency.

In addition, presence/absence data, similar to that collected during recreational bird-watching is also used. Comparison of Highlands' data with other areas within the state will provide information about the overall abundance of specific birds over time and will help evaluate efforts being made to preserve bird populations. It will also provide insight into how birds respond to changes in their habitats on the Highlands plateau

The cost of the sign, which was split by Highlands-Cashiers Land Trust and Highlands Audubon, was \$1,300.

Highlands Police Chief Bill Harrell said he feels very confident concerning a lead about the vandalism and theft at Sunset Rocks as well as the vandalism of area signs around town which have been spray-painted with the number “5” and a “star.” Meanwhile, anyone with information about the vandalism is encouraged to call the Highlands Police Department at 536-9431.

— Kim Lewicki

...SUNSHINE from page 1

ists.

“The key is that these are laws for everybody,” said Brooke Barnett, executive director of the Sunshine Center of the North Carolina Open Government Coalition at Elon University, in Elon, N.C., which is close to Burlington. “They are for all people looking for information about their government.”

Barnett said that unlike the North Carolina Press Association, which primarily assists journalists, the Sunshine Center's mission is to educate the general public about its rights.

In addition to hosting workshops and sharing information about people's rights through their website and other means, the Sunshine Center maintains a telephone hotline at (336) 278-5659 that citizens can call for free advice if they have questions or concerns.

“We handle about 12 unique cases a month of citizens looking for access,” Barnett said. An Elon University school of communications associate professor, she also said citizens contact the Sunshine Center about a variety of open government issues.

“A common request relates to community members who want crime statistics from law enforcement agencies so they can try to do better with neighborhood watch

• See SUNSHINE page 13

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Location: Bryson's Food & Mtn. Fresh Market

Contact: Highlands Police Department/526-9431

• HEALTH MATTERS •

Regaining your vision; Resuming your life

By Dr. Blue
Blue Laser Group

According to the National Eye Institute by age 80, more than half of all Americans either have a cataract or have had cataract surgery. A cataract is clouding of the lens in the eye that affects vision. Most cataracts are related to aging so they are very common in older people. As we age, some of the protein may clump together and start to cloud a small area of the lens. This is a cataract. Over time, the cataract may grow larger and cloud more of the lens, making it harder to see. A cataract can occur in either or both eyes but cannot spread from one eye to the other.

The most common symptoms of a cataract are: Cloudy or blurry vision, colors seem faded, glare, headlights/lamps or sunlight may appear to bright, halo around lights, poor night vision, double vision or multiple images in one eye. (This symptom may clear as the cataract gets larger.) Frequent prescription changes in your eyeglasses or contact lenses. These symptoms also can be a sign of other eye problems. If you have any of these symptoms, check with your eye care professional. The symptoms of early cataract may be improved with new eyeglasses, brighter lighting, anti-glare sunglasses, or magnifying lenses. If these measures do not help, surgery is the only effective treatment. Surgery involves removing the cloudy lens and replacing it with an artificial lens. Many people who need cataract surgery also have other eye conditions, such as age-related macular degeneration or glaucoma.

Wearing sunglasses and a hat with a brim to block ultra-violet sunlight may help to delay cataracts. If you smoke, stop. Researchers also believe good nutrition can help reduce the risk of age-related cataract. They recommend eating green leafy vegetables, fruit, and other foods with antioxidants.

When to consider cataract surgery

Talk with your eye doctor about whether surgery is right for you. Most eye doctors suggest considering cataract surgery when your cataracts begin to affect your quality of life or interfere with your ability to perform normal daily activities, such as reading or driving at night.

You may need cataract removal in one or both eyes and there will be a period of adjustment. But if you are like most who have had cataract surgery, you will be surprised at what a great improvement there is in your vision.

The first day

Many patients have excellent vision the first day after surgery. As your eyes and brain adapt, your vision should continue to get better over time. Returning to the activities that you engage in every day will help your eyes and brain adjust to life after cataract surgery. But you will likely find your vision so improved that you are motivated to resume activities or hobbies that you haven't been able to do for a long time. And you may even find that you'd like to take up a few new ones. Here are a few suggestions for activities that might help speed your healing and adjustment. Always remem-

• See HEALTH MATTERS page 15

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PULL OUT

On going and Upcoming Events

Ongoing

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

• Registration is now open for the 2011 summer nature day camps at the Highlands Nature Center. Five different camps are offered: "WOW! – a World of Wonder" (ages 4-6), "Amazing Animals" (ages 7-10), "NatureWorks" (ages 8-11), "Mountain Explorers" (ages 10-13), and "Junior Ecologists" (ages 11-14). Some camps are offered more than once during the summer. Sessions run from Tuesday to Friday each week. For complete schedules, costs, and other information, please call 828-526-2623 or visit www.wcu.edu/hbs.

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.

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.

• The Highlands Writers Group is now meeting at 1 p.m. at the Library on Thursdays. At one o'clock they will have their free writing exercises. You may bring a seven minute writing piece to read. Newcomers are welcome. Call Anne Doggett at 526 8009

Fridays through May 27

• At The Bascom, "Highlands High School Ceramics," 8-9:30 a.m. Ceramics for high school age students desiring to learn the art of ceramics. The curriculum follows NC state guidelines and develops valuable skills. Free. To register contact Highlands School, 828.526.2147.

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.

Last Sat. of the month through May 28

• At The Bascom, "Friends Around the Globe," 1-3 pm. Fun, creative, educational activities to build skills through the visual arts. Lessons will include a variety of media including drawing, painting, clay and other media. A collaboration with the International Friendship Center. Free. To register or for more information, visit www.thebascom.org or call 828.526.4949, ext. 100.

Saturdays

• 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

Saturday's are a treat at The Bascom! Spring Youth Art is in Abundance

The last Winter Barn Dance of the season, honoring veterans is on Saturday, March 26th from 7-10 pm. The evening's entertainment, *Timeless Highway*, is sponsored by Ray McPhail. 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. Sponsors: The Bascom, The Highlands Area Chamber of Commerce and Visitor Center, the Highlands Historical Society, Mountain Fresh Grocery, Ugly Dog Pub and Sam Call Productions.

Sit back and enjoy this week's Art Cinema presentation *William Segal, Seeing, Searching, Being* in The Bascom's Loft Gallery, Saturday afternoon at 2 pm. Sponsored by Synergy Films. Call The Bascom or visit our website for weekly movie titles.

This spring's Youth Art Schedule at The Bascom includes:

• **Free Art Day**, Wednesday, March 30, 10 am-12 noon, all ages. School is out, come out and create!

• **Middle School Mixed Media**, Thursdays, March 31-May 12 (no class on April 21), 3:15-5 pm, sixth-eighth grade. Students will learn to use art as a means of communicating ideas and interpreting their environment. \$60 for a six-week session.

• **Clay for Youth**, Wednesdays, April 13-May 18, 4-5:30 pm, eight to twelve year olds. Students will enjoy a variety of creative experiences and learn clay techniques. Everyone will get to use the potter's wheel. \$120 for a six-week session.

• **Play in the Clay**, Friday-Saturday, April 22-23, 10 am-1 pm, 10- to 16-year-olds. For beginners and



Clay for Youth and Play in the Clay are part of spring youth art schedule at The Bascom's Studio Barn. To register or for more information on The Bascom call 828. 526.4949 or visit www.thebascom.org.

intermediate young potters, instruction will cover basic techniques, coil and pinch pots. An optional glaze day will be available on Saturday, May 7 from 10 am-12 noon. \$50 for a two-day workshop, \$20 for glaze day.

• **Kids Open Studio Saturdays**, April 2-June 4, 10 am-12 noon, six to twelve year olds. This drop-in program will allow kids to explore their creativity either individually or through a group collaborative. \$5 per session.

Scholarships are available for qualified applicants.

The Bascom is open year round. Through April 2nd, the galleries and The Shop are open Fridays and Saturdays from 10 am-5 pm. For more details on all Bascom activities, visit www.thebascom.org or call 526.4949.

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On going and Upcoming Events

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Through -April 2

•At The Bascom, view Regional Art League's annual exhibition.

Thurs. -Sat., March 24-26

• Operation Medicine Drop-off at Highlands Pharmacy and Main Street Pharmacy from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.. Bring prescription and over-the-counter medicines to the take-back event and keep them out of the wrong hands. For more information, call the Highlands Police Department at 526-9431.

Thursday, March 24

• Free Green Clinic for builders, architects, electricians, realtors, designers from 10:30-noon at 19 Smoky Mountain Drive in Franklin at Smoky Mountain Systems and Advanced Audio Video. This is an accredited class that will carry CEUs. Participants do not need CEUs to attend. "Light Control Solutions for Residential Room and Whole Home Solutions," will be discussed. This clinic will allow individuals to see how best to control both natural and artificial light in homes to ensure aesthetics, efficiency, and occupant comfort. Various methods will be considered. Participants will find ways to contribute to sustainable design with energy solutions. Lunch will be provided. Seating is limited and those desiring to attend should contact Rick Creel at rickcreel@smnet.net or call 828-506-0011 to reserve their seat.

• As part of the Ninth Annual Spring Literary Festival, the Macon County Public Library will host a book

discussion on *The World Without Us* at 6 p.m.. Dr. James Costa, executive director of the Highlands Biological Station, will lead the discussion. The book offers an utterly original approach to questions of humanity's impact on the planet. After his presentation, Dr. Costa will lead a group discussion about the concepts in this book. This program is free and open to the public. Copies of the book are available for check out at the library. For further information, please contact the Macon County Public Library at (828) 524-3600 or visit the library's website www.fontanalib.org.

Friday, March 25

• Highlands-Cashiers Hospital will offer a special reception and hospital update to area Realtors interested in learning more about the hospital Friday. The complimentary mid-morning session will begin at 10 a.m. and will include refreshments. The event will provide participants an in-depth look at the hospital's day-to-day operations while hearing latest news and updates from President and CEO, Craig James. For more information or to RSVP, please call (828) 526-1434.

Saturday, March 26

• Operation Medicine Drop-off at Bryson's Foods and Mountain Fresh Market from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Bring prescription and over-the-counter medicines to the take-back event and keep them out of the wrong hands. For more information, call the Highlands Police Department at 526-9431.

• Operation Medicine Drop Off in Franklin at Wal-Mart and K-Mart, Franklin, from 10 AM to 3PM.

• At The Bascom, Winter Barn Dance honoring veterans from 7-10 p.m. Tickets are \$5. Call the Chamber of Commerce at 526-2112.

• The Nantahala Hiking Club will take a moderate 4-mile hike to Lower Whitewater Falls from the Bad Creek Reservoir parking area. Meet in back of the Wachovia Bank in Cashiers at 10 am. Drive 22 miles round trip. Bring water and lunch. Call leaders Mike and Susan Kettles, 743-1079, for reservations.

• The Satolah, Georgia, volunteer fire department holds its annual benefit, Saturday, at the firehouse on Route 28. Food at 5, smoking bluegrass at 7. Slow-cooked pork barbecue or grilled chicken with all the trimmings, \$7 per plate for adults, \$10 for a combo plate. Music and singing by Foxfire and Chatuga Ridge. And don't miss the homemade cake auction and raffle. All proceeds benefit this volunteer fire station. Raffles, too! The public is invited.

Beginning March 28

• The Hudson Library Parking Lot will be closed for construction until further notice. Only pedestrian traffic will be allowed. Patrons are asked to use parking spaces on Main Street and to follow the pedestrian walkway to the side entrance for the building. Do not attempt to enter the lot with a vehicle. It will be closed to all except authorized vehicles. Construction will take place for 4-6 weeks. If

you need handicap assistance, call during normal business hours, Tues-Fri, 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. and Sat. from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. to make special arrangements. 526-3031. We apologize for the inconvenience.

Tuesday, March 29

• At The Highlands Dialogue's Tuesday discussion, from 10-11:30 a.m., Bill West: Poet Discussion. Handouts will be available at the meeting previous to the discussion and at the Hudson Library in the Community Box available during library hours. For more info about the Highlands Dialogue please e-mail John Gaston johngaston@aol.com.

Wednesday, March 30

• Macon Savings Bank Blood Drive, One Center Court, Franklin, 10 am to 2:30 pm. Please call 524-7000 for more information or to schedule an appointment. Walk-Ins Welcome! Appointments preferred.

Thursday, March 31

• Bonsai workshop at the Highlands Biological Station. 1-3 pm. A hands-on workshop for beginners, presented by Dr. Bob Gilbert. \$20 per person. Advanced registration is required due to limited space; please call horticulturist Cyndi Banks at 828-526-018 for more information and to sign up.

Expand a child's world at Literacy Bingo

The Rotary Club of Highlands and the Literacy Council of Highlands will join forces to benefit a mutual goal: Literacy. Literacy Rotary Bingo to be held on Thursday, April 7 from 6:30-8:30 at the Highlands Community Building will provide funding to help continue the fight for Literacy.

The event's theme, *Expand a Child's World with Literacy*, helps drive the Literacy Council's mission to enrich lives through literacy on the Highlands plateau. Half of all Bingo card money will go to the Literacy Council and half will be awarded to lucky bingo players.

Highlands Literacy's continual goal is to offer effective, quality programs to anyone who needs literacy help in the community. Bingo is a great way to raise funds for this goal and have a fun evening

with the thrill, entertainment and definitely a few laughs at Literacy Bingo.



Fifteen games will be played, with a brief intermission halfway through the evening. Each bingo card is \$1 per game, and you may play as many cards as you like. The last game of the evening is a full-card bingo with the winner getting a surprise jackpot.

The Literacy-Rotary Bingo is family-style bingo, is open to the community and refreshments are free.

The Rotary Club of Highlands is licensed by the State of North Carolina to operate Bingo games.

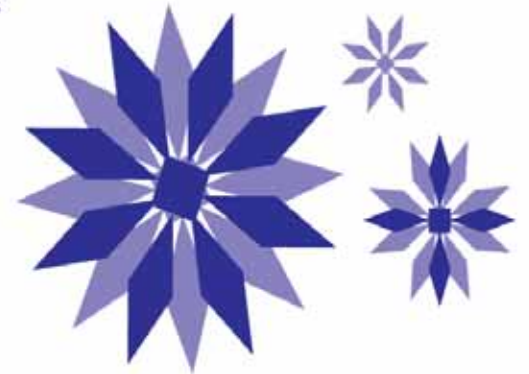
Children and Grandchildren are Welcome! *The Rotary Club of Highlands is licensed to operate bingo by the state of NC.

Fifteen games will be played, with a brief intermission halfway through the evening. Each bingo card is \$1 per game, and you may play as many cards as you like. The last game of the evening is a full-card bingo with the winner getting a surprise jackpot.



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**Regional Art Organizations,
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• SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING •

Easter

By Pastor Dan Robinson

Highlands Central Baptist Church

Fools rush in where angels fear to tread. Since you know I'm not an angel, I guess I've just identified myself...so here I go.

I'm bothered about Easter. No....not strong enough. I'm really troubled... vexed....agitated... distressed. Except for exceeding the proper limits of pastoral decorum I think I would scream. I feel that potential scream rising every time I see Easter bunnies, chocolate eggs and fake grass.

As a culture we seem mindlessly preoccupied with what we can get out of this forthcoming holiday. What a different tack the New Testament takes regarding Calvary and Resurrection.

To begin with, Calvary should have been about your death and mine... not His. Regardless of our fanciful notions about our own goodness, God declares us to be sinners (Romans 3:23), and therefore, deserving of death and judgment. The irony is that even if we could have died on Calvary, it wouldn't have made any difference. It was imperative that the just die for the unjust (I Peter 3:18). The bottom line is that there is nothing you and I could ever do to merit His favor or gain Heaven. We need a Savior. This is the reason for Calvary. Jesus Christ, the God-man gave His life as payment for the sins of the world. Red, yellow, black and white, atheist, agnostic, humanist, heathen, or religionist. For all of us He died!

Then, the Resurrection. Jesus Christ was as dead and lifeless as anyone in any cemetery. But, miraculously by the power of God was resurrected and is alive now. In case you ever wonder whether or not God loves you, just look at the Cross. A certain song says, "When He was on the Cross, I was on His mind." True enough.

I hope this Easter will be for you a day of awe and worship. I hope you will give your life to Jesus Christ. I hope you will know the assurance of sins forgiven and Heaven as your home. The Cross and Resurrection are the most important events in the history of the world. They stand as the beacon of God's love for you. The one who believes that and acts on it surely is no fool.

...HS SPORTS from page 7

rate sprints. "I'm real proud of my team," said Massey, "for their first shot at this they really did a terrific job."

The Highlands High School track team competed last Wednesday at Cherokee in a Smoky Mountain Conference meet. Highlights for the high school included Senior Samuel Wheeler finishing in 4th place in the long jump and Freshman Tyler Munger finishing 6th out of 21 in the 100m dash.

Coach Massey said that he was "very pleased" with the effort from both teams and that he hopes that with a little more experience that his group would continue to grow and improve throughout the season.

•See HS SPORTS page18

• 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

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Sun.: Holy Communion - 9:00 a.m.; Adult Forum -

10:45, Buck's Coffee Cafe, Cashiers

Mon.: Bible Study & Supper at members' homes - 6 p.m.

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

Thurs.: 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

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3645 Cashiers Rd, Highlands, NC

Senior Pastor Gary Hewins

Sun.: 9:30 am: Adult Sunday School

10:30 am: Middle School; 10:45 am: Childrens

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.;

Evening Worship 6:30 p.m.

Wed.: Men's Bible Study 8:30 a.m.,

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)

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Chaplain Margaret Howell

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Sundays: Sunday School and Adult discussion

group 9:30 a.m.; Worship/Communion - 10:30

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8 miles south of Highlands on N.C. 28 S in Satolah

Pastor Roy Lowe, (828) 526-8425

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

Choir - 6 p.m.

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

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Sundays:10:30 a.m. at Serenity Chapel at Trillium

Village, Glenville.

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

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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

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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

...SUNSHINE continued from page 8

measures," she said.

Often, people contact the Sunshine Center with questions about access to public meetings of school boards and city and county commissions, Barnett said. Citizens also have made inquiries about whether adequate notice was given for a meeting, whether minutes of the meeting were readily available later and whether a meeting should be closed or open to the public.

Last fall, when the Sunshine Center held an educational workshop in Asheville, she said the hot topic at that session related to access to animal control records.

The Sunshine Center has advised citizens when they have been incorrectly told that the public information or access they seek is for journalists only or for professional and not non-student journalists. The center has also fielded concerns from citizens who have been questioned inappropriately by government officials about what they need the information for.

She said the Sunshine Center has about a 90% success rate of solving people's issues with open government questions. Barnett added that solving an issue sometimes means determining that that person is not entitled to the record or access requested.

The Sunshine Center also works, Barnett said, on helping both government representatives and citizens understand the law and work together better.

As a general assignment reporter and columnist for the Asheville Citizen-Times, John Boyle's work regularly involves delving into public records and monitoring government meetings.

In one recent example, public records played a key role in February news reports written by Boyle and his colleagues at the Citizen-Times about Buncombe County commissioners being the state's highest paid commissioners. The stories led in part to the commissioners cutting their compensation.

Boyle has worked as a journalist for 19 years, with the last 16 of those being at the Citizen-Times. Through the years, he said, government officials' understanding of and compliance with open records and meetings laws has "probably gotten a little better."

Overall said he's seen local law en-

forcement agencies be more responsive when it comes to sharing public records ranging from police reports to 911 call audio files. According to a Jan. 25 story in The Charlotte Observer, North Carolina and North Dakota are the only two states in the country to consider 911 calls to be public information. That same story reported that the Durham Police Department also has persuaded city and county elected officials to restrict access to the calls "to include only written transcripts or recordings distorted so the caller's voice can't be recognized." The N.C. Association of County Commissioners is lobbying for the effort, too.

But adherence to open records and meetings laws by government officials "does seem to ebb and flow sometimes," Boyle added, "especially when there's a change in (an agency's) personnel."

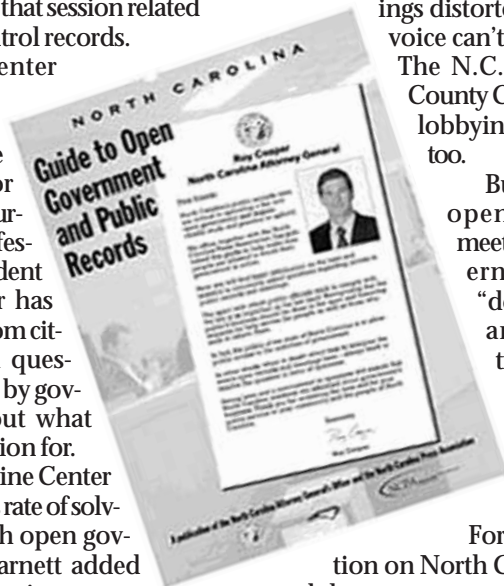
For more information on North Carolina's public records laws:

- Visit the Government Records Branch of North Carolina
- Download your copy of "Guide to Open Government and Public Records," a publication of the North Carolina Attorney General's Office and the North Carolina Press Association. [PDF]

April is Public Health Month

April is Public Health Month and to raise awareness about the important role public health plays in our lives, Macon County Public Health will recognize a "Public Health Hero" in the month of April.

Citizens may nominate community volunteers for this award by completing the short nomination form found at <http://www.maconnc.org/public-notices.html>. We'd like to hear your stories about people who've made a difference in the health of our community, so nominate a deserving volunteer by March 31st.



Register your American Cancer Society Relay For Life Team today!

The American Cancer Society Relay For Life® of Highlands gives everyone in the community a chance to help the organization save lives and create a world with less cancer and more birthdays. Register your team today by visiting www.relayforlife.org/highlands or by calling Lisa Duff, Senior Community Manager, at 828-994-0431

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 - 9 Trinity
 - 10 TBS
 - 11 WMYA-TV (MyNetworkTV)
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 - 13 WLOS (ABC)
 - 14 Local
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 - 17 National Geographic
 - 20 Fox News
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 - 25 Discovery Channel
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 - 29 A&E
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 - 31 The Learning Channel
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 - 37 USA
 - 38 Spike TV
 - 39 Golf Channel
 - 40 FX
 - 41 CNN
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 - 382 The Movie Channel Xtra East
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... SOCIAL STUDIES continued from page 1

"The curriculum that will be taught in our classrooms reflects the importance of these lessons as well as a high level of input from teachers, historians, parents, students and the citizens of this state."

Macon County Schools Superintendent Dr. Dan Brigman, said the new Social Studies standards will require two or more additional positions in Macon County.

"We have been aware of this potential change for nearly two years and see the benefit of the additional course and credit requirements. Although I am in favor of increased standards for improving student achievement, this change has been implemented during a very difficult time in our state," he said. "The required positions to support the change will contribute to our financial challenges as we struggle to maintain the current level of services for all students throughout Macon County."

Key elements of the revised K-12 Social Studies Standards include:

- a study of U.S. History in fifth grade;
- a study of North Carolina and U.S. History in eighth grade;
- the integration of financial literacy and environmental literacy throughout the K-12 standards;
- a continued focus on North Carolina history in fourth grade;
- a study of world civilizations and societies in sixth and seventh grades with a focus on geography and cultures; and
- two U.S. History courses at the high school level.

The U.S. History I course will provide a study of European Exploration of the New World through the Reconstruction Era (post Civil War). The U.S. History II course will provide a study of the 19th century to contemporary time. The two-year sequence will give teachers more time to cover the full

scope and depth of the course material.

Highlands School principal Brian Jetter said every time the state ups its requirements for graduation it impacts the high school class schedule and the schools resources.

"We must find room in the schedule for the second History class. That sounds easy, but in a small school we usually have only one section of any course and most of the time that one section is only offered one time in a year," he said. "Our resources are our teachers. If every high school student now needs four courses in social studies for graduation, rather than three, our teachers end up teaching 4 X 120 (approximately the number of high school students at Highlands School), instead of 3 X 120. That 480 versus 360 means larger classes each period, and keeps us from offering social studies electives such as Psychology or Current Affairs because the schedule is now full of required courses."

The revised standards also include a stronger focus on financial literacy. State Treasurer and State Board of Education member Janet Cowell has been a strong proponent of financial literacy in the state's social studies curriculum. "It is never too early to start gaining an understanding of how to manage personal finances," said Cowell. "I am proud to be part of a School Board that understands the importance of financial literacy and has approved standards that will provide every North Carolina child with the basic financial skills to achieve personal and financial success."

The newly approved standards are available online at www.ncpublicschools.org

– **Kim Lewicki and StatePoint Media**

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... PERSONNEL continued from page 1

it felt more discussion was needed concerning allowing someone to serve on two boards longer than two terms. Craig is also the Chairman of the Planning Board.

At last Wednesday's Town Board meeting, Craig told commissioners he didn't want to be re-appointed to the Appearance Commission – and was content to just serve on the Planning Board.

The board agreed to stick to two-year term limits, except if a position can't be filled in time and in that case the "sitting" person will stay until it's filled — even if it goes into a third term. So, Craig will stay on the Appearance Commission until someone is found to fill his spot.

There are now three vacancies on the Appearance Commission, two vacancies on the Zoning Board of Adjustment (Alternate James Tate was appointed to the Zoning Board as a regular member to fill the unexpired term of Bill Conway who requested to be relieved of the post. Two alternate vacancies now must be filled), and three vacancies on the Advisory Committee for Scholarship Endowment Fund.

In June 1998, the town separated the Planning Board and Appearance Commission into two boards and though business has been conducted that way since then, the policy change wasn't amended in the current ordinance, so it goes to the Planning Board next week for an amendment recommendation, then back to the Town Board for a public hearing and subsequent vote.

Rebecca Shuler, part-time secretary to the Town Manager, who is now a Notary and has completed some course work in Town Clerk Administration, was appointed part-time Deputy Town Clerk.

Commissioner Amy Patterson suggested making her Town Clerk because by state statute only a Clerk can do the duties she is doing, but since that title would initiate a pay raise, it will be considered in the 2011-12 budget.

Sandra Baty asked the board about its personnel policy because so many town employees are related. The town's policy is that no one may serve directly under an immediate family member.

Rebecca Shuler and her husband Matt Shuler, GIS Technician and acting Technology Director, both work in Town Hall. Town Manager Jim Fatland said since they aren't supervised by each other, it's OK.

In other news, the Highland United Methodist Church represented by Jeff Weller of Summit Architecture came before the Town Board to request conditional use zoning be applied to the property it has recently purchased for John

Lupoli.

The property borders Church Street Alley, Spring and Third streets and the church plans to recombine both parcels into one.

The newly acquired .59 acre parcel's use will be the same as the Wellspring property – for a Faith and Fellowship Center, Youth Education and secondary church needs.

Weller, said as many trees as possible will be saved and there are actually plans to plant more trees than currently exist so the entire parcel will stay as green as possible.

The zone requested is B1-Conditional Use. The conditions are that the use must be church related and if the use changes the zoning will revert to the old B3 designation; the development must leave 30% greenspace; there is a single curb cut on Spring Street; that there are 10-ft.

... HEALTH MATTERS from pg 9

ber, however, to follow the advice of your physician as you learn to adjust to your new vision. You will also notice that everything is brighter and colors are richer with your new lens.

If you are age 60 or older, you should have a comprehensive dilated eye exam once every year. In addition to cataracts, your eye care professional can check for signs of age-related macular degeneration, glaucoma, and other vision disorders. Early treatment for many eye diseases may save your sight. Dr. Blue is available to see you for any of your eye issues.

• The National Eye Institute (NEI) is part of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and is the Federal government's lead agency for vision research that leads to sight-saving treatments and plays a key role in reducing visual impairment and blindness.

side setbacks but the allowed B-1 zero setbacks on the front and back bordering streets.

The request was OK'd but sent to the Planning Board which will hear it at the March 28 meeting. Following its recommendation, it will go back to the Town Board for a final vote.

People interested in serving on town boards, commissions and committees are urged to contact the administration at 526-2118.

– Kim Lewicki

Calling All Independents & Democrats!



APRIL FOOL'S Political Vent

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Contact: Highlands Police Department/526-9431

... on this day

March 24, 1976

Queen Elizabeth II sends the first Royal Email

Because we are a monarch, We,
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out of the House of Windsor.
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send any message via computer?
Do you think Her Grace
communicated over cyber space?
I think not, Sir, I have reckoned
that was up to Elizabeth II.
She, on whose realm the sun does not set
has sent an email through the Internet.

... from the History Guy

NC visitor spending jumps to record \$17B

By Margo Metzger
StatePoint Media

Gov. Bev Perdue recently announced that visitors to North Carolina spent a record \$17 billion in 2010, an increase of 9% from 2009. The number was higher than the previous record of \$16.8 billion set in 2008. The sixth most visited state in the nation, North Carolina gained nearly 2,000 tourism jobs in 2010 while state tax revenues from visitor spending increased 12.6 percent and have increased 16.2 percent since 2007.

More than 40,000 businesses in North Carolina directly provide products and services to travelers. Those visitors spend more than \$46.6 million per day in North Carolina and contribute nearly \$4.1 million per day in state and local tax revenues as a result of that spending, according to the U.S. Travel Association.

Highlights include:

- 2010 total visitor spending saw an increase of 9 percent to a record \$17 billion, up from \$15.6 billion in

2009.

- 36.8 million people visited North Carolina in 2010, a 2.5 percent increase from 2009.
- The travel and tourism industry directly employs 185,500 North Carolinians, up 1 percent from 2009.
- Visitor spending directly generated a total of more than \$1.5 billion in state and local tax revenues. State tax revenue totaled more than \$947 million and local tax revenues were \$546 million as a direct result of visitor spending.

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Training for the 'big time'



The Panther Prowl 10U baseball team that participates in USSSA and Nations Baseball has been working out a few times this winter with ex-minor leaguer, Tampa/New York Yankee and FHS graduate Jared Greenwood at his new WNC Baseball Academy on Siler Road, Franklin. Front from left: Bailey Watts, Lee Langstaff, Sean Thompson, Hunter Jamison. 2nd row from left: Max Mason, Tyler Harrison, Jay Bueck, Kaplan Mitchell, Blake Gibson, Tyler Harrell. Back row from left: Jared Greenwood, Coaches Bill Harrell, Jody Mason, Matt Sullivan. "I think it's great for the boys to get a different perspective, especially from someone that has been on the threshold of the Big Show," said Coach Bill Harrell. "Right now we plan to play in 8-10 tournaments through July, but our first USSSA Tournament starts on 03/26 in Hominy Valley or Canton."

| | | | |
|----------------|----|-----------------|----|
| Jay Bueck | 20 | Graham Judd | 15 |
| Blake Gibson | 18 | Max Mason | 21 |
| Tyler Harrison | 20 | Kaplan Mitchell | 2 |
| Tyler Harrell | 1 | Sean Thompson | 19 |
| Bailey Watts | 7 | Robbie Watts | 8 |
| Lee Langstaff | 11 | | |

... **SWANSON** from page 6

work by providing ever increasing funds to support their efforts. Forget the content of the message; it was the form that was the point. There were many misspellings, frequent misuse of punctuation and poor sentence structure. An eighth-grader submitting such a missive for grading would get it back with an F. Perhaps the people paid to teach the kids should be graded.

... **WOOLDRIDGE** from page 4

And my story has an even happier ending. After returning from my shower in my PJs, my bed had been made. I closed the electric doors to my suite and, because I'm a member of the more powerful, guilt-free male species, fell asleep in minutes, getting a full five hours. Whoa, again....again....and again!

Coming soon, watch for Fred's new mystery/ thriller titled Deceived, at your local book stores.

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• POLICE & FIRE DEPT. •

Highlands PD log entries from March 14. Only the names of persons arrested, issued a Class-3 misdemeanor, or public officials have been used.

March 14

• At 5:30 p.m., a sign was reported stolen from Sunset Rocks.

March 17

• At 2 p.m., officers responded to a two-vehicle accident at US 64 and Third Street. There were no injuries.

• At 7:05, officers questioned a person walking on Mirror Lake Road. She was OK, just on her way home.

• At 9 p.m., officers responded to a noise complaint at Highlands Smokehouse concerning a power saw. It was moved inside.

• At 10:12 p.m., officers responded to a noise complaint at Ruka's Table in Wright Square. The band was asked to stop playing.

March 18

• At 9:30 p.m., officers responded to a noise complaint at Ruka's Table in Wright Square. The music was turned down.

• At 3:30 p.m., officers responded to a call of a damaged fence at Oak and N. 4th streets.

March 19

• At 5:05 p.m., a person reported missing by her husband was found at the WHLC radio station.

March 20

• At 3:47 a.m., officers responded to a possible assault at S. 4th and Spring streets between three male subjects. All was OK.

• At 9:49 p.m., officers check a residence on Chowan Drive about a possible B&E but all was secure and OK.

March 21

• At 8:52 p.m., officers responded to a call about a person in the road at Sherwood Forest and US 64 who was having seizures.

March 22

• At 7:52 p.m., a ID card found on N. 4th Street was turned into police.

• During the week, police officers responded to 2 alarms and issued 5 citations.

Highlands F&R Dept. log entries from March 18.

March 18

• At 7:41 a.m., the dept. was first-responders at a residence on Holt Road.

March 20

• At 10:35 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to Main Street where a person had fallen. The person was taken to the hospital.

• At 2:24 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to Main Street. The person was taken to the hospital.

March 21

• At 8:54 p.m., the dept. was first-responders on N. 4th Street where a person was having a seizure.

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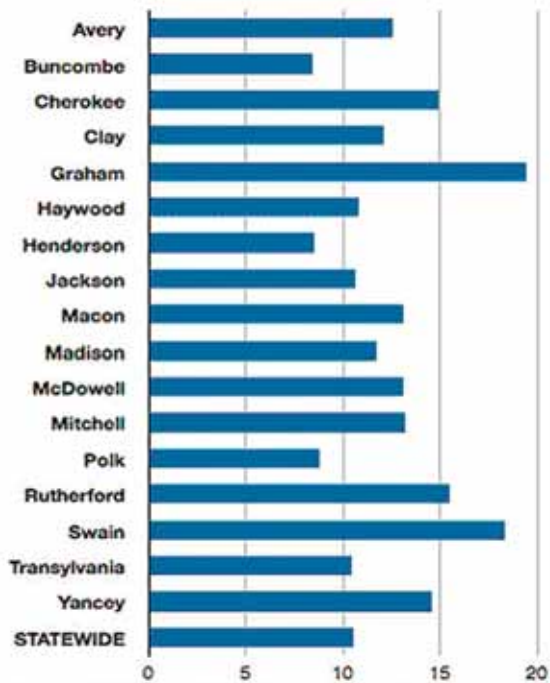
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WNC January 2011 unemployment rates by county and percentage



WNC unemployment rates by County and percentage

| WNC county | January 2011 unemployment rate |
|--------------|--------------------------------|
| Avery | 12.5 |
| Buncombe | 8.4 |
| Cherokee | 14.9 |
| Clay | 12.1 |
| Graham | 19.4 |
| Haywood | 10.8 |
| Henderson | 8.5 |
| Jackson | 10.6 |
| Macon | 13.1 |
| Madison | 11.7 |
| McDowell | 13.1 |
| Mitchell | 13.2 |
| Polk | 8.8 |
| Rutherford | 15.5 |
| Swain | 18.3 |
| Transylvania | 10.4 |
| Yancey | 14.5 |
| STATEWIDE | 10.5 |

• Source: Employment Security Commission of NC
• Graphics by Carolina Public Press

Unemployment rose across WNC in January: in Graham County, the state's worst rate, 'job opportunities are limited'

By Angie Newsome

Carolina Public Press

www.carolinapublicpress.org

Data released last week by the state's unemployment agency confirmed that January was a tough month for the state's workforce, with rates rising in all but one of North Carolina's 100 counties.

In Western North Carolina, the numbers painted a similar picture. Graham and Swain counties ranked first and second among the highest unemployment rates in the state, at 19.4 and 18.3 percent, respectively. Rutherford, Cherokee and Yancey counties were also among the worst county rates in the state; all were well above the 10.5 percent average for the state as a whole.

Pam Dickey, manager of the Employment Security Commission of N.C. offices in Graham, Cherokee and Clay counties, said the numbers reflected several conditions for workers in North Carolina's westernmost counties: a typical winter-month slow-down in retail and tourism jobs and the still-lasting impact of the decline in the area's home-building industry and related recession.

"That area (Graham County) in particular is a more isolated part of the state, and a lot of folks that are from Graham County typically have a history of working in the construction or construction trade business," Dickey said from her office in Murphy.

"There were a lot of businesses that relied on the construction industry, and when the building and selling of homes decreased dramatically, it had an affect on the area," she said. Businesses offering everything from well drilling to appliance sales suffered, as did employees.

In the quarter ending Sept. 30, the most recent data available, there were 204 businesses in Graham County, according to the "Workforce In-Depth" report issued on the county, on March 18, by the Employment Security Commission. [PDF] Forty-six of those were in construction. That doesn't account, she said, for those whose construction-related jobs were headquartered in east Tennessee or in neighboring counties.

Overall, she added, the numbers reveal that the recession's problems have persisted. "We're just having a slower time in recovery than some of the larger cities," she said.

Today, Graham County workers who spent years working in construction and the related trades are faced with finding work in other sectors, she said. With only one major plant in the Graham County, "job opportunities are very limited," she said.

But today's data also showed that while unemployment rose across the region in January, not all mountain counties topped the state overall.

Three counties – Buncombe, Henderson and Polk – posted unemployment rates below the state average of 10.5 percent, with Buncombe County's rate, at 8.4 percent, being

among the best eight counties in the state for the month.

In the Asheville metropolitan statistical area, the rate increase 1 percentage point from December to January, from 7.9 percent to 8.9 percent.

Rick Elingburg, manager of the Buncombe County Employment Security Commission office said the increase was due to expected seasonal layoffs in hospitality, retail and construction businesses.

But local workers benefit generally, he said, by having diverse types of employers in the area. And even though unemployment increased, new opportunities are developing for workers here and within commuting distance.

"We have quite a few medium and large manufacturing companies in our area that are actually adding jobs," he said. Those places include Continental Automotive Systems, Eaton Corporation, Mills Manufacturing and GE Aviation Systems Components.

These jobs are available to people able to commute to the area, too, he said, adding, "We feel good about that."

...HS SPORTS from page 12 Highlands Softball

The Lady Highlander Softball team played Andrews on Monday and came away with a 12-1 loss to the Lady Wildcats.

Highlands began the game well, taking a 1-0 lead early in the game, but some timely hitting from the Lady Wildcats put them out in front and they were able to build a lead. The Lady Highlanders are in just their third season of rebuilding a dormant program and have increased their numbers from 10 to 16 players in recent years. "We are still young," said Lady Highlander coach Christine Murphy, "but our numbers are increasing and we are able to experiment with different lineups and are still trying to settle positions."

Murphy emphasized the improvement in fielding that has occurred in recent years and that as the program continues to grow the culture of softball will increase and there will be much more experience among the players.

Softball and Track both have been added in the past three years under Highlands Principal Brian Jetter, and having more options available for students is a benefit for all involved. "The addition of any activity available for students-especially a sport is good for the health of students as well as their grades, because students usually improve their classroom performance when participating in sports," said Jetter. "It's a win-win for everyone."

The Softball team will play its next home game on Tuesday, when they will host Cherokee at the HHS softball field.



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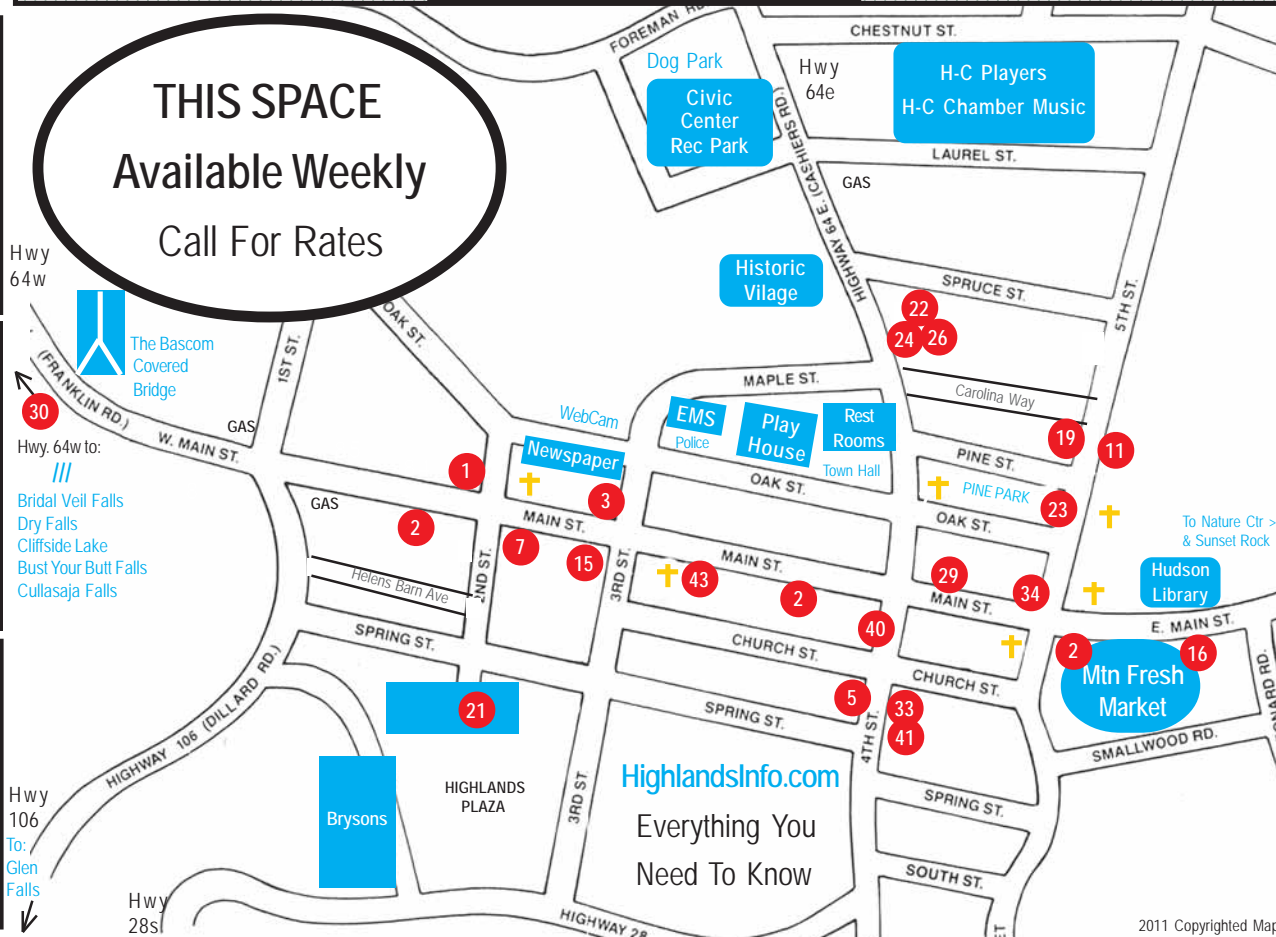
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